Announcing PracticalPR!

PracticalPR (PPR) is a breakthrough in the design and implementation of proportional representation (PR)—**the two stage solution**—as the most practical way to remedy the problems of First-Past-The-Post (FPTP). PPR ensures *perfect* proportionality—simply and automatically, and also offers a range of practical options to remedy real electoral issues.

PracticalPR has originated from feedback received *(thanks friends!)* from our early efforts to explain **Electoral Justice Now** (EJN) and what we were calling 'PerfectPR'.

While **Electoral Justice Now** remains committed to supporting *whichever* form of PR emerges from the upcoming BC referendum process, our view has been that PerfectPR would be the best choice with least vulnerability to a NO campaign. However, we now see that a more *flexible* solution with options would be better—hence **PracticalPR**!

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**?

So, what is **PracticalPR**, and what makes PPR more practical than other forms of PR? **PPR** comprises a set of *core features* (i.e. **core-PPR**), supplemented by a flexible set of *options* that effectively address specific electoral issues. Hence, **PPR is customizable**— to best meet a particular set of requirements and objectives. The actual form of PPR to be implemented would be determined through the PR evaluation and selection process.

For practical considerations (as explained later), it's recommended that PPR should be implemented in two stages—probably with **initial implementation limited to core-PPR**.

THE *CORE FEATURES* OF **PRACTICALPR** (**core-PPR**) ARE:

- **No need to change voting procedures**—PPR works with First-Past-The-Post (FPTP).
  - Other forms of PR require voters to learn a new system with more complex choices.

- **No need to change existing ridings** (i.e. retains local Representative accountability).
  - All standard forms of PR require larger ridings or combined electoral districts.
  - Much simpler for voters—and fair to all incumbents.

- **The Citizen's vote** (the natural unit of Democracy) **becomes the operative unit of voting in the legislature** (rather than the Representative's seat)!!!
  - o The voting power of each party in Parliament is derived directly from—and hence is precisely equal to—their total number of Citizen's votes (i.e. for all of their elected and defeated candidates), thereby ensuring perfect proportionality.
  - o Representatives cast proxy votes on behalf of all Citizens whose votes are entrusted to them (i.e. the votes they personally received plus their share of votes for defeated candidates—equitably reassigned by their party).
    [n.b.: Vote reassignment is legitimated by the precedents set by STV and AV/IRV.]
  - o Computers would be used in the legislature to automatically convert the single vote by each Representative into their assigned number of Citizen's votes.
  - o PPR recaptures the true meaning of the word *'Democracy'* (i.e. *'the People rule'*), as <u>the Citizen's vote was the basis of Athenian democracy</u>. It's also how democracy would probably have been done long ago—if computers had been available—and it is the fundamental basis of the superiority of PracticalPR over standard forms of PR.

- **PPR eliminates any geographical injustice**, for both rural and urban voters—since **every vote always counts equally**, regardless of which party and how others vote.
  - o Ensures no party has any advantage due to riding boundaries (no *'gerrymandering'*).
  - o Riding population (or changes) are non-factors—which permits a better use of seats.
  - o Gives every Citizen the same good reason to vote—even in 'safe seats'.

PracticalPR (PPR) is the only form of PR that is based on *principle ("the primacy of the Citizen's vote")* rather than some method of manufactured proportionality (i.e. seat counts cleverly contrived to approximate vote-share). Also, PPR's core features (i.e. **core-PPR**) are immediately available at no cost and no complexity:

- o No change affecting voters (i.e. other than substantial Citizen empowerment)!
- o The only change is to voting procedures within the legislature!
- o Yet PPR would achieve *perfectly* proportional representation—unlike such costly, convoluted, and imperfect alternatives as MMP, STV etc.

