

Darshan S. Kang, MP

Dear Sir,

For your consideration regarding Electoral Reform.

First, some personal background for context:

1. Skyview (or predecessor ridings) constituent and taxpayer since 1979.
2. To date, have never had the need to request assistance from or interface with the federal government .
3. Believe in self-reliance and the wishful thinking that a smaller, more nimble and efficient Canadian federal government is achievable.

On Electoral Reform:

1. What specifically has failed Canadians with the current First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral system? I have never been let down by FPTP governments, only my perception of paying a premium, but to me that's okay as a citizen of the best country - Canada. To me Electoral Reform is not a priority! The FPTP system has served the UK, US, Canada, India plus other countries who are among or becoming the strongest global players for centuries/decades. This question should have been (and I feel was not) the 1st question asked and definitively answered/communicated before heading down the current path. So for me, I need some detailed evidence on why an electoral change is needed and how it will make future Canadian generation's life better.
2. What constitutes the reason for the rush to make a decision on keeping the FPTP or selecting another system?
3. The possibility of a new system and a coalition government with perhaps a fringe minority holding the balance power has all the earmarks of making questionable or compromised decisions, be less efficient and slower or yield higher cost to Canadian's than experienced now, and that will not be good.

Since we're already on the current path, some recommendations:

1. Please provide or post a link to the Electoral Reform charter (that must have been) prepared prior to launch. Included would be objectives, stakeholders roles and responsibilities, assumptions, constraints, business case/cost, risks, etc.
2. Slow the electoral reform process down and accelerate higher priority and more beneficial agenda that will more positively impact Canada's economy and well being. It is concerning there is a rush for electoral reform, puzzling decisions such as stopping oil tanker traffic on north BC coast and not on the east coast and in the Bay of Fundy, an \$800M contribution to global health fund when we have a first nations (and others) health and housing crisis here, approval or non response allowing the city of Montreal to release millions of litres of raw effluent into the St Lawrence River/seaway and a stall and drag-out culture ever more evident regarding pipeline approval processes, all to obtain a seemingly tenuous "social license" from a small, loud and many times unreasonable (maybe foreign funded) minorities. Some advice - "use available resources collectively and work hard to select then ensure the top national priorities get the highest attention and horsepower first, please.
3. Continue the electoral reform consultations and eventual selection of a single alternative electoral system (from AV, PR, MMP, STV, other or combination) with considerable detailed discussion and communication nation wide on how that decision was arrived including pros, cons, examples and what-if scenarios comparing the existing FPTP system.
4. Then allow the electorate to vote (FPTP + one other system) on the federal general election ballot scheduled for 2019 - (my guess - large \$ saving over a stand alone referendum).

Some related considerations that merit (more) review:

1. Mandatory voting
2. Electronic voting (maybe on weekend day or days for greater public convenience) - with mandatory and electronic voting many decisions could be vetted by all Canadians on an ongoing basis and maybe quiet the increasingly disgruntled eco and other tax promoting or taking minorities that will likely never be satisfied with virtually any issue, process, or decision. Everyone should be heard, however for the benefit of the non political majority of Canadian's "get on with it" regarding truly priority national issues. Electronic MP voting may open the door for less whipped party line voting and more free votes (like the assisted death legislation that was reasonably, comprehensibly and expeditiously executed by all parties and both houses), albeit from the outside on what appeared from the outside as partisan voting (i.e. my neighbor and fellow party MP rose to voted a particular way - I will just follow suit). Caveat to electronic voting is would be further reduction of face to face and community sociology that poll voting contributes and promotes.
3. Application of available (or new) technology could be expanded so MP's could teleconference from a (or several) centralized (say Calgary/S. Alberta - maybe provincial) location(s) for the majority of their house and committee work and only meet face to face in Ottawa for say limited 1 week sessions throughout the year. This could create savings including the MP travel/living allowances allowing at least the western MP's to have closer/better access to the electorate. and personally less travel, stress, etc. Maybe the multi \$B house of commons remodel underway could have been avoided (at least partially) with greater vision and out of the box thinking on how and where our government business is conducted in this expansive country.
4. Minimum voting age of 16+ for individuals that file a federal tax return. If someone pays tax they have some skin in the game and say regarding their future.
5. Perhaps cabinet minister shuffles are warranted with many new MP's and now almost a year in office. Maybe an evaluation and reappointment of some ministers (and other MP's) to best align their capabilities? Maybe move more seasoned individuals into certain roles or reassignment of some current ministers or MP's to the parliamentary secretary level to foster a mentoring culture and environment to occur. If gender balance, a noble target is impacted, so be it. Diversity should never be done simply to say some equality has been achieved. I require the best, smartest, independently thinking and experienced individuals available are selected from the total elected talent pool. This one you will have to take up with the Liberal caucus and the PM.

MP Kang, please communicate progress and details to me and Skyview citizens, preferably on your web site. To the committee, please read, consider, then add my notes above to your publicly accessible stakeholder involvement file and check me off being initially "consulted" regarding electoral reform.

regards and thank you for your service,
Robert Pawson