What is wrong with our voting system?

The Legislature we get is not the one we voted for — and that’s not right.

The current system — single-member plurality, or “first-past-the-post” — distorts people’s votes, producing unrepresentative legislatures.

• We usually have a majority government that has been elected by a minority of voters - a ‘false majority’.
• Sometimes the winning party does not even have the most votes — a ‘wrong winner’, as happened in 1996.
• Or, we can end up with no official opposition, even though over 40% of British Columbians did not vote for the winning party as happened in 2001.
• A majority of our votes are usually ‘wasted’ - in 2005, 64% of voters had no effect on the outcome.

Both major parties, and all smaller parties and independent candidates, have suffered from our antiquated voting system.

But, more importantly, we, the people, have been denied the governments, and opposition, that we voted for. British Columbians deserve better.

Many countries around the world, including Germany, Ireland, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand, use modern systems that avoid these problems.

BC-STV will give British Columbians the governments they vote for — and that’s the way it should be.

“In 2005, we were just 2% short of the 60% needed for victory. On May 12th, 2009 we have a second chance, but we expect a better funded and organized opposition. You can help.

How can you help?

Volunteer

Help us raise awareness through letter writing, planning local events, calling supporters etc. Use your skills to promote STV.

stv.ca/connect

Contribute

Help us purchase signs and brochures, reach out to new voters and get the vote out on Election Day. Whether you donate $25 or $5000 your support will make a difference.

stv.ca/support

Contact your local organizer:

Or visit us online:

STV.CA

Make Your VOTE Count!

Single Transferable Vote

May 12th 2009

STV.CA/Join

As recommended by the Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform

Fair Voting BC is a non-profit, non-partisan organization committed to changing BC’s voting system to one that is fairer and puts voters first.

“Since the current voting system was adopted in 1955, no government has been elected by an absolute majority of voters. The current system — single-member plurality, or “first-past-the-post” — distorts people’s votes, producing unrepresentative legislatures.

• We usually have a majority government that has been elected by a minority of voters - a ‘false majority’.
• Sometimes the winning party does not even have the most votes — a ‘wrong winner’, as happened in 1996.
• Or, we can end up with no official opposition, even though over 40% of British Columbians did not vote for the winning party as happened in 2001.
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“Our voting system is broken.”

- British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell

“The current electoral system no longer responds to 21st century Canadian democratic values.”

- Law Commission of Canada
Why did almost a million British Columbians choose BC-STV?

Greater Voter Choice

Parties can nominate a number of candidates in each district, but the voters have the final say on which ones are elected. No more ‘safe seats’ - the voter’s choice is all that counts. And, if you need help after Election Day you can approach the MLA you voted for; the one who lives closest to you, or all of your MLAs. It’s your choice.

Fairer Results

No more distorted outcomes. It will take roughly the same number of votes to elect an MLA, no matter what riding, no matter what party. Across the province a party’s share of the votes will be very similar to their share of the seats. Your vote will count.

Accountable Local MLAs

Voters can choose between several candidates from the same, or different, parties at election time, and compare how all of their district MLAs measure up between elections. As a result, MLAs will have a strong incentive to represent their community’s best interests in the legislature.

What is BC-STV?

BC-STV is a form of Single Transferable Vote, which is used in Ireland and Australia and locally in New Zealand, Scotland and the US. It is a modern system designed to ensure voters have effective voices in government.

Easy as 1, 2, 3

You can vote for as many candidates as you like. 1 for your first choice, 2 for your second choice, and so on. They can all be from one party or from several parties and independents. As easy as 1, 2, 3...

Counting your vote

If your first choice does not have enough votes to get elected and is eliminated from the race, your vote isn’t wasted - your vote is simply transferred to your next choice.

Local Districts

To help ensure that most ballots will contribute to electing someone, current ridings will be combined into districts represented by between 2 to 7 MLAs depending on population size.

Recommended by the Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform

BC-STV was brought to you by... people like you. It is the result of 11 months of deliberation by the historic BC Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform.

The Citizens’ Assembly was initiated by the Government of BC to evaluate our voting system and, if appropriate, recommend an alternative.

The Citizens’ Assembly was made up of our fellow citizens: 80 men and 80 women randomly chosen from across the province.

They learned, researched and listened to British Columbians.

The Citizens’ Assembly identified three values that unite British Columbians.

• Greater Voter Choice
• Fairer Results
• Accountable Local MLAs

After studying voting systems around the world, they recommended BC-STV as the one that best matched the needs of British Columbians.

In 2005, 58% of voters supported BC-STV, but it required 60% to pass. On May 12th, 2009, we have one last chance to choose STV for BC.

Find out more at STV.CA