

## INTRODUCTION

The goal of this document is to convince the **Special Committee on Electoral Reform** to consider the **Direct Party and Representative** (DPR) voting system first described by **Stephen Johnson** (UK), in its deliberation for replacement of the current **First Past The Post** (FPTP) system.

In this document, I will very briefly consider the following aspects:

- Voting Process (Party & Representative)
- How Proportional Representation is achieved?
- Principal Outcomes of DPR
- External Resources available for further study
- Conclusion

This document does not cover **mandatory** or **online** voting. It does offer a tentative answers to the following 5 principles as listed in the mandate of the special committee: **Effectiveness and Legitimacy, Engagement, Accessibility and Inclusiveness, Integrity and finally Local Representation.**

### 1) VOTING PROCESS (PARTY & REPRESENTATIVE)

In this system, voters cast **two votes**. One to select their local representative in their local district and one for the party of their choice in a nation wide district. Only one representative is elected for the local district and only one party is selected in the nation wide district. It is the party vote that determines which party, or parties, can form the Government.

Voters select their local representative based either on the candidate's party affiliation or some other criteria. Similarly, the party selection could be based either on the candidate's affiliation or simply on the party that best fit the voter's aspirations. This separation of concerns allows the voters to select a local candidate independently of the party affiliation. This is different of **FPTP** where a candidate selection means that you are also selecting the party to which the candidate belonged. This (DPR) more sophisticated method of voting allows for greater precision and flexibility in the choice at the benefit of the Voter. This method is very easy to understand and only requires two checkmark on the ballot (or two separate ballot).

All qualifying parties are normally listed on the ballot. I would make an exception for the **Bloc Québécois** as this party only exist in Québec (by design) and therefore should only be available to the voters of that province.

### 2) HOW PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IS ACHIEVED?

Having a sufficient and broadly distributed number of seats is important to a party. However, as mentioned earlier, this does not determines which party, or parties, can form the Government. Moreover, it is to be expected that the percentage of seats assigned to a party will rarely match the percentage of popular vote won by that party. Since it is the percentage of the popular vote that really counts, some adjustments are required.

All parties are allowed to keep all the seats they have acquired and only one vote is allowed per seat. In order for a party's seat percentage to match the party's popular vote percentage, each seat's vote must be weighted. Here is a very simple example for illustration purposes only:

<b>% OF SEAT ACQUIRED</b>	<b>% OF POPULAR VOTE</b>	<b>WEIGHTING FACTOR</b>	<b>FINAL VOTING %</b>
30%	60%	2	60%
60%	30%	.5	30%
45%	45%	1	45%

In the above table the **FINAL VOTING %** is made equal the the **% OF THE POPULAR VOTE** by applying a **WEIGHTING FACTOR** to the **% OF SEAT ACQUIRED** keeping in mind that only one vote per seat is allowed.

### 3) PRINCIPAL OUTCOMES OF DPR VOTING

In order to quickly describe the major characteristics / benefits of DPR. I have chosen to import this section from a document entitled "DPR Voting - Short Description" produced by Stephen Johnston. This document was first produced in 2010 and then updated recently in 2016.

1. A form of proportional representation is achieved with minimal change to the voting system.
2. All MPs are elected in single member constituencies. Their democratic accountability is retained.
3. The relationship between the MP and their electorate is retained.
4. The votes each party has in parliament are proportional to the votes won in the election.
5. This (% of popular vote won in election) determines which party, or parties, can form the government.
6. Simplicity of voting and counting is comparable with FPTP.
7. The election is not decided by voting in 'marginal' constituencies.
8. The system does not encourage numerous small parties.
9. The system is resistant to gerrymandering.
10. Frequent revision to constituency boundaries is not necessary.
11. Separating the vote for the MP from the vote for the party means there are no safe 'party' seats.
12. It accommodates independent and independent minded candidates.
13. The MP relationship to his/her constituents is closer. The MP is less dependent on the Party.
14. Each ('Party') vote in every constituency makes a difference to the result of the election.
15. DPR Voting is a PR voting system which does not need Party List MPs. (unlike AMS / MMP).
16. The voting and counting procedures are simple, quick and transparent (unlike STV).
17. DPR does not require constituency boundaries to be redrawn (unlike STV and AMS/MMP).
18. The votes for the party, and the local MP are not combined in one vote (unlike FPTP).
19. The system does not use preferential voting or multi member constituencies (unlike STV).
20. There is no 'Overhang' issue with DPR Voting (unlike MMP).
21. The cost of introducing the new system would be low.
22. It would be straightforward to reverse the change.

### 4) EXTERNAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR FURTHER STUDY

<b>TYPE</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
VIDEO	Proportional Representation - Make Every Vote Count (8 min.)	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOcVA0D4Gkg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOcVA0D4Gkg</a>
TEXT	DPR Voting - Short Description (2 pages)	<a href="http://www.dprvoting.org/PDFs/Short_description.pdf">http://www.dprvoting.org/PDFs/Short_description.pdf</a>
TEXT	DPR Voting - Long Description (19-20 pages)	<a href="http://www.dprvoting.org/PDFs/Description.pdf">http://www.dprvoting.org/PDFs/Description.pdf</a>

## CONCLUSION

Direct Party and Representative (DPR) voting system seems to have been designed from ground up to replace **FPTP in Westminster Parliamentary environment**. It retains some of the features of FPTP while introducing exact Proportional Representation by using a weighting system when evaluating the vote. It is a very simple, easy to understand (especially by the voters), inexpensive to implement and easy to rollback from if absolutely necessary.

I am humbly asking the Special Committee on Electoral Reform to include this voting system among the others already taken under consideration.

In particular, since time is of the essence, I am asking the committee to soon schedule an interview with Stephen Johnston from the UK. This interview should also seek the participation of political scientists knowledgeable about the current Canadian system and its traditions in order to insure the fullest coverage and understanding.

Thanks for your time!  
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Submitted: Thursday October 6, 2016.