

ERRE Submission

Mesdames and Messieurs,

Re: Submission to the Electoral Reform Committee

I am writing with respect to the first of your objectives that of a “viable alternate voting system to replace the first-past-the-post system.”

I am strongly in favour of a proportional system for the election of our representatives. To me this means that the number of representatives in parliament for each party (and members independent of any party) should reflect the relative proportion of votes given to each party (or group of independents). For practical reasons of geography etc., it may be best to consider a number of distinct regions, and provide proportionality by region rather than nationally.

Further, I think that no member should be “elected” to parliament without having been voted for by constituents. Thus, I am decidedly not in favour of makeup lists provided by the parties. Any scheme for allocating additional members to meet proportionality requirements should be based on the election algorithm and not on external factors.

Thus one of the schemes proposed for PEI makes sense. Halve the number of ridings and double the number of representatives per riding. One member elected by plurality, and the second chosen based on makeup requirements where each “second choice” is determined according to the number of votes received.

I am also concerned that our electoral choices should not be overwhelmed by lobbying once they are elected. We make a choice at the ballot box. And that choice should be reflected in the policies and actions of our government. The actions of lobbyists should be constrained.

I would like to see that the only lobbying of any representative that is allowed, is that by constituents of the elected representatives. Lobbyists should only have access to ministers, if they are residents in the minister’s own riding. This would succeed in distributing the efforts of lobbyists across all ridings, and ensure that local electors would have as much influence over their MPs as large lobby groups.

In summary:

- I recommend that a proportional system be introduced.
- I recommend that our proportional system not include unelected representatives.
- I’d like the efforts of lobbyists to be constrained to the lobbying of their own MPs.

Colin Griffiths
Cantley