

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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NANAIMO PUBLIC HEARING DATED  
27 MAY 2004 AT COAST BASTION 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](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 Dunaway

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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In recognition of the flaws inherent in FPTP, Transferable Ballots and PR, a hybrid of voting systems encompassing two ballots and a ‘none of the above’ option. All of which are aimed to minimize the existing undue influence of political parties.

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## KEY THEMES

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David Dunaway argued that British Columbia requires an electoral system that does not foster political parties in order to loosen the party system’s stranglehold on our legislature. He proposed a hybrid system, combining elements of First Past the Post, transferable ballots and PR systems. The ballot paper for this system would be divided into a separate vote for the constituency MLA and the political party, as in the MMP system, but the voter would cast a preferential vote for the candidate and select one candidate from an open party list. Mr Dunaway explained that the number of candidates on each list should be limited to the number of ‘at large’ seats be contested. MLAs would be elected either by winning a riding or by receiving the greatest number of votes on the open party list. Mr Dunaway also specified that the vote counting process should round down, for example if a party is entitled to 7.4 seats it should receive 7 seats, and any additional seats be allocated to parties without seats, with these candidates labeled as ‘deemed elected’. He also proposed the inclusion of a ‘none of the above’ option on both parts of ballot to distinguish between disgruntled and apathetic voters. No candidate who contested a constituency in which more votes are cast for the ‘none of the above’ option than any of the candidates would be allowed to contest any subsequent election to fill the vacancy. Mr Dunaway argued that voters would be able to adapt to this new system because the complexity of the system lies in the counting system rather than the ballot.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

David Dunaway recommended the introduction of a hybrid electoral system, as described in his submission.

*Quote: “We must not waste the opportunity presented by this Assembly to undermine the party system’s stranglehold on our political landscape.”*

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## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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

Q	I’m interested in hearing from you more about why you prefer this system with preferential balloting rather than MMP or pure PR?
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A	My system incorporates elements of an MMP system but with transferable ballots, so that it is apparent whether or not a candidate has sufficient support to be elected on the first count.
Q	If the ballot is complicated and it's not clear as to how the counting works, do you think people will think that the process is not transparent?
A	I think the counting is straight-forward, it's just that we're accustomed to the overly simplified counting of the current system. In my system, there are just more categories to count.

**Comment from panel:** There were no further 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	Would you identify the political party on the ballot?
A	Yes, that's how we would determine the party for the purposes of allocating seats proportionally.
Q	With your system, someone with a minority of the votes could still get in, and wouldn't that be non-proportional?
A	Democracy is about including as many voices as possible. I think we need to include the minority parties in this province: the Greens, the Marijuana party, the independents. They might only get one seat but you would still get more than two perspectives.

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

**SUBMISSION: YES**

**SUBMISSION ID# TO FOLLOW**