

REFORM PARTY OF ONTARIO's "PURPLE BOOK"

November 2009

ELECTORAL REFORMS

Our Values:

We believe Ontarians want to be included in the decision-making process, and that they want their MPPs to truly represent their views.

Electoral Reform is needed in Ontario:

Ontario's voter participation rate continues to drop to record lows, with only 50% bothering to vote in 2007. We think this is due to an electoral process that allows for MPPs to be elected with as little as 34% of the votes cast, meaning two-thirds of voters preferred someone other than the elected candidate.

Allowing voters to rank candidates by order of preference would provide a greater sense of satisfaction at election time.

Fixed election dates are another means of reducing party control over the electoral process, which is a good step for voters and for democracy in Ontario.

Despite being a minor party, one that would benefit from the failed MMP system of proportional voting, we believed that it did voters an injustice by strengthening party grip over the election process. On the federal scene, the Senate of Canada is intended to offer a sober second thought on federal legislation, as well as a regional balance in federal decision-making. To that end we think provinces and not the prime minister's office, should nominate stand-by senate candidates for the next available senate seat to represent Ontario's views. Ultimately, we think a Triple-E Senate is in the broader public interest.

The size of many rural and northern ridings is too large to allow MPPs to do their jobs properly. We think that ridings should not exceed a maximum area, and that ultimately weighted votes should be assigned to MPPs to address ridings with smaller or larger than average populations.

To that end, we propose the following remedies:

1. We will introduce a change to the election ballot, allowing voters to rank candidates by order of preference (Preferential Ballots).
2. Maintain Fixed Election Dates.
3. Electing federal Senate nominees during provincial general elections.
4. Allow ridings to match county and city boundaries, with MPPs allotted weighted votes to address divergent numbers of constituents so as to maintain the concept of representation by population.
5. We will increase the voter base by allowing all taxpaying Ontario residents 16 years+ the right to vote provincially & municipally.
6. We will level the playing field for parties by amending the Elections Finance Act to provide all parties with the same level of subsidy regardless of their success at election time.