Hence, for these and other practical reasons:
- o It makes most sense to **implement core-PPR first**, as soon as possible, and **consider other PPR options for implementation with the following election**.
- o Indeed, core-PPR could even be implemented retroactively (i.e. with voting in BC's present legislature based on the BC2017 election popular vote, which would greatly improve the stability of this minority government).
- o Core-PPR even provides a *'risk-free guarantee'*—as there would be no costs or complications if it might later be decided to revert to the present system.

With PPR, British Columbia would set a fine example for our federal government—which would have no excuse for not fulfilling its promised electoral reform—as core-PPR could easily be implemented for the 2019 election (no costs, no complications, and risk-free).

Beyond the basic core-PPR features, **PracticalPR** (**PPR**), also includes a **flexible set of options** that address specific electoral issues. [n.b.: Some options could be included in the initial implementation—with other options probably deferred for future consideration.]

PRACTICALPR'S *OPTIONS*—OFFERING **PRACTICAL REMEDIES FOR ELECTORAL ISSUES**:

1. Issue: **Risk of minority government instability under PR.**
    The **PPR** remedy: a ***double-majority* confidence vote**
    —i.e. a majority of both *Citizen's votes* and elected *Representative's votes*.
    o This would give a minority government elected with PPR the same stability it would have under FPTP (i.e. the *best of both* systems, rather than the *worst of either*).
    o Given the importance of government stability, and since this only involves procedural change within the legislature, it's **highly recommended to include this feature in the initial implementation**.

2. Issue: **Risk of *'tail wagging the dog'* syndrome under minority governments.**
    The **PPR** remedy: a ***double-majority* confidence vote** [i.e. same as above]
    —i.e. a majority of both *Citizen's votes* and elected *Representative's votes*.
    o The *'tail wagging the dog'* syndrome can occur if a third-party may hold extortionate power over a minority government.
    o This is a potential problem in any minority government situation—which becomes more likely under any form of PR. But only PPR offers a remedy!
    o [n.b.: this would eliminate the PR risk factors exposed by Bill Tieleman in his hit-job against PR: "Greens Political 'Hostage-Taking' Preview of Grim Future Under PR".]

3. Issue: **Excessive regional polarization and/or under-representation.**
    The **PPR** remedy: **Balanced representation**—by parties within regions—by adding a small number (e.g. 10%) of **regional seats.**
    o The root cause of polarization (such as BC2017) and under-representation (Greens in BC2017) is FPTP's distortion. Another manifestation is over-representation (the flip-side of under-representation). Since removal of any elected Representatives due to over-representation of their party would be unthinkable, the appropriate remedy is to add some small number of regional seats to improve the effectiveness of under-represented parties, especially in committee work.
    [n.b.: Creation of additional regional seats is legitimated by the precedent of MMP.]

- o As typically half the votes go to defeated candidates under FPTP, and with these votes being reassigned within each party under PPR, it would be quite easy to add regional representatives—without impacting the perfect proportionality of each party.
- o These might be filled by the leading defeated candidate from the most under-represented party in each region—with the government and opposition taking precedence over a third-party (i.e. to ensure representation in every region for both the government and official opposition).
- o This could also improve demographic balance (e.g. gender parity, diversity, age).
- o It might be decided to have two additional representatives per region, perhaps allocating one to the most under-represented of the two major parties, and the other to the third-party.
- o The number of additional seats might even be decided mutually by the parties after an election, based on the degree of polarization and under-representation. This flexibility is possible only because PPR always ensures perfect proportionality, regardless of the number of members, as the voting power for all Representatives draws upon each party's substantial reservoir of votes for its defeated candidates (about 300,000 each for the three parties in BC2017).
- o In contrast to Mixed-Member Proportional, this would add considerably fewer members (about 10% vs 50%), targeted only for balanced representation (as perfect proportionality is automatic), and it would avoid the problematic *'party lists'* of MMP.

