

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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BURNABY PUBLIC HEARING DATED  
5 MAY 2004 AT HOLIDAY INN METROTOWN

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.

# Monique McDonald

## BC Association of the Deaf-Blind

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### DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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The presentation is to address accessibility for deaf-blind, visually impaired and blind individuals to participate in the voting process.

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### KEY THEMES

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The presenter addressed the needs of deaf-blind people to access the voting process. Ms McDonald expressed the difficulties experienced by deaf-blind people in terms of being able to vote privately.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The presenter recommended:

1. Training for returning officers in how to assist deaf-blind persons.
2. Notification on the voter card received by mail that information can be received upon request in large print, Braille, or audio-cassette.
3. Review and explore Advocates for Sight Impaired Consumers' recommendation of a template prototype that has been sent to Elections BC for consideration, in order to prevent the occurrence of spoiled ballots.
4. That at least one or two Braille, large print, and audiocassette copy of the list of candidates be made available at each polling station.
5. A task light is made available within one voting booth at each polling station to accommodate those with low vision.

*Quote: The recommendations not only benefit persons who are deaf-blind, blind and visually impaired, but many other voters. With an open dialogue with Elections BC we can ensure that all citizens are able to enjoy the right to vote independently, privately and with dignity.*

### QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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Q We can address ballot structure, how difficult would it be for you to use a preferential ballot?

A I would have to consult with other people in the deaf-blind community. If it was in large print it would be alright, it may pose a problem for Braille, but hopefully we could find a way to make that

accessible.

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QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

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Q Have you lobbied Elections BC?

A One of our members has been in contact with elections BC, and I have been advocating our position in my position for ASIC.

Q Is there a way to identify yourself to Elections BC in order that they may accommodate your needs ahead of time at the voting station you will be attending?

A I haven't done that but I may start. I know other individuals have done that, but in other cases it may be self explanatory to staff when they walk in if they have a cane.

Q In the last two elections in the West End I have noticed that people with eye-seeing dogs have been treated badly, as have people in electric scooters, and I have raised this issue but I haven't noticed any improvement. Has this situation improved?

A A service dog should be allowed entrance into any building and I suggest that it should be made known to Elections BC, and the Returning Officer be made aware of the laws surrounding guide dogs.