

ONTARIO SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

B E T W E E N:

**FAIR VOTING BC and
SPRINGTIDE COLLECTIVE FOR DEMOCRACY SOCIETY**

Applicants

- and -

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF CANADA

Respondent

AFFIDAVIT OF ANDREW BLAIR

I, Andrew Blair, of the City of Halifax, in the Province of Nova Scotia, SOLEMNLY
AFFIRM:

1. I have personal knowledge of the matters deposed herein. Where I have relied on the information of others, I believe it to be true.
2. I am 48 years old and have voted in the last nine federal elections. I have never voted for a winning candidate in a federal election in my lifetime. I also do not feel that any of my MPs have truly represented my views. This is very frustrating because I don't consider my political views to be on the fringe. It is simply a reflection of our broken voting system.

3. The first federal election in which I was eligible to vote was the 1993 election. I was living on Vancouver Island at the time, in the Nanaimo-Cowichan riding (it no longer exists). I believe I voted for the New Democratic Party, though my memories are quite dated. The Reform Party candidate won, with 39.8% of the vote – I am absolutely certain that I did not vote for this candidate.
4. My second election was the 1997 election – it is at this point that elections start standing out in my mind. I was living in Kelowna, British Columbia (the riding of Kelowna at the time). I remember that election well because it was a wake-up call to me: candidates that I preferred such as those of the NDP or the Green Party, had no hope of winning and in fact had *never* won in the riding as long as it had existed. Even the Liberal Party had little hope of winning. The candidate that was most likely to win was from the Reform Party, a party whose policies I reviled. I had a stark choice: vote for a candidate that I disliked and disagreed with on most issues – the Progressive Conservative Party candidate – to attempt to block the Reform, or throw my vote away on a candidate that I preferred but who would never win. I chose to vote strategically (voting for the PC candidate) but Reform Party candidate Werner Schmidt won anyways, as I predicted. Voting for the Conservative Party, a party that I really didn't like, instead of voting for my first choice made me feel as if the electoral system didn't allow me to express my voice and support my preferred party and candidate.
5. Over the following seven provincial elections, I have only lived in ridings represented by Liberal Party MPs.
6. In late 1997, I moved to the riding of Ottawa-South to attend university, and I lived in

this riding until 2012. When I arrived, a Liberal Party MP (John Manley) was representing the riding, and likewise won in the 2000 election. In the 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2011 elections, Mr. Manley's Liberal colleague, David McGuinty won, despite failing to ever obtain a majority of the vote. (In fact, the Liberals have held the riding since its creation in 1988.) I voted for the NDP each time. The NDP candidates obtained between 6.7% and 18.2% of the vote.

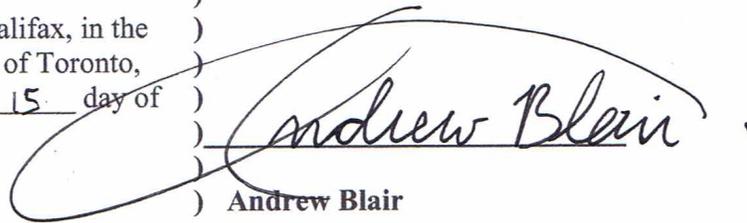
7. In my time in university, I was eager to debate and engage in politics, but became increasingly discouraged because the winner in the various electoral districts around Ottawa was all too often a foregone conclusion. In my discussions with my fellow students, I discovered that many felt the same way. It seemed to us that little mattered when faced with a stronghold riding where one party had a lock on victory each election. Writing to my MP on one issue of policy or another, I was often given the cold shoulder if I did not advocate something in line with party policy. It dawned on me that this entire system had a problem, one which made young highly voters cynical (if they didn't give up on participating in our democracy entirely). I felt strongly that I should not give up hope, and give into this cynicism.
8. In 2012 I moved to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and took up residence in the riding of Halifax West, where I still live. The riding had been represented by Liberal Party MP Geoff Regan since 2000, and he again won in the 2015 and 2019 elections. I voted for the Green Party candidate in both those elections, when they gained 3.9% and 12.06% of the vote. I unfortunately felt as if I was throwing my vote away, given that I had no chance to elect my candidate of choice.

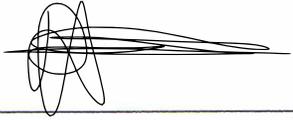
9. I understand that, under our current first-past-the-post system, an MP claims to represent in Parliament *all* voters in their district (or, at the very least, its majority views). Unfortunately, my MPs were often elected by a minority of voters. I certainly do not feel as if they have represented me and cared about the same issues as I care about (unlike the NDP and Green candidates for which I voted). I have experienced this first-hand for the entirety of my adult voting life. Issues such as climate change policy have been important enough to me that I have volunteered in grass-roots movements to campaign on them for many years, frequently talking to the public or meeting with my MP. My views on this point, which I believe are reflective of the views of a significant number (even if not the majority) of residents in my riding, have rarely been adequately represented in Parliament by my Liberal MPs, as I believe a Green MP would have done for me. On climate policy in particular, I feel the voting system has been a critical hindrance to Parliament realising the progress desperately needed for survival of our country and civilization – and the progress many Green and NDP voters, if not the majority of Canadians, want to see.

10. The issue of voting system reform further became an increasingly important issue for me while in Ottawa. The 2015 election was a pivotal moment, as the Liberal Party, promising to reform the voting system, won the election. I took part in the cross-Canada public consultations the government held, and noted that approximately nine out of ten fellow citizens across Canada who came out to speak on the consultation were likewise in favour of reforming the voting system, as were the overwhelming majority of experts consulted. But as we know, the Liberal Party did not honour their promise. Quite the opposite: a year after winning the election, they actively worked

against it in Parliament. It has been very frustrating for me that I am not represented by an MP willing to push this issue and advocate for my position in Parliament.

AFFIRMED BEFORE ME, by)
videoconference, from the City of Halifax, in the)
Province of Nova Scotia, to the City of Toronto,)
in the Province of Ontario, on the 15 day of)
APRIL, 2021.)


) **Andrew Blair**



Commissioner of Oaths, etc.

Nicolas M. Rouleau (LSO #54515D)
Nicolas M. Rouleau Professional Corp
41 Burnside Dr.
Toronto ON M6G 2M9