4. Issue: **Representation for unrepresented parties with significant vote-share?**
The **PPR** remedy: provide some *'At-large'* representation for each party that achieves a specified threshold (e.g. 5%) but fails to elect a Representative.
- o As a principle of electoral justice, each Citizen's vote should have representation.
- o But it's also important not to have too many small parties, or fringe/radical parties.
- o "Leaders Plus" is an innovation by Steven Hurdle [based on an idea borrowed from electoral reformers in PEI] proposing to detach the party leaders from ridings (since their scope of responsibility is provincial/federal), and award an *'At-large'* seat to every leader of a party with vote-share above the threshold (e.g. 5%).

5. Issue: **Representation for remaining unrepresented votes?**
The **PPR** remedy: provide some non-partisan *'At-large'* representation for votes for Independent candidates and small parties that fail to elect a Representative.
- o As a principle of electoral justice, each Citizen's vote should have representation.
- o Votes for independent candidates could be represented by creating one or more *'At-large'* seats, to be filled by a politically *non-partisan* person [e.g. such as an *'Ombudsperson'*] through some suitable selection process. [Suggestion, this might be an opportunity for political science students to fill as interns for a year or two.]
- o The non-partisan voice could make a positive contribution to the legislative process.

- o *[n.b.: Any such additional (i.e. non-elected) Representatives should not be included in the Representatives' seat count vote under a 'double-majority' confidence vote.]*

6. Issue: **Existing ridings are based on FPTP limitations** *(i.e. 'Rep. by Pop')***.**
The **PPR** remedy: **Redraw the electoral map** to use seats more effectively.
[Recommendation: defer this option to a following election.]

   - o While there's no need to ever change ridings under PPR (since perfect proportionality is automatic), it would be advantageous to squeeze out some urban ridings to facilitate regional seats for balanced representation (without increasing the number of Representatives) and/or to reduce the size of some rural ridings.
   - o PPR is geography neutral, as every vote always counts equally.
   - o Hence ridings could be based on more natural boundaries—without any concerns regarding population (or changes).

7. Issue: **Some voters may not want their vote to be reassigned by a party.**
The **PPR** remedy: **An explicit vote for a preferred party** (with implicit option to decline) if one's chosen candidate was defeated.

   - o This would give voters more control—allowing them to vote for both a preferred candidate and party (i.e. which might be different).
   - o By eliminating *'strategic voting'* it would also help Independents and small parties.

8. Issue: **Some Citizens may not want political *'deals'* to determine who governs.**
The **PPR** remedy: **Empower Citizens to vote directly for the Party Leader they want to elect as their Government Leader** (i.e. Premier or PM)**.**

   - o As a principle of electoral justice, as a fundamental democratic right, every Citizen ought to have a vote that counts equally in the election of their government.
   - o Under FPTP, the normal result is a *'false majority'* and the distorted seat count determines which party forms government (sometimes not with the most votes).
   - o Under PR a *'false majority'* would not occur—instead, a minority government would be the usual outcome, led by whichever party obtained sufficient third-party support to form a majority. This gives a third-party leader the power to be a *'kingmaker'* (e.g. BC2017), which some Citizens might consider to be undemocratic.
   [n.b. If Citizens are given the power to elect their Premier/PM, it should be a preferential ballot with IRV to ensure the winner has majority support.]

9. Issue: **Some Citizens may want all Representatives to be elected by a majority.**
The **PPR** remedy: **Change to a preferential ballot** with Instant Runoff Voting.

   - o Under FPTP, typically only about half of the Representatives are elected with more than 50% support (i.e. true *'democratic legitimacy'*), and most of those are in so-called *'safe seats'* (i.e. where only one party has a realistic chance to win). Depending on how many parties, some Representatives may have less than 40%

support (federally some have less than 30%), making it unclear whether a winner is the candidate most acceptable to a majority of voters.

- o The remedy is a preferential ballot (Alternative Vote) with Instant Runoff Voting (an iterative process of elimination that's familiar to Citizens as the way leaders are elected by all parties), which Australia has used for about a century.
- o Preferential ballot with IRV eliminates *'strategic voting'* and *'vote splitting'* problems.
- o The combination of a preferential ballot plus proxy voting of the Citizens' votes in Parliament, which was called PPR123, was presented to the federal Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE) on 2016/09/28.

