

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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POWELL RIVER PUBLIC HEARING DATED  
15 MAY 2004 AT THE CEDAR ROOM, POWELL  
RIVER RECREATION 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.

# Philip Fleischer

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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Some arguments on electoral reform, in particular run-off and pro-rep.

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## KEY THEMES

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Philip Fleischer argued that, while the MMP system has become better understood recently and is promoted as a system that would resolve some of the political problems we have in this province, the run-off system also resolves these issues, but with the added advantage that it does not further entrench parties as will be the case with a PR system. He explained that under an MMP system, candidates become even more dependent on political parties for selection. Mr Fleischer advocated the introduction of the run-off system in BC, because it is the only system where the electorate gets to exchange information and reflect on their priorities during the election process. He argued that the run-off system allows compromise and provides channels for alternative and minority ideas, builds consensus, engages voters, and can work with parties but it does not structurally necessitate them. He warned that if we move to an MMP system where half the votes are dedicated to parties before the nominating even begins, party control will be even worse than under the current system.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Philip Fleischer recommended the introduction of the run-off electoral system in BC.

*Quote: "The run-off system is the only system where the electorate gets to exchange information, negotiate with themselves, and reflect on their priorities during the election process."*

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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	How unwieldy and expensive and chaotic could this be during the actual election process, given that it would be more drawn out?
A	Well, it would be a lot cheaper than the current party sponsorship situation where we just channel a whole lot of

	tax money to parties.
Q	Given the decrease in voter turnout, do you think we would see declining turnout at each stage of the run-off election?
A	Well, people might also get more engaged with the process. I think this system would give parties more incentive to run candidates that could engage a wider range of voters.
Q	Wouldn't the run-off system make it more difficult for minor parties?
A	I think any change would be better for minor parties. I think in the last election we would have seen more Green candidates, because people who were voting to get rid of the NDP would have seen that they were going to give the Liberals too much power.
Q	It seems to me that the system you're recommending is a no party system which would conflict with the Assembly mandate.
A	I don't see that this would conflict with the Westminster parliamentary system. Other Westminster democracies use the Alternative Vote system which is just a way of having a run-off all in one election.

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

**SUBMISSION: NO**