

# Submission to House of Commons

## Electoral Reform Committee

Guy Dauncey, Ladysmith, Vancouver Island

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I personally favour changing to a system of mixed-member proportional voting, with a possible referendum after two or more elections, once people are familiar with how the new system works.

Since 1900, Canada has had 33 elections: in only five was there a true majority, two of which were during wartime. In 90% of the peacetime elections, the party that won a majority of the seats won no more than an average 38% of the public support.

This means that for 90% of our peacetime parliaments, the majority of Canadian voters have not supported the elected government. This is not democracy, rule by the people. In Greek, it's *evatritocracy* - rule by one third of the people.

Proportional voting happens in over 90 countries, including 85% of OECD nations and 21 of the 28 countries in Western Europe, including Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Greece, Portugal & Spain. Among the Top 10 countries in the Economist's Intelligence Unit rankings, 8 have built proportionality into their voting system for the main legislative chamber.

### Seven Additional Suggestions

1. To avoid small minority parties having an undue destabilizing influence, require a **5% threshold of public support** for a party to qualify for seats.
2. To increase voter turnout, introduce a **\$100 revenue-neutral Voting Tax Credit**, with a rebate for people who don't pay taxes. Each voter is given a voting receipt, which is used to claim the credit.
3. Do whatever is needed to make voting easy for those who are blind, deaf, or have a **personal handicap**.
4. **Reduce the voting age to 16**, as in Austria, Brazil, Scotland, Argentina, Cuba, Ecuador, & Nicaragua. With the limit at 18, the first election when young people can vote is almost always after they have left school, when it's common to try to be cool for a few years by NOT doing what adults do. If their first election is while they are at school they will experience serious debates and take part in serious voting, establishing the habit. Our world faces enormous challenges to tackle the climate crisis and end our plundering of nature, and it is important that young people become engaged in thinking about these problems. Giving them the vote is an honest way to say "Your thoughts and opinions matter."
5. **Lock in the current \$1,525 limit** on contributions to campaign fund-raising, and the ban on corporate and union donations. Require a 75% vote of support in the Commons to change this.
6. **Set strict rules and penalties for attempts to subvert voting** and the electoral system, such as the use of anonymous robocalls.
7. Re-introduce **public funding for political parties**, based on the votes they got at the last election.

Many thanks for your serious, diligent, and I'm sure often exhausting listening,  
as you tackle this really important issue.