10. Issue: **Some Citizens may not want to change to a preferential ballot.**
The **PPR** remedy: **"**Voter's Choice**"** [proposed as substitute for a referendum]**.**

- o Under this solution (also submitted to the ERRE Committee), each voter would choose whether to cast a single-choice or a preferential-choice vote.
- o The majority of Citizens in each riding would determine whether their Representative would be elected under FPTP or IRV. [n.b.: This respects riding preferences.]

11. Issue: **Some may prefer to replace FPTP and add PPR onto another system.**
The **PPR** remedy: This idea has some merit, and should be considered in a two stage implementation, starting with core-PPR, as strategically the best plan**.**

- o The goal would be to have a more proportional foundation for PPR than FPTP [suggested possibilities: EasyPR and LocalPR], to reduce the additional seats and improve demographic diversity.
- o The problem is that this option would significantly increase complexity, and be burdened by the significant costs and negatives of whatever system replaced FPTP (e.g. STV etc.)—making it much more vulnerable to defeat in a referendum.
- o This would substitute for the Option#3 above (Balanced Representation)—but it probably wouldn't achieve the same level of representational balance.

12. Issue: **Some Voters may want an *'exit option'* in case PR might not work well.**
The **PPR** remedy: **core-PR!**

- o **PPR** is the only form of PR with a *'No cost and no risk Guaranty'!*
- o **Core-PR** does not change the ridings or voting procedures—it simply changes voting procedures in the legislature—to count every Citizen's vote.
- o Hence, FPTP could be restored by simply going back to counting Representatives' seats instead of Citizens' votes!

13. Etc. There's no end to electoral challenges and possible refinements.
With **PracticalPR**, new remedies will be found as new issues are identified.

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS AND VULNERABILITIES OF OTHER PR ALTERNATIVES:

1. **Mixed-Member Proportional** (MMP)**.**
   - MMP's problems originate with FPTP distortions. As riding elections are conducted under FPTP, such distortions need about one-third of all members to be filled by so-called *'compensatory'* seats (i.e. to compensate for FPTP distortions).
   - MMP requires some combination of about 50% more seats or 50% larger ridings.
   - Adding 50% more seats would be a non-starter: the public would be outraged by the extra costs, and there simply isn't enough space in the legislature.
   - 50% larger ridings would be unfair to constituents (even more unfair to incumbents).
   - Comprehensive redistricting would probably be required to minimize increased seats and costs. This would be unfair to incumbents, and reduce service to constituents by local Representatives (offset by regional representatives).
   - The regional representatives are chosen from *'party lists',* according to the degree of under-representation of each party in each region. The understood intent is that these representatives should be elected, but this would present voters with a list of names of candidates they probably knew little or nothing about.
   - Problems with party lists were a major concern for the BC Citizens Assembly on Electoral Reform, leading them to choose STV over MMP by 80% to 20%. They concluded that party lists gave the parties more control—whereas STV made Representatives more accountable to the Citizens and gave voters more choice.
   - MMP's flaws make it highly vulnerable to proven negative campaign strategies. [e.g. Bill Tieleman's recent hit-job against PR in general and MMP in particular: "[Greens Political 'Hostage-Taking' Preview of Grim Future Under PR](...)".]

2. **Single Transferable Vote** (STV)**.**
   - While STV is objectively superior to MMP, its excessive complexity made it highly vulnerability to NO campaigns [BC-STV was defeated in the BC referendums of 2005 (receiving 58% of the votes, with 60% then required) and 2009 (just 39%)].
   - STV does not need additional members or different ridings. STV groups ridings into electoral districts that elect up to seven members (far fewer in rural areas).
   - Each voter has only one vote—but the ballot shows all candidates in all ridings in that electoral district, and the voter can rank order as many candidates as desired. Both voting and vote counting are considerably more complicated under STV.
   - STV drastically reduces the quota needed for election—to much less than a majority (typically just 13% to 20%), depending on the number of members in each district. This imposes a coarse granularity with the consequence that STV is only crudely proportional. For example, if the district size is 4 ridings, the quota is then 20%+1; this means that zero to 20% of votes elects nobody, 20%+1 to 40% elects one

