

## Ottawa

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## Mark Strahl

Member of Parliament  
Chilliwack—Hope

## Constituency

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October 14, 2016

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia  
Member of Parliament, Lac-Saint-Louis  
Chair, Special Committee on Electoral Reform  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Scarpaleggia,

**RE: Submission to the Special Committee on Electoral Reform from the Riding of Chilliwack—Hope**

For the past several months, Members of Parliament across Canada have held public consultations with their constituents in order to provide a submission to the Special Committee on Electoral Reform. Please consider the following to be my submission based on my public consultations in the riding of Chilliwack—Hope.

### 1.) Methodology

In order to consult with as wide a variety of my constituents as possible, I have been engaged in various forms of public consultation from January 2016 to October 2016.

These consultations have included the following:

- Holding public meetings every 4-8 weeks on a variety of topics, including electoral reform;
- Reaching out to constituents via social media to get their input;
- Meeting with constituents one-on-one in my office to hear their ideas and concerns regarding electoral reform;
- Receiving and responding to correspondence from constituents regarding electoral reform;
- Sending a mail-in survey to every household in my constituency on the topic of electoral reform with an invitation to respond with comments.

In each consultation, every effort was made to remain non-partisan and invite feedback of every kind. I did not engage third-party advocates or invite any advocacy groups to any of my meetings.

The survey that I sent out was sent to every household in my riding via unaddressed mailing through Canada Post in the first week of September, 2016. Every household was invited to respond

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by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016, to ensure that the results could be tabulated in time to submit to your committee.

The survey asked the following question:

- “Before changing how we elect our MPs, should the government hold a referendum to get the approval of Canadians?”

The survey included a pamphlet that provided arguments both for and against the use of a referendum, including quotes from national editorials and the Liberal Minister of Democratic Institutions, Maryam Monsef.

## 2.) Consultation Results

In the consultation methods that I used, the survey had the largest response. The results from the survey are as follows:

Total Respondents	1,480	100%
In favour of a referendum	1,319	89%
Against a referendum	130	9%
Undecided	31	2%

**Table 1 - Results from survey**

The tallied results from the survey are limited to people who provided their name and address on their responses. Respondents had to live at an address within my riding in order to be counted, and had to be voting age Canadian citizens in order to respond.

In addition to my survey, I also received about a dozen letters on the issue of electoral reform, but there was no consensus on what, if any, electoral changes are desirable. Contributions that I received ranged from constituents proposing we keep the First-Past-The-Post system to four form letters I received from constituents who asked me to consider the Fair Vote Canada submission.

I am very encouraged with the number of respondents to this survey. In order to have received the same level of feedback via townhall meetings, I would have had to host 20 such meetings with 75 unique attendees at each one.

The use of a survey was also beneficial, because it limited respondents to Canadian citizens living within my riding. In a townhall format, respondents are not required to live within the Member of Parliament’s riding and there is no differentiation between individuals and advocacy or partisan groups. In my survey, I did not count submissions from third parties, as only individuals could reply.

## 3.) Conclusion

The results of the survey speak for themselves. Eighty-nine percent is a staggering majority in favour of a referendum. Clearly, by the response of my constituency, I am unable to support any electoral reform without a national referendum, and I will be sure to clearly and loudly advocate for a national referendum on behalf of my constituents.

I urge the government and the Special Committee on Electoral Reform to respect the will of my constituents and to recommend providing Canadians the final say over the future of their electoral system through a national referendum.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Strahl', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mark Strahl, MP  
Chilliwack—Hope