

**Report from and election reform dialogue held Thursday, October 6, 2016 in Goderich, Ontario  
Organized by Dean Whalen, Karen Melady, Brent Bowyer and Tony McQuail**

**25 people attended the evening. Information was provided on our current first past the post system, alternative vote, mixed member proportional, single transferable vote and a rural-urban proportional system. People had opportunities to share questions, concerns and observations. They were given sticky notes on which they could write comments and post them under the 5 principles of the committee. At the end of the session a vote was held.**

**1 person voted to retain the current first past the post system**

**Nobody voted for an alternative vote system**

**20 voted for a proportional electoral system**

**2 people voted for undecided**

**Below are the Committee's 5 principals with the comments that were placed under them during the meeting by the dialogue participants.**

**Principle 1: Effectiveness and legitimacy**

“Effective, as in serving all, only if all people vote. Therefore PR is need to engage voters, make each vote count.”

“Legitimate seats are those that reflect the percentage of voters and allow for diversity of voices and regions.”

“Canadians need to feel that the end result is a result of the consultation process - that their input was heard.”

“Size of ridings cannot be increased by much or the local representatives will not still be local.”

“Parliament will be more effective when minority points of view are heard and have more influence as in collations. Policies will be more legitimate when they are negotiated rather than imposed.”

“FPTP is not an effective voting system because it leads to false majorities and a ping pong game of fighting in Parliament in order to maintain or gain majority power rather than cooperating to serve the public.”

**Principle 2: Voter engagement**

“Voter turn out would improve if all votes led to representation.”

“Proportional voting would create a high interest and voter participation.”

“I desire a democratic process that offers proportional representation for the wide/diverse communities across this immense country.”

“Move voting age to 16 years to increase youth engagement and improve participation rate of all population.”

“Coalitions in proportional government are more collegial and civil and less adversarial and time wasters.”

“Voters will be more engaged if they feel it counts for some influence proportional to the % of the voters who vote for a given platform.”

“There is a clear relationship between votes cast and percentage of seats. And voters know they need to get to know more than one candidate because the voter can be represented by more than one member.”

**Principle 3: Accessibility and inclusiveness**

“More peoples points of view need to be represented in even if they are not the majority.”

“We need voter education on a new system when it is implemented so it is not too confusing.”

“FPTP has excluded my voice for decades; is not inclusive for the wide range of perspectives in Canada.”

“Any new system needs to be easily understood.”

“Thoughtful discussion is needed which coalition governments must engage in.”

“It is really important that all Canadians have a voice proportional to the percent of votes cast. Diverse points of view need to be welcomed and represented.”

#### **Principle 4: Integrity**

“need to continue to have an independent election organization independent of the current party in power”

“There is no integrity currently, Party Politics require MP’s to vote in ways that may contradict their communities values and needs.”

“Instant runoffs traditionally favour the middle, leading to more centrist governments and fewer new ideas.”

“In a proportional government more collaboration will be required between elected members – a good thing.”

“Integrity means representation in my riding for my views and my ideals.”

“Too broadly defined regions may result in less direct communication between the electorate and MPs.”

“I’m in favour of PR”

“PR is the only way to go, FPTP is unfair and outdated”

“We need better citizen engagement. 16 year old voting age. And mandatory voting – reward vote – don’t fine.”

“Civil discourse must return to parliament. PR requires multiparty discussion and cooperation for the benefit of all citizens.”

“Phony majorities that presume they have the support of most Canadians when they may only have 34% of the 60% who voted have no integrity.”

#### **Principle 5: Local representation**

“A local rep is important but does not override the importance of all citizens having a voice. A local MP who only spouts the party line and only listens to those who support his or her policies will be of no help to those who didn’t vote for him or her.”

“The current FPTP system has resulted in NO representation of my values and needs. My MPs for decades have never represented me. In fact they no longer have the right to vote in favour of local needs over party needs.”

“It is important that electors can easily understand how parties can name possible representatives.”

Submitted by: Fran McQuail