member, 40%+1 to 60% elects two members etc. But it is greatly complicated by secondary choices and transfers of votes from eliminated candidates (to each voter's next choice)—as well as fractionalized surplus votes (i.e. in excess of the quota) from elected members. The whole process is very opaque, and given the coarse granularity and indeterminate impact of the order of elimination, it's impossible to know the degree of electoral justice vs randomness of the results.

- o Moreover, there are questions concerning the democratic quality of STV voting. Specifically, each voter is confronted with a full matrix of all candidates in all ridings in the district. How knowledgeable are voters about candidates in other ridings? How ethical or democratically acceptable is it for people to vote for candidates they know little or nothing about? How democratically satisfactory is it if most of the votes for candidates within a riding might come from voters in other ridings? Also, there's some evidence that, faced with lengthy ballots and with little knowledge, there seems to be a tendency for unintentional bias dependent upon the positions of names on the list. Greater choice does not necessarily ensure better democracy.

- o STV also doesn't guarantee that a member is elected from each riding! Worse, in mixed rural-urban districts, there's a risk that representatives might be concentrated in urban ridings—with under-representation of rural ridings. However, the district is well represented, usually with members from several parties.

- o STV does have other positive qualities—it places candidates from each party in competition with one another (increasing accountability to constituents, and making it more likely that non-performing members might be defeated), and it greatly reduces 'safe seats' (i.e. at the riding level, but not at the district level).

- o STV is well designed for highly populated urban areas, but district size would be a major concern in Canada's vast sparsely populated rural areas.

3. **Rural-Urban PR** (RUPR)**.**

- o RUPR is a hybrid: STV in urban areas and either MMP or FPTP in rural areas.

- o RUPR is a commendable but unfortunate compromise—inheriting most of the defects of STV (excessive complexity) and either MMP (more members and/or larger ridings) or FPTP (non-proportional)—but it does avoid STV's unsuitability for Canada's vast rural areas.

4. **Local PR.**

- o LocalPR is a clever Canadian modification of STV that ensures one member is elected in each riding (with some reduction in the quota for election).

- o This also makes LocalPR suitable for Canada's vast sparsely populated rural areas

- o LocalPR otherwise suffers from STV's defects.

All defects and costs associated with each PR alternative become easy targets for a NO campaign. Selecting any of the standard alternatives is almost choosing to lose.

The best strategy to win a PR referendum would be to choose the simplest form of PR—with the least change, least cost and least risk: clearly that would be **core-PPR**!

The simplest referendum question would be **a simple choice based on principle**, with no need to know anything about *any* voting system. Here's our recommendation:

> ### WHICH SYSTEM SHOULD BE USED FOR VOTING IN THE LEGISLATURE?
>
> **A.** *Do you want to **change** how voting is done in the legislature, to produce perfectly proportional representation, **by using the votes of <u>all</u> Citizens?***
>
> ---***OR***---
>
> **B.** *Do you want to **retain** the existing voting system in the legislature, that uses only the single vote of each Representative, which is a disproportional distortion that is typically based on **only about <u>half</u> of the Citizens' votes?***

FURTHER ANALYSIS OF DEMOCRATIC ISSUES:

1. What is PR?

PR is of course the generic term for electoral systems that produce Proportional Representation. But as simple as that appears, the reality is much more complex, calling for further analysis.

PR was conceived as a remedy to the hard reality of highly *disproportional* representation produced by a non-PR electoral system—especially FPTP. The problem is obvious when the overall electoral outcome, based on the seats for each party, is disproportional to their total vote-shares. And this seems fundamentally *wrong*—an undemocratic injustice inflicted by a flawed electoral system.

