

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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PRINCETON PUBLIC HEARING DATED  
14 JUNE 2004 AT THE COMMUNITY  
SKILLS CENTRE

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.

# Harold Daykin

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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MMP for BC via 19 regional compensation seats.

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## KEY THEMES

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Harold Daykin explained that the goals of his proposed electoral system are:

- 1) To help bring about greater fairness in the translation of votes into seats;
- 2) To prevent a large number of parties from winning seats in the legislature;
- 3) To reduce the power of the Premier;
- 4) To increase regional representation by having each major region in the province represented in the Government and Opposition caucuses;
- 5) To reduce political and class polarization; and
- 6) To ensure that the media are able to announce final election results on the night.

He proposed the introduction of a Mixed Member Proportional electoral system, with almost one quarter of MLAs elected by proportional representation. The number of seats in the legislature would remain the same as under the current system. The compensatory seats would be allocated to regions of the province according to population, with four regions encompassing the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island each electing three MLAs, two regions in the southern Interior electing two MLAs, and the Northern Interior, North-West BC and North-East BC electing one MLA each. Mr Daykin explained that voters would have two votes, one for a candidate and one for a party, enabling voters to split their ticket if they wished by voting for a candidate from one party and casting their party vote for another party. He advocated that modified Sainte-Lague divisors be used to allocate the compensatory seats to parties in each region. Mr Daykin specified that MLAs elected to the compensatory seats should not be selected from a party list, but should be candidates who had contested election in the ridings and had been narrowly defeated. He described these candidates as the 'top losers' for each party.

Mr Daykin described this proposal as moderate, and compared it to reform in New Zealand where just under half of all parliamentary seats are elected proportionally. He argued that one quarter of the legislature being made up of compensatory seats is sufficient to be produce proportional election outcomes. He provided charts of simulated election results to illustrate his proposal and suggested that had his electoral system been used in the 1996 and 2001 provincial elections, the Liberal Party would have won both elections and small parties would have been elected to both legislatures.

Mr Daykin concluded by arguing that BC does not need 46 or 50 per cent of seats to be elected proportionally, but that only one quarter of seats need to be compensatory for the system to be proportional.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Harold Daykin recommended a Mixed Member Proportional electoral system for British Columbia, using nineteen proportionally allocated compensation seats divided between provincial regions, with no party list.

*Quote: "BC does not need to have 46 or 50 per cent of the seats in the legislature to be elected proportionally. Instead only one quarter of the seats need to be compensatory for the system to be fair."*

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

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

Q	What would you be doing with the number of seats across the province? Would you be reducing the number of ridings in order to free up the 19 compensatory seats?
A	Yes, I would reduce the number of districts. As I understand it, your mandate requires you to maintain the current number of seats in the legislature. There is evidence to support that decision from Vancouver civic politics in the 1970s. We held a plebiscite on whether we should move towards a mixed district, and at least 10 per cent voted against the proposal purely because it required increasing the number of aldermen.
Q	When we turn up at the polls to vote under your system, would sort of voting ballot would we fill out?
A	There would be two votes, either on separate pieces of paper or divided on one ballot. It would be clear that you would need to vote once for a candidate and once for the party that you prefer. Normally in Germany or New Zealand there is a party list and it is ranked. I propose that we not have party lists. Instead, Vancouver Island would be a whole region and propose for the sake of argument that the Green won entitlement to one of the three PR seats for Vancouver Island, then the candidate for the Greens who had the greatest proportion of the vote in the riding but had not been elected in that region would be allocated the compensatory seat.
Q	Would that mean that most parties would have to run candidates in all the districts to qualify for the compensatory seats?
A	Well if they didn't run any in the whole region then they wouldn't have candidates to qualify for election in the compensatory seats.
Q	For your local riding seats, are you suggesting that we keep the same system and use FPP to elect candidates in

	the ridings?
A	Yes I am.
Q	My question refers to the two vote ballot, are you using both votes to calculate which parties receive compensatory seats?
A	No, only the party vote counts for the compensatory seats. Let's imagine that Joe Blow was the candidate for the Unity Party that would have got a compensatory seat, but if you didn't vote for him in the riding you would have still been loyal to the party by marking the party ballot for him.
Q	For the PR candidates to be picked, you're going in favour of the top loser, is that right?
A	Yes, the candidate with the highest percentage of valid votes in the whole region. So if one candidate won a higher percentage of the votes than the other candidates for that party in the region then they would get the party's compensatory seat.

**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	You said that the party is the deciding factor on the ballot. So if there is no candidate in the riding from your party, then you could still give your party vote to your party?
A	I think the answer is yes. As long as the party has stood at least one candidate in the region, although not necessarily in your riding, then that person could be elected via the compensatory seats.
Q	If the party has already won enough seats in the ridings do they get any PR seats?
A	No, they don't.

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

**SUBMISSION: YES**

**SUBMISSION ID# 0190**