

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

GRAND FORKS PUBLIC HEARING
DATED 10 MAY 2004
AT SELKIRK COLLEGE

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.

Diana Carr

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

A brief statement in support of MMP.

KEY THEMES

Ms. Carr discussed the need for electoral reform in order to moderate the extreme swings of policy characteristic of BC under FPTP.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The presenter recommended a change to MMP to enable the inclusion of more women and minority voices in the legislature; to prevent strategic voting by providing citizens with two votes; to stimulate increased voter turnout; to protect rural representation; and to encourage a consensus style of politics. Ms. Carr also advocated the use of a five per cent threshold to avoid the proliferation of unmanageable numbers of parties in the legislature.

Quote: I am hoping that with an MMP system, government will be less adversarial. Cooperation between minority and majority voices should result in better long term legislation, and less acrimony between differing points of view.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

- Q You mentioned two systems MMP and STV, have you ever lived in an area that used these two systems?
- A No
- Q Would it bother you to have a minority government?
- A No I think it would be a good thing to have a minority government as people would have to listen to each other. I favour MMP for this as I found the counting of the votes under STV just too complex.

Q Do you think that you could get used to a different type of ballot?

A Yes.

Q Under MMP you are voting for a party with a list, but under STV you are voting for a candidate, so under MMP the voters have no choice regarding who goes on the list, are you happy with that?

A Well you could choose among the local candidates you know, and the list need not necessarily be decided by party officials, there can be a grassroots decision making process about how the candidates are ranked within the party.