

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

SECHELT PUBLIC HEARING DATED
5 JUNE 2004 AT THE DRIFTWOOD INN

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM. IT ATTEMPTS TO CAPTURE THE KEY ISSUES AND ARGUMENTS THAT WERE PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING. IN SOME INSTANCES, THE PRESENTER HAS ALSO MADE A SUBMISSION TO THE ASSEMBLY AND THIS IS ACCESSIBLE VIA THE WEBSITE AT WWW.CITIZENSASSEMBLY.BC.CA BY CLICKING ON "GET INVOLVED". IF SUCH A SUBMISSION IS AVAILABLE, IT WILL BE NOTED AT THE END OF THIS REPORT.

Keith Thirkell

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

A presentation in favour of proportional representation and mandatory voting.

KEY THEMES

Keith Thirkell told the hearing that he supported the introduction of any electoral system as an alternative to the current system, which has failed to provide accountability and resulted in broken election promises. He argued that the political system has evolved in British Columbia and that electoral reform is long overdue. Mr Thirkell supported the introduction of MMP as proposed by the Green Party and the FreeYourVote Society. He also advocated the introduction of compulsory voting. Mr Thirkell suggested that voting should be mandatory, with a \$50 penalty for not voting used to fund scholarships for low income students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Keith Thirkell recommended the introduction of MMP in British Columbia.

He also recommended making voting compulsory for all citizens.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

There were no questions or comments from the panel.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Following this presentation quite a few members of the audience had questions.

Q	What do you think of statistic released in last week that a high proportion of Canadians expect that politicians won't keep promises?
A	That adds to cynicism especially among young people. Young people are becoming more empowered intellectually but see a political system that is not responsive, and that promises one thing while it does another.
Q	I heard recently that you have to pay \$1000 to run for office. Is there any sort of system that would allow disadvantaged people to become part of government?
A	I would support that but I do acknowledge that it takes money to run in an election under the current system. In a PR system people without the resources to stand as candidates in a riding could get involved with a political

	party and be elected via the party list.
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SUBMISSION: NO