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Electoral Justice Now!

Liberating Democracy from an unjust electoral system, to better reflect and serve the 'Will of the People'!

It's time for 'We the People' to demand **Electoral Justice Now!**

- Electoral Justice is the next step in the Electoral Reform movement.
- **Electoral Justice Now** can be truly achieved through **PerfectPR**, which eliminates the flaws of standard forms of 'pseudo-PR' (i.e. the best PR alternatives before computers).
- **PerfectPR** ensures a perfectly proportional balance of power in the legislature, based directly on the votes of *all* Citizens:
every Citizen's vote is entrusted to an elected Representative (*votes for defeated candidates are reassigned by each party*), and the votes of all Citizens are cast in the legislature by the Representatives (*proxy voting, counted by computer*). With **PerfectPR**, the fundamental unit of Democracy is the Citizen's vote—not the Representative's seat.

Representative Democracy is supposed to determine and serve the *Will of the People* based on **voting**—first by the Citizens in local elections, then by their elected Representatives in the legislature. But our First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system produces a double distortion of the Will of the People: first it distorts the voting choices of many Citizens (i.e. *strategic voting* for a 'lesser of evils' party—rather than for their *true* preference); this distortion is compounded by distorted election results (i.e. total seats not being proportional to total votes for each party).

Question: has FPTP given us Electoral Justice in recent BC elections?

- In 1996, FPTP distortions produced the **wrong winner** with only 39% vote-share, while the Opposition won more votes (41%).
- In 2001, FPTP distortions produced a **blowout** election that gave the Government 77 of 79 seats, while the Opposition won just 2 seats, even though 42% voted for an opposition party.
- In 2017, FPTP distortions produced a **fragile minority** Government with a margin of just one seat, even though it was supported by 330,000 more votes (NDP+Green) than the Opposition.
- In five of the seven elections since 1996, FPTP distortions produced **false majority** governments (i.e. less than 50% vote-share winning more than 50% of seats and hence 100% of the power).

Votes for losing candidates (typically half of all Citizens' votes) are effectively **wasted** by FPTP; hence, many voters (perhaps about one-third) are coerced into **strategic voting**.

FPTP also distorts based on the geographic distribution of votes. With most ridings being so-called **safe seats** (where only one party has a realistic chance to win), voting there is irrelevant.

With a **large majority of votes being either wasted or irrelevant** (i.e. having no meaningful democratic value) under FPTP, it's hardly surprising that about one-third of Citizens don't vote.

With computers, it's just as easy to count millions of Citizens' votes (instantly and precisely) as a few dozen or a few hundred Representatives' votes. We should not accept the electoral injustices of any voting system based on the limitations and the inequalities of previous centuries. **Every Citizen's vote should always count, equally, and now we can do it!**

Electoral Justice Now raises two important questions of principle:

1. *Whose vote should be the **fundamental unit of Democracy**: the **Citizen's vote** or the **Representative's vote**?*
2. *Whose votes should be counted in the legislature: **every Representative's single vote**—or **every single Citizen's vote**?*

Democracy, as invented in ancient Athens, empowered all free Citizens to participate in public debates and cast their *own* vote on each issue. As this form of *Direct Democracy* would be impossible in modern nation states, it has been replaced by *Representative Democracy*: Citizens elect their local Representatives, who represent them in the legislature and vote on their behalf.

Electoral Justice Now presents a simple solution to the problems of misrepresentation. It's called **PerfectPR**—and it's founded on the original principles of Democracy—*majority rule* based directly on the votes of *all* Citizens. Under **PerfectPR**, the body of **Representatives would hold in trust, and cast in the legislature, the total number of Citizen's votes given to each Party!**

With the **Citizen's vote** (rather than the Representative's seat) **as the operative unit of Democracy in the legislature**—and no vote ever *wasted*—**PerfectPR** provides the *only* true expression of the *Will of the People*. **PerfectPR** recaptures the original concept of Democracy—being based *directly* on the votes of *all* Citizens—and hence is absolutely fair to all voters, political parties and candidates.

The implicit goal of PR is to reduce electoral injustice—by making each party's voting power in the legislature (based on seats) *approximately* proportional to their share of Citizens' votes. We salute the commitment to Proportional Representation (PR) by the various political parties and electoral reform organizations. But they ought to recognize that all standard forms of PR provide only *imperfect* solutions with serious defects. Such flaws have always been exploited by a NO campaign (usually led by associates of an opposition party) to defeat PR in a referendum.

PerfectPR is the most natural, logical, and easily understood form of PR! It's based on the simple principle: **'To make every vote count—always and equally!'** It's also the only form of PR that **does not require any changes in riding boundaries or voting procedures!!**

By embracing the principles of **Electoral Justice** and its natural solution, **PerfectPR**, British Columbia can fulfill its commitment to PR—by becoming a true leader and shining example for Canada—and potentially even for the World!



“Perfect PR” !

Doing Democracy right ... by making every Citizen's vote count in Parliament !

