

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

NORTH VANCOUVER PUBLIC HEARING
DATED 2 JUNE 2004
AT THE LONSDALE QUAY HOTEL

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.

Paul Browning

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

A presentation in support of mixed member proportional representation (MMP).

KEY THEMES

Mr. Browning expressed his support for electoral reform in the form of MMP. The presenter argued that the introduction of MMP would protect local representation while addressing the lack of proportionality that exists under the current FPTP system. According to Mr. Browning the introduction of MMP would result in a more democratic system, reducing the likelihood of lopsided majorities where there are few opposition members to critique the government. In addition, the introduction of MMP would reduce the likelihood of parties being able to rule as a majority despite receiving less than 50% of total votes cast.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The presenter recommended the introduction of MMP. Under the system proposed by Mr. Browning voters would cast two ballots, one for their local MLA and one for a party list. After the ballots for constituency MLAs have been counted, additional seats would be allocated to parties based on their percentage of the vote in the party list ballot so as to bring the distribution of seats to a proportional level representative of overall voter preferences throughout the province.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Q How do you prevent strategic targeting of ridings under MMP?

A Obviously candidates can still focus on ridings but for parties to get 20% of the seats they would have to get 20% of the votes across the province as a whole. I believe MMP would create less of an incentive to campaign in particular ridings and more of an incentive to campaign across the province as a whole.

Q Would you consider forming a political party at the university to interest other students in politics?

A A lot of students I know are quite apathetic. As for changing that I wouldn't necessarily support a youth

party. I believe parties should represent all British Columbians, so I would support parties making efforts to increase youth involvement but would not support forming a separate political party.