

March 15, 2022

Special Committee on Yukon Electoral Reform

Re: Committee Initiative, and Survey

Hello, we are writing today to express our extreme disappointment and upset with and around the survey/invitations that recently arrived in our mailbox.

The survey arrived without any advance public notice or education around this significant initiative of great import to all Yukoners.

The survey documentation did not include any reference material, backgrounders, or information on the Committee's work and processes, including, on a go forward basis.

Perusing the survey document itself, we are of the view that it is of very poor quality, both in terms of layout/structure, and content.

The explanations offered for the various electoral models presented in the survey are not well-presented. Coupled with the lack of any examples, this presents a major challenge to discerning what and how various alternate models might actually 'work'.

We note as well that there are likely other, perhaps more nuanced or complex, models that are not even presented for consideration in the survey.

We find the orientation of the survey to be more focused on sussing out how political parties can best position themselves for the next election(s), and toward upholding the existing political party system in Yukon, and without any discussion on other electoral models (such as non-party, consensus style governments).

The lack of any space or opportunity to provide comments within the survey document is also limiting to solicitation of Yukoners' thoughts on a range of issues directly related to the survey itself, and to the commission's overall work undertakings.

In an effort to try and grasp any sense at all of the context for this survey, we went on a time-consuming journey to try and find 'something' that might delineate the Commission's purpose, activities to date, and intentions for bringing its work to conclusion.

We eventually found the Committee's website – buried within levels of the Legislative Assembly's website.

Imagine our complete shock and surprise to learn of the news releases previously issued, and public hearings already held.

For all intents and purposes, there have been NO communications with the Yukon public about the Committee's work, agendas, or plans, other than its intention to produce a report for the Legislative Assembly by Fall Session 2022. We can only assume that those who did make hearing

submissions/reports were those for whom this initiative was very 'close' and who were therefore in a position to engage on the subject at the time.

We feel the Committee has not accorded either the subject matter, or the Yukon citizenry, the respect deserving of such an important matter as electoral reform.

We have not yet had time/opportunity to review the report/submissions presently listed on the Committee's website. We will be undertaking to do so in an effort to better inform ourselves, before making a decision on when and how we might complete the survey.

In the meantime, we strongly urge the Committee to quickly undertake a comprehensive Yukon public education campaign, involving outreach by media, direct-to-home mailouts, and other means, toward ensuring Yukoners are better informed and equipped to engage on this matter, and can make meaningful contributions to these discussions.

Given the survey documentation did not identify a survey close deadline, we would also appreciate Committee confirmation of when, and how, the survey results will be shared with the Yukon public.

We look forward to your response.

Cathleen and David Lewis  
Whitehorse, Yukon