

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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SALT SPRING ISLAND PUBLIC HEARING  
DATED 19 JUNE 2004 AT LIONS' HALL

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.

# Andrew Lewis

## Green Party of Canada

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### DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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I will be recommending some form of MMP based on my experiences canvassing for the Pro Rep Initiative in 2002.

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### KEY THEMES

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Andrew Lewis spoke in support of the introduction of MMP in British Columbia. He described his experience as a canvasser during the 2002 Proportional Representative Initiative campaign. Although the Initiative did not achieve the required 10 per cent in every riding, Mr Lewis described the campaign as a success. He told the hearing that his presentation was a tribute to the numerous volunteers and supporters that were involved in the campaign. While the Pro Rep Initiative supported a mixed system with a fifty-fifty split between constituency and list MLAs, elected using closed lists, Mr Lewis stated that he was not absolutely committed to this model. He discussed the Canadian Law Society recommendation for a model of MMP for Canada which involves 70 per cent of MLAs being elected in single member constituencies and 30 per cent of MLAs being elected via flexible party lists, and suggested that this could be used at the provincial level. Flexible lists are a hybrid between open and closed party lists where voters can either vote for the party they prefer, or they can select the candidate they prefer within the party list. Mr Lewis also suggested that it may be even more simple to retain the 79 constituencies in BC and then add 25-30 extra proportional seats. He argued that it is critical for any proposed electoral system to be easy to understand and easy to implement in order to pass the required referendum threshold.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Andrew Lewis recommended the introduction of MMP in British Columbia.

*Quote: "The Pro-Rep Initiative helped start a dialogue about our electoral system in BC, helping to educate people and raise the bar for political discussion that is both positive and constructive."*

### QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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

Q	Would you recommend a province-wide list or divide the list up into regions?
A	I haven't thought about it, it sounds like a great idea.
Q	I thought your hybrid list idea was interesting. So you have a choice to either vote for the party and accept the party's order of the list, or you could vote for a particular

	person on the list?
A	That's right. So say the Green Party had a list of 30 people and you agreed with the order of people on the list then you'd tick the party, or if I was number 15 on the list and you thought that I should be at the top of the list then you could vote for Andrew Lewis.
Q	We are not able to increase the number of seats in the legislature. Given that, do you still think we should make 25-30 per cent of the seats proportional because the ridings would need to be a lot bigger?
A	I think 25 to 30 per cent proportional seats is a good compromise, rather than having 50 per cent proportional seats.

**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 one member of the audience had a question.

Q	Why don't you make all the single-member constituencies elected using a majoritarian system with a preferential ballot? That way you rank the candidates in the constituency seats 1,2,3,4 and the person who wins is supported by more than 50 per cent of people in the riding.
A	You could add another level of fairness to the system. That would be fine. I hadn't thought of that, but I do think it is important that the system is simple. Maybe we could start simple and then move to that as the next step.

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

**SUBMISSION: NO**