

Lobbying 101 – Jan 23, 2014 workshop summary

Lynn McDonald

Sound link

Lobbying 101

<http://soundcloud.com/wingwo/lobby-101-at-metro-hall/s-t097L>

Half of attendees have lobbied MPs prior to this workshop; however, almost all attendees agreed to lobbying.

Which party the attendees belong to is crucial as different message for different party, so the message must be adapted.

Some Conservatives want Proportional Representation. There is some quiet rumblings in the back benches that might be encouraging for reform. Michael Chong's Reform Act is an indication of some action in Parliament that speaks of the backbenchers' desire for reform.

Most work needs to be done with the Liberals since they are the 'grey' area. Some lean towards it more than others. The Liberal National Convention is coming on Feb. 20, so that it should be 'out there' before that. However, the official Liberal position does not favour PR.

There are four in the attendees going to the Liberal Convention.

NDP favours Proportional Representation - Craig Scott, Critic for Electoral Reform, is doing a tour promoting Proportional Representation.

Crucial Question: In 2015, will there be a Harper majority?
If there is not a majority, the other parties should form a coalition.

So if the Liberal Party does not have Proportional Representation on their policy, we cannot move much further on electoral reform. It is crucial to create the discourse in the Liberal ranks.

Attendees will form groups according to their ridings and their parties to form lobby groups.

Lobbyists must be prepared with notes. The executive summary from *Voting Counts* from the Law Commission is a good preparation.

<http://www.electoralalliance.ca/content/law-commission-report-electoral-reform>

<http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/J31-61-2004E.pdf>

ADDITIONAL TIPS ON APPROACHING MPS

Shared by Adam:

- come in armed with information on PR, like the packages Fair Vote offers
- focus on the principles behind PR and not the practice, the principle is what is important to voters, the details of how it works can be hashed out in a House committee
- get them to make PR and electoral reform a plank in their election platform
- get them to put info on PR out to their constituents ahead of the election
- ask them to sign the "Declaration of Voter's Rights" from Fair Vote
- get a photo of your meeting with them about PR, and if they agree, a photo of them signing the Declaration of Voter's Rights
- get them to put a link to the Fair Vote website on their webpage or fb page
- talk of the potential for multiparty cooperation/coalition on the issue
- send them a post-meeting thank you detailing what was discussed

Shared by Pat McGrail:

Good discussion re MP visits here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/462278493818914/>

References re PR:

<http://wilfdays.blogspot.ca/2014/01/ten-canadian-commissions-assemblies-and.html>

<http://www.electoralreformforcanada.ca/research-and-resources>

http://www.unlockdemocracy.ca/pushing_the_liberals_towards_pr

Others:

www.fairvote.ca

<http://www.fairvote.ca/what-you-can-do/>

<http://www.fairvote.ca/resources/>