

September 30, 2022

**To: Yukon Special Committee on Electoral Reform**

Dear Committee members:

To begin, I thank the Committee for the work it has done so far, and information it has gathered. I consider electoral reform, and more generally democracy, to be of critical importance to our continuing success as a society and I am glad this process has been undertaken. It was overdue.

Second, I need to state that I consider the basic process being followed to be inadequate. I note that this is the second Yukon electoral reform commission formed in the past five years. The first was criticized for not being independent enough from the Yukon Government. The second and current commission is comprised exclusively of members who are elected members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. I do not consider this to have been a move in the right direction.

This Committee when formed in May 2021 was given an extremely simple/vague/broad mandate: to “examine electoral reform”. There were no objectives given to the Committee for such reform.

The Yukon is a geographically large territory with a tiny but diverse population. Electoral reform options – as you will know well – are many, and of course “the devil is in the details”. I have my own electoral system preference – mixed member proportional – but it’s plain for me to see that there is currently nothing resembling consensus in the Yukon citizenry on what electoral reform should look like - or even if there needs to be electoral reform.

I believe that the work undertaken by this Committee needs to be continued by a Citizens Assembly, who would (1) establish objectives for electoral reform in Yukon (2) study options (3) consult with Yukoners and (4) report with recommendations to the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Such a direction change would not mean starting from scratch. The Committee has gathered a great deal of information and consulted widely, and the information and submissions would be available and considered by the Citizens Assembly members. The Citizens Assembly would continue consulting Yukoners as and to the extent they consider useful.

For any electoral reform to be successful there will need to be public trust. I believe that trust can better, perhaps only, be built by a body that is truly independent from government, non-partisan, and representative of a diversity of the Yukon population.

I am appreciative and grateful for the work the Committee has done to date. I believe however that to best continue electoral reform process, you need to hand off leadership of it to a Citizens Assembly.

Many Canadians presently look to other nations' democratic systems – New Zealand, Germany, the Scandinavian countries – for inspiration and ideas. I believe that the Yukon, with its wealth of resources, Indigenous culture, and small but engaged population, could create a made-in-Canada model democracy. And that that our best chance to do that is right now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lenore Morris'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'L' and 'M'.

Lenore Morris