

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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KAMLOOPS PUBLIC HEARING  
DATED 17 JUNE 2004  
AT THE COAST CANADIAN 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](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.

# Al Knight

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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I am concerned with the number of members and the threshold for proportional representation. I am also concerned with the selection process for the members at large.

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## KEY THEMES

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Al Knight supported the introduction of a mixed system based on members from specific geographic regions and members selected by proportional representation. He recommended setting an electoral threshold at 10 per cent of the party vote, arguing that if an ideology is not supported by at least 10 per cent of the electorate then its popularity may be fleeting and does not deserve legislative representation. He also proposed that there be a maximum of 72 members in the legislature, with 36 representing each of the present federal electoral districts and up to 36 more Members at Large being selected on the basis of the percentage of votes each party received in the current election. Electoral district alignment between provincial and federal risings would give MPs and MLAs a commonality of constituents. Mr Knight also suggested that the Members at Large should not be selected from party lists. Instead all candidates would be required to run in one of the 36 electoral districts, with the non-winning candidates from each party arranged in a list according to the number of votes won in the current election. These candidates would then fill any of the compensatory seats won by the party, in order of the number of votes each candidate received. Mr Knight described the advantages of this system as the requirement that all candidates must hit the campaign trail and the elimination of the selection and entrenchment of a party few. He also recommended some safeguards: Members at Large should not be given funds for a constituency office, they should only receive 60 per cent of the travel allowance of the other members unless they are Cabinet Ministers to keep them in Victoria, and there should be no recounts of the ballot.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Al Knight recommended the introduction of a mixed system, combining geographic and proportional representation.

*Quote: "If any ideology is not supported by at least 10 per cent of the people in an election it is still in its infancy and can still flourish or die and does not deserve legislative representation."*

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## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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There were two members of the panel who sought clarification on elements of the presentation.

Q	Have you given any thought to extra rural representation?
A	I was very hesitant when they first enlarged the size of my federal riding. It's now about 30 per cent bigger, but it seems to be working out fine with airplane travel and all

	the communications technology.
Q	The Members At Large, would they be assigned to a region or constituency, so that we have a couple of people carrying the flag?
A	We could have a member from here elected using FPP and another member elected by PR, and it would be a bit of a problem but not a big one.

**Comment from panel**      There were no comments from the panel.

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

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

Q	What if a situation occurred where too many members in the riding were elected so there weren't enough for the proportional representation allocation?
A	Mathematically, I think the chance of that happening would be slim.
Q	Ten per cent seems to be a rather arbitrary number for the electoral threshold?
A	It is arbitrary, and I trust that the good people on this assembly will go into that issue in a lot more detail.

**Comment:**      There were no comments from the audience.

**SUBMISSION: NO**