

POWER UP YOUR VOTE

BC Provincial Referendum on Electoral Reform

Tuesday, May 12th

BC-STV Electoral Reform

"On May 12th you have a choice – between the new politics or more of the same."

On Provincial Election Day you will cast a vote in a referendum. Your decision will decide whether we stick with a 'first-past-the-post' system beloved by parties, or the people's choice, the BC Single Transferable Vote.

We think you should choose BC-STV.

Which electoral system should British Columbia use to elect members to the provincial Legislative Assembly?

The existing electoral system (First-Past-the-Post)



The single transferable vote electoral system (BC-STV) proposed by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform



Learn more
www.stv.ca

What's wrong with the existing system?

It cheats the voters

We do not get the government or opposition that we voted for, and whole regions are often not represented in Cabinet.

It makes government unaccountable

When 40% of the votes can win 60% of the seats and 100% of the power, the government believes it has a mandate to do what it likes, when it likes.

It favors parties over people

Where parties have "safe seats", nomination meetings count more than elections. And political parties would rather keep a weak, elected MLA than risk replacing one.

It weakens our province

It fuels polarized policy-making, seesaw governments and partisan posturing. The result: instability.

How will BC-STV make elections better?

Fair election results

Parties will win the portion of seats in the legislature that they actually earn.

More effective representation

Greater voter choice leads to more competitive local contests and an end to "safe" regions for just one party.

Accountability to communities

When nearly all voters help elect someone then government and politicians must truly serve the people.

More responsive legislatures

A more representative legislature means policy-making will better reflect the values and priorities of British Columbians.

Greater stability

Consensus-based, enduring legislation creates a better investment, business and labour climate.

BC-STV: The People's Choice

In 2004 a group of 160 ordinary people were asked to fix our broken electoral system. Our politicians knew they couldn't fix it themselves, and voted unanimously to turn the task over to an independent Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.

Drawn at random, these committed citizens spent 11 months learning and listening to the people of BC. What they heard led 95% of the Assembly to back BC-STV.

Their choice went to the people in a referendum on May 17th 2005. It won majorities in 77 out of 79 constituencies, but despite backing from 58% of voters fell just short of the required 60% threshold. For the Citizen's Assembly, who had worked hard to meet the needs of both urban and rural BC, this broad based support was proof that ordinary people can take on an extraordinary task on behalf of their fellow citizens.

"We did our work with a level of respect, integrity and commitment that was unequal to anything I've been involved with before or since."

*Anna Rankin,
Quesnel,
Citizens'
Assembly
member*

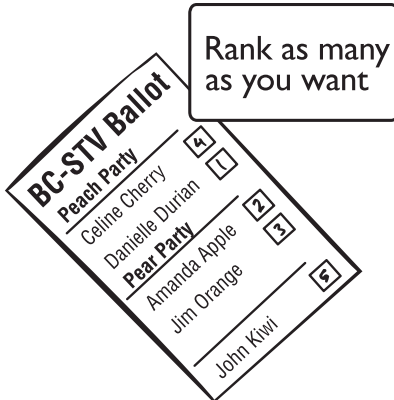


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BC-STV Electoral Reform

What is BC-STV?

BC-STV is a form of Single Transferable Vote, versions of which are used in Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Scotland. It is a modern system designed to ensure voters have an effective voice in their government.



A new way to vote

Simplicity

On the ballot, voters can rank as many candidates as they like - it's as easy as 1,2,3. Voters decide which candidate best represents their chosen party. They can even vote for candidates from several different parties, or for an independent.

Real Choice

Political parties hoping to win more than one seat will put forward a diverse slate of candidates to maximize their appeal with voters.

Stronger local representation

Each region will have the same number of MLAs as before, but they will be grouped together into 20 multi-member districts across the province. So there will be 4 MLAs who represent the Kootenays as a whole, instead of one MLA for Nelson-Creston, another for Cranbrook, and so on.

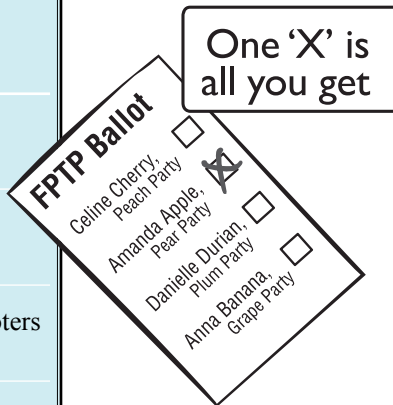
In a typical 5 seat district, a party with a fifth of the vote will generally get one seat; a party with two fifths of the vote will get two seats, and so on.

As winner no longer 'takes all' nearly every voter will get an MLA they helped elect. Our current system can just as easily hand a party that gets a minority of the vote in a region, all the seats, or none at all. STV puts voters in control, giving them the mix of MLAs they actually voted for.

The result – more views represented and more voices heard.

Compare the choices and you'll know why:

	BC-STV	First Past the Post
Accuracy	Votes translate into seats fairly	Distorted outcomes
Do votes matter?	80%+ of voters elect an MLA	Minority of voters elect an MLA
Accountability	Strong	Compromised
Representation	Effective	Weak
Stability	More enduring legislation	Wild policy swings
Party control	Moderate	Excessive
Style	Cooperative	Confrontational



Need more information?

Visit: www.stv.ca

Or call: 1-866-835-7612

Register on voting day.

Voting Information:

www.stv.ca/vote

Authorized by Jamie Deith, financial agent, British Columbians for BC-STV, 604-484-2979.



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