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“PerfectPR” and “PerfectPR+” vs “Pseudo-PR”

PerfectPR provides all of its unique advantages based upon a surprisingly simple principle: **‘To make every vote count—always and equally!’**

Under **PerfectPR**, the fundamental unit of Democracy is the **Citizen's Vote**—not only in local elections but also in Parliament! With **PerfectPR**, each party's parliamentary voting power is derived directly from (and hence is exactly equal to) their total number of Citizens' votes—and no Citizen's vote is ever *wasted* or made irrelevant by the voting system.

PerfectPR, by literally “*making every vote count*”, eliminates the problems of *strategic voting* and *safe seats* (unfair to voters), *vote splitting* (unfair to parties and their supporters), and *false majority* governments (where a party with less than 50% vote-share wins more than 50% of the seats and hence holds 100% of the power—which is unfair Democracy).

Here's how **PerfectPR** works:

1. Citizens vote as usual.
2. Votes are counted as usual; the candidate with the most votes is elected as Representative.
3. Each elected Representative holds in trust all Citizens' votes they personally received.
4. Each Party retains all votes for their defeated candidates; those votes are equitably reassigned among their Representatives.
5. With every vote in parliament (legislature), **each Representative casts proxy votes on behalf of all Citizens whose votes are entrusted to them**; computers automatically convert each Representative's single vote into their assigned number of Citizens' votes.
6. Consideration should be given to providing some representation for any small party that achieves a specified threshold (e.g. 5%) but does not elect a Representative. [Perhaps appoint the Party's leader (or candidate with the most votes) to an ‘*At-large*’ seat.]
7. Consideration should also be given to providing some ‘*Independent*’ representation to avoid wasting the remaining votes for small parties or Independent candidates. [Perhaps appoint the Independent candidate with the most votes to an ‘*At-large*’ seat.]

PerfectPR also presents other unique opportunities to enhance the quality of Democracy:

1. **Balanced Representation**—by party, by region, by gender or demographics.
This is the major advantage provided under the optional enhanced form, “**PerfectPR+**”!
 - The reassignment of votes for defeated candidates (typically about half of all votes) presents great flexibility without impacting the perfect proportionality for each party.
 - Every election under any voting system inevitably produces some degree of unbalanced representation—which could be much improved by adding a small number of regional seats. Unlike MMP that needs about 50% more seats for *approximate proportionality*, **PerfectPR+** would have far fewer (as it automatically achieves *perfect proportionality*), targeted where needed for more balanced representation.

- Such regional seats would be awarded to each party under established rules, based on the total number of votes for their defeated candidates. Such seats would be regionally allocated and based on each party's degree of under-representation.
 - Regional seats could be filled by each party's leading candidate (i.e. their defeated candidate with the most votes in that region, with consideration for gender parity).
 - This eliminates the polarization problem—which can leave a Government or Official Opposition without representation in a region (even with a large number of votes).
2. Gender parity in the parliamentary voting power of each party could be *perfectly* achieved through the reassignment of votes for defeated candidates.
 3. If a Representative '*crosses the floor*' to sit with another party, they should retain only their *own* single vote, and their remainder of Citizens' votes should revert to the original party for reassignment. [This should also apply to the votes held by the Speaker.]
 4. If a Representative is absent, it should be possible for temporary reassignment of all Citizens' votes held by that Representative.
 5. Whereas a tie vote in the legislature is a very real risk when the seats are almost equally divided, a tie vote based on millions of Citizens' votes would become almost impossible under PerfectPR. Hence, government stability would be enhanced under PerfectPR, and Representatives should have more independence to '*vote their conscience*'.
 6. In the future, with sufficient controls to enable safe online voting, the power and flexibility of proxy voting (i.e. Representatives casting the Citizens' votes in Parliament) has the potential under PerfectPR to empower voters with new and much more effective ways to improve government accountability to Citizens.

The standard flawed forms of '*pseudo-PR*' are based on the dubious premise that '*two wrongs can make a right*'. Trying to achieve PR by cleverly contriving that party seat counts are roughly proportional to vote-share is misguided, imprecise, problematic and undemocratic. Worse, such defects involve major changes, complications and costs—leaving them highly vulnerable to proven negative campaign strategies to exploit public unawareness, apathy and anxiety. Specifically:

- **Mixed Member Proportional** (MMP) elects all local Representatives under FPTP. It then needs to add typically 50% more so-called *compensatory* seats (i.e. as compensation for FPTP distortions), filled from *party lists*!?? Redistricting could reduce the number of additional seats—but this would require correspondingly larger ridings.
- **Single Transferable Vote** (STV) was chosen over MMP (80% to 20%) by the BC Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform in 2005. They concluded that STV gave voters more choice and made Representatives more accountable to voters—whereas MMP gave more power to the parties and made Representatives even more beholden to the parties. But STV is only crudely proportional, is excessively complex, involves multi-member districts of up to seven ridings, and substantially reduces the democratic standard for election.
- **Rural-Urban PR** (RU-PR) is a hybrid combination of STV for urban areas, and FPTP for rural areas (as STV would be totally unacceptable in Canada's vast under-populated areas). RU-PR has all of STV's defects in urban areas and all of FPTP defects in rural areas. It is even less proportional than STV, and probably even more vulnerable to a NO campaign.