

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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VICTORIA PUBLIC HEARING DATED  
10 JUNE 2004 AT THE WESTERN BALLROOM,  
HARBOUR TOWERS

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 B. Godfrey

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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Votes-to-seats: Lesson from other jurisdictions such as Israel, Germany, Australia and New Zealand.

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## KEY THEMES

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David Godfrey argued that the under-representation of women in the legislature is a social ill that cannot be resolved by an alternative electoral system. He also opposed the creation of First Nations seats in the legislature because he felt that the creation of additional special ethnic seats undermined the premise that all British Columbians are equal. He outlined his core criteria for a fair electoral system: that all seats are equal, that all persons elected to seats are equal, that the method for determining who is elected and why should be clear to voter, and that the ballot should be obvious to use. Mr Godfrey evaluated a list proportional representation (list-PR) system, a mixed member proportional (MMP) system and the Alternative Vote (AV) system against these criteria and concluded that, while all three systems were fairly simple to understand and to use, the AV system provided more guarantees that all seats and persons elected to those seats are equal because it retains the single-member ridings used today. He expressed concern that a list-PR system, and an MMP system with a party list component would involve the parties ranking candidates, which would create inequalities within the parties, and could result in regions not being represented equally if list MLAs were predominantly from the Lower Mainland.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

David Godfrey recommended the introduction of the Alternative Vote electoral system in BC.

*Quote: "In BC, the Alternative Vote system would uphold the equal seats rule, simply because we wouldn't have to redraw any districts. The citizens of riding*

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## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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There were no questions or 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	When I first Canada it was explained to me that the Alternative Vote system had been introduced to exclude the CCF, is that right?
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A	Yes, that is correct.
Q	Just a comment that your criticism of the STV that it could be incomprehensible to British Columbians. Is Malta a country of geniuses? I think that British Columbians are just as likely to grasp the system as the Maltese are.
A	I agree but my point is that the complicated mathematics required to count the vote in an STV system is not transparent.

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

**SUBMISSION:** NO