

Oct. 7, 2016

Dear Members of the Committee on Electoral Reform,

This is a brief that argues in favour of changing the voting system to one based on proportional representation.

When Prime Minister Trudeau said that the last election would be the last one using the first past the post voting system, I was elated.

About 12 years ago, I learned how first past the post actually works and how it creates false majorities, under or over represents parties, and how the results do not reflect the way Canadians actually vote.

I then joined others who were becoming aware of the limits of first past the post as well and proceeded to read widely on the topic. I attended conferences, sessions of the Citizen Assembly in Ont., meetings and panels of academics.

After several years of such study, based on what I learned, I knew that it was time to change Canada's voting system to one based on proportional representation where parties get seats in proportion to their share of the popular vote. It is only under this system that everyone's vote actually counts towards electing representatives of the party that each voter supports.

For me, the essence of the issue is that under PR, all voters have a chance to elect members of a party that represents their own political voice. They do not have to make do with a member of a legislature from a party they do not support and who therefore cannot speak with their political voice.

I feel that making such a change will change politics in Canada in a positive way. With every voter seeing their vote reflected in the number of seats that their party gets means they know they will be heard to the extent of support they have in the general voting population.

We will not have parties getting 25% of the vote and only 10 seats any more.

I know that you have heard all the arguments in favour of PR many times and all the facts and figures that back them up so I am not going to repeat them here.

Suffice to say that as we all know, over 75 countries use some of form of pr. It is time for Canada to join this group.

Members of the Committee, after hearing what you have heard across Canada and after listening to the experts, I hope that you will recommend that Canada change our voting system to one based on PR.

The voters in this country deserve nothing less than a system that fairly represents the marks they make on the ballot.

Thank you for your consideration.

Linda Sheppard