

Bill 2

The Democratic Reform Act

WHEREAS only three majority governments have had a majority of the popular vote and the party with the largest share of votes has been over represented in parliament in every election over the last century¹ and

WHEREAS fewer than 1 in 4 Canadian parliamentarians are female despite over 90 years of enfranchisement of women in Canada ² and

WHEREAS an element of proportionality would reduce regional imbalances, promote fairness, diversity in opinions, and has the potential to revitalize voter turn-out³

THEREFORE HER MAJESTY, BY AND WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE YOUTH PARLIAMENT OF MANITOBA, ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) All electors shall cast two ballots in an election. On the *proportional ballot* electors shall vote for a party and the overall share of this ballot that each party receives will determine the percentage of seats that each party receives in the House of Commons. On the *representative ballot* electors shall vote directly for a person to represent their respective riding. Any party that does not fill its allotment of seats through the representative ballot, shall add members from its ranked party list until the proportional allotment is filled.
 - a) Both regional and proportional representatives shall have the same abilities to vote and speak in the House of Commons.
 - b) For a party to be listed on the proportional ballot it must:
 - i) Release a ranked list of candidates at most two weeks after an election is called.
 - ii) Alternate between male and female candidates on the ranked list.
 - iii) Run representative candidates in at least one riding.
 - c) To win a proportional seat, a party must receive at minimum 3% of the proportional vote or win one representative seat.

- 2) The Office of the Governor General shall be elected by a general election every five years.
 - a) The Governor General shall remain the representative of the Monarch.
 - i) All candidates for Governor General must receive the assent of the Monarch to be named on the ballot.
 - b) The Governor General shall have the right to challenge any bill passed by the parliament by putting it to a national referendum.
 - c) Candidates for the position of Governor General shall not be members of any political party and may not be solicited for during the election by any political party.

¹ "Canadian Election Results by Party 1867-2011." *Elections*. Simon Fraser University, 2 May 2011. Web. <<http://www.sfu.ca/~aheard/elections>>.

² Canada. Parliamentary Information and Research Service. Social Affairs. *Women in Parliament*. By Julie Cool. Parliament of Canada, 14 July 2010. Web.

³ Canada. Law Commission of Canada. Ministry of Public Works and Government Services. *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Print.

- 3) All Canadians age sixteen and older shall have the right to vote in federal elections.
- 4) The Senate of Canada shall be appointed by majority vote by the provincial/territorial legislatures.
 - a) Each province shall appoint three senators plus one additional senator per 500, 000 people of population.
 - b) Each territory's legislative assembly shall appoint one senator.
 - c) The requirement of \$4000 in property ownership shall no longer be obligatory for Senators.
 - d) Senators may serve up to two terms of eight years and must retire at the age of 75.