So the goal of PR is to right this wrong and produce electoral justice. And the objective of PR is to produce a balance of seats that is approximately proportional to the total votes for each party—thereby reflecting the *'will of the People'*, and thereby producing *'true'* Democracy. That's all very fine—but it's not obvious *how* that might be achieved, it's quite difficult to accomplish, and every proposed method presents problems and imperfections.

Further, another important objective for electoral justice is balanced representation— politically, regionally and demographically (i.e. gender, diversity, age etc.). Hence, balanced representation is a multi-dimensional challenge, which no electoral method could automatically satisfy. However, PR is generally recognized as producing more balanced representation than FPTP.

The various forms of PR produce different degrees of both proportionality and balanced representation. Comparing MMP and STV, MMP would produce better proportionality

(with a sufficient number of *'compensatory'* seats) and, dependent upon the *'party lists'*, MMP would probably produce better demographic balance (especially with respect to gender and diversity).

PracticalPR (PPR) presents a different picture. **Core-PPR** by itself provides *perfect* proportionality, but no improvement in representational balance. However, **core-PPR** would <u>optimally satisfy the primary goal of PR—the perfect balance of political power</u> (i.e. as direct expression of the *'will of the people'*), which is also the basis of electoral justice! This is sufficiently important that core-PPR is recommended as the first stage—so as not to become complexified by the secondary (but very important) objective of representational balance. It's suggested that this should be more carefully studied and implemented as part of the second stage, probably with the following election. [Alternatively, after the implementation of core-PPR, the addition of regional seats could be implemented at any time—as a legislative decision—since it would not impact the balance of political power.] Compared to MMP, PPR offers a much more complete and flexible range of options to improve representation, and with far fewer additional seats.

2. Proxy Voting:

Some politicians and proponents of the standard forms of PR have raised objections to PPR on the basis that it gives Representatives *unequal* voting power. The critics call it *'weighted voting'*, with implication that it's unfair.

This is a misrepresentation based on misconception. In actuality, the differentiated voting power under PPR is a precisely perfect realization of democratic equality via *'proxy voting'*.

Such criticism ignores the fundamental **<u>democratic principles that are the basis of PPR</u>**:
  o   A Democracy belongs to its Citizens—not to their Representatives.
  o   Every Citizen in a Democracy is an equal *'shareholder'*—each entitled to one voting share—which should always be counted, and count equally.
  o   In a 'representative democracy', the Citizens elect Representatives—who vote on the *Citizens'* behalf in the legislature (i.e. proxy voting).

Moreover it's clear that, as Citizens, <u>all Representatives do indeed have an *equal* vote —their *own* vote</u> (which they presumably cast for themselves in their own election). And each Representative carries their own *equal* vote into the legislature, to be cast along with the *equal votes of all Citizens* whose votes are entrusted to them.

<u>Under PPR, each elected Representative retains all votes they personally received</u>. All <u>votes for defeated candidates</u> (typically about half the votes) <u>are retained by each party, and equitably reassigned among their Representatives</u> (under rules to be established).

[n.b.: Proxy voting, while not yet used for voting in legislatures is legitimated and universally accepted as the basis of corporate shareholder democracy.]

3. Democratic Legitimacy:

Under representative democracy, **true *'democratic legitimacy'* can only be assured through proxy voting in the legislature—based directly on the Citizens' votes**.

To fully comprehend the truth and implications of this statement, one first needs to understand the meaning of *'democratic legitimacy'*. The fundamental standard of democracy is **'majority rule'**—i.e. with the support of more than half (50%+1) of the voters. The <u>majority criterion ought to be applied in electing all representatives</u>—as well as <u>all decisions by the body of representatives within a legislature</u>.

The sad truth about democracy in Canada is that the majority standard of democratic legitimacy is routinely violated in both the election of representatives and voting decisions within a legislature (i.e. given that most governments are elected by much less than a majority of voters).

