Make Every Vote Count equally!

The basic democratic principle that every Canadian's vote should be **equal and effective**, regardless of where you live or for whom you vote, remains unfulfilled in our current electoral system.

The Problem:

First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) inevitably distorts overall election results, usually giving Canadians "false majority" governments. It also denies half of all voters representation when they don't pick a "winner".

Over and over, our current system delivers 100% of the power to parties who obtain less than 40% of the vote. It's the nature of the system. Canada is one of only three OECD countries still using an antiquated, 12th century Winner-Take-All system. 80% of OECD countries use some form of proportional representation.

Winner-take-all voting

- False majorities where Parties with less than 50% of the vote can obtain 100% of the power. British Columbia has had 17 elections since 1953 – 16 have been false majorities.
- In every election half of all voters are unable to elect a representative aligned with their values
- Political division is artificially exaggerated, making regions appear more partisan and politically opposed
- Low voter turn-out with troubling low levels among young people
- Staggering public apathy and indifference
- False majorities promote hyper-partisan competition and the excessive concentration of political power in the Prime Minister's Office
- Strategic voting becomes an imperative where you 'hold your nose' to vote for 'the lesser of two evils'
- Distorts voter intention and leaves many communities without a real voice in their government.
- Some Canadians will never have a representative who shares their views
- False majority governments can fail to reflect the priorities of most Canadians

The Solution:

Proportional Representation is about fairness. Everyone should have equal and effective votes for equal and fair representation.

Peer-reviewed research has shown that countries using PR tend to outperform those using winner-take-all systems on measures of democracy, quality of life, income equality, environmental outcomes and economic growth.
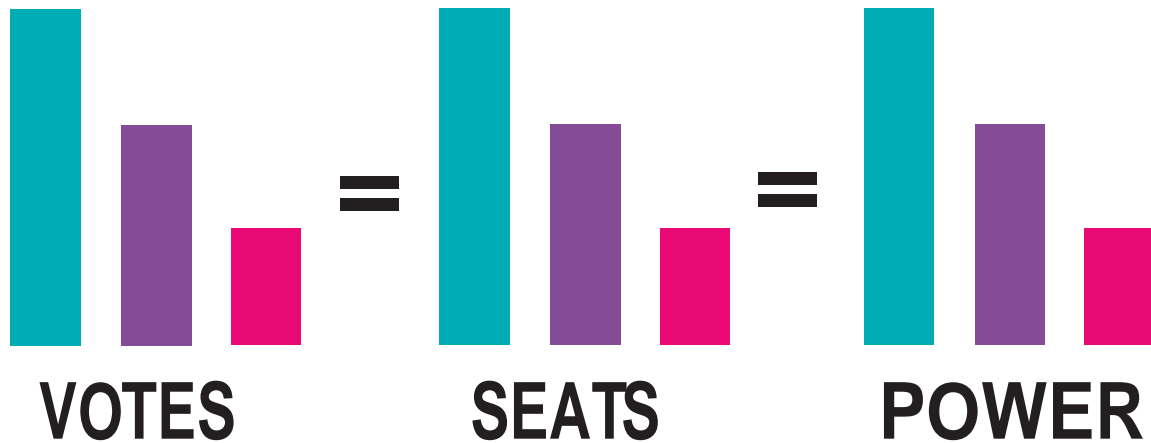
Why? Because the electorate had more power to effect change.

Proportional Representation

- Most western democracies use proportional representation
- Most votes counts toward electing a representative
- People are more encouraged to vote and turnout can be up to 7.5% higher
- False majorities should no longer occur
- Voter intention is respected - 39% of the vote should equal 39% of the seats
- More women and minorities are elected and Parliament reflects a wider range of political views
- Abuses of power are curtailed and Parliaments are less adversarial
- Voters are more satisfied with the quality of their country's democracy
- Higher scores on health, education, environment and standards of living
- More fiscally responsible and stable
- As degree of proportionality increases, income inequality decreases
- Reduces the need for strategic voting
- Delivers policy supported by the majority with greater continuity and stability

Let's Make All Our Votes Count in BC!

EQUALITY • FAIRNESS • DIVERSITY • EFFECTIVENESS • CHOICE • ACCOUNTABILITY
STABLE & EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT • REGIONAL BALANCE • LOCAL REPRESENTATION

VOTES = SEATS = POWER

BC has certainly had its share of controversial, unfair elections.

British Columbia has had 17 elections since 1953 – 16 have been false majorities where the winning parties overall share of the vote is considerably lower than their share of the seats.

1996 - NDP received only 39% of the votes, the Liberals 42% but the second place NDP formed a false 'majority' government! The following election gave the Liberals 57% of the vote but they took 97% of the seats, leaving virtually no opposition to hold them accountable and excluding the Green Party despite it receiving 12% of the vote.

2005 and 2009 - Liberals win a false majority with 46% of the vote.

2013 - Liberals receive a false majority with 44% of the vote.

BC has been slowly moving toward electoral reform, holding 2 referenda on introducing proportional representation, initially polling a strong majority in favour (57%) but falling short of the ruling party's required 'super-majority' (60%).

Thanks to the hard work of fair minded-citizens, BC will have another opportunity to switch to a fairer voting system in 2018.

Opponents linked to political parties have already started misinformation campaigns aimed at scaring you. They enjoy the benefits of false-majorities and don't want to share power.

Get the facts!

- Voter intention needs to be respected where 39% of the Votes equal 39% of the Seats.
- All Canadians deserve equal & effective representation aligned with their political values.
- Any proportional system can be designed to ensure the voter elects local representatives.
- PR limits elite control over decision-making, which enhances accountability and policy innovation.
- Countries with proportional representation have stable governments that empower ordinary citizens and allow for a wider range of views to be represented in the legislature.

You can help us make voting fair in BC by:

- Sharing our posts on social media
- Liking us on Facebook: Fair Vote Canada-BC and Fair Vote Canada
- Following us on Twitter: @FairVoteBC and @FairVoteCanada
- Bringing our handouts to your meetings or other places in your community where you can talk to voters.
- Downloading resources like this flyer at www.fairvote.ca/campaign-resources/

Sign the BC Voter's Pledge www.fairvote.ca/bcvotepledge