

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

VICTORIA PUBLIC HEARING DATED
10 JUNE 2004 AT THE WESTERN BALLROOM,
HARBOUR TOWERS

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.

Ken Frenette

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

I will make a few recommendations: that objective political awareness should be mandatory in high schools; and if voter turnout continues to drop, we have a serious problem in Canada.

KEY THEMES

In order to engage young people in the political process, Ken Frenette proposed that objective political awareness education should be compulsory in high schools and the voting age should be lowered to the age of 17. He advised that there should be a 30 day grace period, so that 16 year olds about to turn 17 should also be able to vote on election day. Mr Frenette recommended that voting should be mandatory. He requested that there be a thorough review of riding association member lists in the province. Mr Frenette also suggested that Canadians should be polled regularly on all issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ken Frenette recommended lowering the voting age to 17 and introducing compulsory political education in high schools.

He also recommended that voting be mandatory.

Quote: "Lowering the voting age just might mean something to disaffected, young Canadians."

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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

Q	You mentioned in your presentation that voting should be mandatory, so should we fine people who don't vote like they do in Australia?
A	Rather than concentrating on punishment we should encourage people to vote. We should put the idea out there, just float it and see what sort of response that we get.
Q	Do you think that a change in ballot structure with more choices will hinder or enhance voter turnout?
A	It will enhance voter turnout because I'm currently so disgusted with the system that I'm not going to vote until I see some change. If the current voters in Canada are in their 60s, 70s and 80s then we need to do something to

	get more people voting.
Q	What do you think about having a none of the above option?
A	We have to try something to get people out there so why not.

Comment from panel There were no comments from the panel.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

SUBMISSION: NO