Specifically, it's quite common for about half (or more) of the representatives to be elected without democratic legitimacy—often with less than 40% provincially, and sometimes with less than 30% federally. And seldom does a government have democratic legitimacy—where typically 40% (or less) vote-share is normally sufficient to produce a 'false majority' government with 100% of the power.

The latter problem is the most important reason and justification for PR. The goal of proportional representation is electoral justice—i.e. to produce election results that are a true reflection of the *'will of the people'*. Again, the criterion for determining this should be majority rule.

Since the 18th Century, many mathematicians and political scientists have developed numerous ingenious methods to achieve PR. Why so many? Because all of the standard methods—based on contriving a balance of seats that's roughly proportional to the vote-share of each party—suffer from various complications and flawed results.

By contrast, proxy voting—based directly on Citizens' votes—provides an *uncomplicated* solution founded upon the most fundamental principle of democracy—*majority rule*—and hence produces *flawless* results (i.e. *perfect* proportionality)!

Given that proxy voting should eventually be adopted within all legislatures (simply because it is the *right* thing to do—and, once that's understood, it will almost certainly be demanded by the People), all other electoral systems should therefore be re-examined.

- o FPTP surely ought to be replaced. But curiously, with proxy voting in the legislature (i.e. core-PPR), replacement of FPTP becomes only advisable rather than essential.
- o PR, as it has been known and practiced in the large majority of democracies (mostly MMP with some STV), involves various complicated electoral procedures that produce much improved yet still imperfect proportionality. Given that proxy voting

ensures perfect proportionality without complications, a more direct system for electing representatives would seem preferable (especially to avoid 'party lists').

- o AV (Alternative Vote, also called Instant Runoff Voting) provides several strong advantages. It ensures democratic legitimacy of all elected representatives, while also eliminating 'strategic voting' (ensuring each 1st-choice vote is an uncoerced vote for one's true preference) and the 'vote-splitting' problem between parties. Hence, AV would clearly provide a democratically better foundation for proxy voting than either FPTP or any form of PR based on roughly proportional seat counts. [n.b. PPR, especially with its Balanced Representation option, would perfectly offset any advantages any parties might gain from AV.]

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS:

Most advocates of electoral reform ignore the realities of the political environment, and hence fail to develop a viable strategic plan that's capable of achieving their goals—which is tantamount to planning to lose.

It doesn't take rocket science, but it does need practicality.

Here's a summary of the political challenges and obstacles to electoral reform:

- o Most Citizens don't know and don't care one iota about electoral systems.
- o Most Citizens don't trust politicians, and would suspect that any electoral reform recommended by politicians was probably self-serving.
- o Most politicians know hardly anything about voting systems. They just want to get re-elected—and the existing system has worked well for them. They will mostly believe and do whatever their party leaders tell them.
- o Most political parties have a rigid position of self-interest on voting systems.
  - The two major parties want to retain FPTP—because it's the basis of the *'two-party system'* based on *'strategic voting'*—which is primarily responsible for *'false-majority'* governments, and always gives them a substantial unearned seat bonus while unjustly depriving the opposition by the same amount.
  - The major opposition party can be counted on to oppose PR and support FPTP—because they know that their turn in power will come (sooner or later).
  - The minor parties, as eternal victims of FPTP, always want PR. Indeed FPTP makes it almost impossible for a third-party to escape the role of *'spoiler'* (unless there's a major political realignment—when a major party collapses).
- o The major party backroom boys are key political strategists and opponents of PR.
  - The major party that's out of power can probably be expected to provide backroom expertise to run a successful NO campaign.

