

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

BURNABY PUBLIC HEARING DATED
5 MAY 2004 AT HOLIDAY INN METROTOWN

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.

Sol Erdman

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DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

With an election process called interactive representation, each voter gets a local representative who is closer to him or politically than under other systems. Each legislator also reports to constituents regularly. Linked to voters in these two ways, legislators will try harder to reach broad agreements than they do in other systems.

KEY THEMES

The presenter expressed the need to reform the electoral system in order to promote a closer relationship between MLAs and constituents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The presenter recommended the introduction of an electoral system with a preferential ballot. Mr. Erdman further suggested that a direct line of communication be established between MLAs and constituents (interactive representation).

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

- Q Would the districts remain as they are now?
- A You could conceivably make the districts as large as you want depending on the extent of minority representation you're after. I assume you wouldn't want less than three MLA's.
- Q How do you deal with the uneven distribution of work across MLAs?
- A I don't see anything inherently problematic about that.
- Q Would the ratio of member-constituency support be in effect until the next general election or would they adjust according to arising issues?
- A The mandate would stay constant until the next election. There is always trading among issues, and for an MLA to do what he feels is best he has to be given a full session.

Q Would it take a long time to get results under this system?

A With computers the results would be almost instantaneous.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Q If we are going to have a big business why don't we elect a CEO and have a board of directors that can vote him up in a general meeting just like in the big companies?

A You can imagine that the legislature is the board and that the Premier is the CEO.

SUBMISSION: YES SUBMISSION ID# EDMAN-0141