

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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RICHMOND PUBLIC HEARING DATED  
4 MAY 2004 AT THE VANCOUVER AIRPORT  
MARRIOTT HOTEL, RICHMOND

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.

# John Waller

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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When a voting procedure is evaluated on should ask: is it fair; is it easily understood; and does it represent all regions in BC?

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## KEY THEMES

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John Waller argued that, while the current Single Member Plurality (SMP) system is simple, it wastes the votes of all people who did not for the winning candidate. This means that a majority of voters are not represented in Victoria. Candidates and governments can be elected without a majority of the vote. Dr Waller argued that we need to change the way we do things. He proposed that Assembly members should evaluate systems according to the criteria of fairness, local representation and simplicity.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

John Waller recommends that Assembly members consider the three following questions when evaluating electoral systems for BC.

- 1) Is it fair? Does it represent the wishes of all voters in the ridings?
- 2) Does it leave the voter with an individual through whom they can express their concerns between elections?
- 3) Is it simple enough that voters are not intimidated by the process of voting?

*Quote: "This is the most important political event in this province since women were given the vote in the 1920s."*

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## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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

Q	Do you have a current preference for an electoral system?
A	I prefer STV but I do not think it would sell in BC, so therefore I think that MMP would be better suited to BC.
Q	You said that STV wouldn't sell. Why not?
A	It's too complicated, if you try to explain it to the voter then the voters would be confused.

Q	Are you concerned with the act of voting being simple or the formula being simple?
A	I think people are concerned with what happens to their vote after they have voted. We need to re-engage voters but we won't if people don't understand the system.
Q	But if we had a learning campaign people could learn how the system works?
A	I would like a system that people can understand readily. People may not pay a lot of attention to a learning campaign.

**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	Do you believe in preserving the ridings we currently have in BC?
A	I think with MMP we could, but with STV we would need larger multi-member ridings.

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

**SUBMISSION: YES**

**SUBMISSION ID# 0094**