

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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GRAND FORKS PUBLIC HEARING  
DATED 10 MAY 2004  
AT SELKIRK COLLEGE

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](http://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.

# David Carter

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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A presentation in favour of a Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system.

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## KEY THEMES

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Mr. Carter expressed his view of the shortcomings of the current FPTP electoral system including its lack of proportionality, the creation of artificial majorities, and the election of “wrong winners. The presenter also discussed the problem of negative voting and the exclusion of minority voices within the legislature.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Carter recommended the adoption of MMP in order to encourage voter turnout as all votes will count; to enable citizens to split their vote between candidates and parties; to allow new political parties representation in the legislature; and to facilitate the accurate reflection of BC’s diverse society.

*Quote: We need to shift from exclusion to inclusion in our political arena and ultimately from confrontation to negotiation.*

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## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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Q Do you think that MMP would bring out more voters?

A From the input I have had from youth my impression is that yes it would. I’m convinced that it would increase voter turnout and decrease the voter apathy that results from people feeling that their votes don’t count.

Q Are you concerned about increased numbers of spoiled ballots?

A No.

Q Do you know as much about the other systems as you know about MMP?

A No I don't. I haven't studied any as well as MMP, but it appears to me to be a clear step in the right direction as a system that is more representative of the diversity of the province.

Q How do you think that diversity could be ensured by the party lists without everyone having to join a political party?

A Parties would have an interest in providing a balanced list in order to avoid alienating certain sectors of the population, both societal and geographic sectors. Beyond that it is up to people to participate and to join political parties.

Q Do you envisage a problem with knowing who the party list candidates are if the list is organized on a province wide basis?

A Some of the onus would be on the individual to contact the party and find out who these individuals are and some of the onus would on the party to put forward their candidates, who they are and what they represent. So it's a two way street. It is no easy matter but it is addressable.

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**QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

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Q Would there be a cap on funding or political advertising in order to create a level playing field?

A I'm with you on that, but it is one problem at a time. Lets look at the voting system first and deal with the funding issue in a another arena.

Q The parties draw up the list so I see the possibility for choosing between candidates on the list, thereby taking away the influence of the party leader, is that possible?

A I've heard of systems that give people the ability to rank their preferences on the party list, I don't have a problem with that, I think that would give the voters more flexibility. What I'm looking for is a presentable, simple package that can gain enough support to get through this referendum process. If it doesn't stall the process then I would be in favour of introducing that element of flexibility into the system.