- - The backroom boys' regular dance partners—the lobbyists—can be expected to fund a professional NO campaign. [The success of PR would eliminate false-majority governments—which would inhibit backroom deal making.]
  - Such political pros are masters of negative campaigning, using half-truths and FUD tactics (i.e. to spread Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt), duping a disinterested majority with a well-tested playbook to exploit the weaknesses of whichever standard form of PR (MMP & STV) is chosen for the PR referendum.
- Most electoral reform advocacy organizations are people of high integrity with limited political skills and inadequate strategic analysis.
  - They don't know how to play political hardball—and probably couldn't even if they did know how, because it would drive away their politically innocent volunteers.
  - So the standard PR referendum game is a mismatch—with the political pros going negative and playing hardball for the NO side, vs. the political amateurs trying to educate a disinterested public by explaining confusing details of a subject most people don't care about—i.e. playing softball on the YES side.
- While a political party's promise of PR (always by an opposition party victimized by FPTP) may be sincere, their process for (supposed) fulfillment usually isn't.
  - Why? Would a political party/leader lie? Let's give them the benefit of the doubt and just say that conditions can change.
  - Whichever party wins an election has thereby become a beneficiary (rather than victim) of FPTP distortions. So the government finds itself in a *conflict of interest* situation—i.e. fulfilling their promise of PR would hurt the party—which their backroom boys would probably advise them to find a way not to do.
  - The traditional stratagems to avoid fulfillment of such an inconvenient promise are either a *'made-to-fail'* referendum (a flawed PR choice that can easily be shot down by the NO side, a referendum question designed to confuse, or setting the bar too high) or an inconclusive study that can be conveniently buried.

These are some of the hard realities (largely ignored by most PR advocates), explaining why **the most practical solution is a two stage implementation** of **PracticalPR**.

With **core-PPR** as the first stage, *Electoral Justice Now* is advocating the best and simplest alternative (i.e. *perfect* PR—with no change to ridings, no change of voting system, no complexity, no flaws, no vulnerabilities, no cost and no risk).

Core-PPR is the only practical choice—and the best choice to become a winning strategy! The second stage of **PracticalPR** implementation—with careful consideration of the other identified options and any new ideas—should probably be deferred to a following election.

In 2018, BC will have the historic opportunity to set the standard for the rest of Canada by adopting any form of PR.

With **PracticalPR**, BC can set the standard for the entire World, showing how Democracy should be done in the digital age, with an electoral system worthy of the 21st Century!

Electoral Justice Now!

Electoral Justice Now (EJN) is a new organization of political activism, advocating for a more principled and positive form of Electoral Reform (ER). We salute all the good work done by all of the ER activists and organizations since the beginning of the movement in England in 1883. However, EJN respectfully challenges all ER organizations and leaders to refocus their efforts onto the principles of Democracy and Electoral Justice.

It's just not enough to simply call for electoral reform—while offering only flawed and imperfect PR alternatives. Much better is needed and indeed possible!

EJN recognizes that the limited success to date of the ER movement results from:

- o Misfocusing the public debate onto a nebulous concept of 'reform' rather than the principle of 'justice'.
- o Only offering marginally acceptable electoral alternatives (such as MMP and STV)—with defects easily exposed by opponents of PR.
- o Failure to rally public opinion to the need for a principled and endless struggle for true Democracy.
- o Failure to conduct effective campaigns for referenda on PR—with failure to publicly expose the political self-interest and duplicity of the political parties opposing ER.

The objectives of EJN are to remedy these inadequacies—with intent to work with other ER organizations and activists to achieve *Electoral Justice Now*, with the adoption of some form of PR, preferably PPR! It's time for *'We the People'* to have PR!

EJN will strongly participate in the public consultation process for British Columbia's 2018 referendum on PR, advocating for the adoption of whatever form of PR is chosen.

EJN intends to run a vigorous campaign that will be focused on:

- o Principles. Primarily the principles of Electoral Justice. Primarily on how FPTP violates all of the principles of Electoral Justice.
  [If PPR is selected, it becomes a much stronger case in contrast to FPTP, with PPR fulfilling all of the principles of Electoral Justice.]
- o Exposing the NO campaign. Primarily exposing the deceit and dishonesty of their FUD campaign, and exposing the self-interest of the parties and lobbyists behind it.