

## Submission to the House of Commons Committee on Electoral Reform

### Local Accountability

By Laura E. Tupper

The accountability of a local Member of Parliament to all of the people in his or her riding is a strength of the existing electoral system that should not be overlooked. The voice that Canadians have between elections is as important as the voice they have on election day.

My experience has been that irrespective of their politics, the local Member of Parliament is someone who is approachable, engaged and ready to work on behalf of all of their constituents. The primary accountability of a Member of Parliament under the current electoral system is to the people who live in their riding as these are the very people who will decide with their vote in the next election whether or not the Member of Parliament will keep their job.

Under the current system, candidates are selected locally by the members of each party. Although I may not support the policies of a particular party, I am confident that members of my community are best positioned to select the candidate who will represent these views on behalf of my community should they be elected.

In any of the proportional representation systems that have been discussed, this direct, local accountability of the Member of Parliament to the constituent is lost. Instead, proportional representation shifts power to political parties and special interests. The common interest is the loser in proportional representation. As neighbours and local communities, let's make sure our voice on national issues is not silenced.