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## Vote for MMP

### **More Choice. Fairer Results. Stronger Representation.**

Have you ever:

- Felt that your vote didn't count?
- Voted for a party you didn't like just to stop a party that you liked even less?
- Been discouraged that a party got a minority of votes, yet formed a majority government?

**It's time to make democracy work better**—for Ontario and for working families. On October 10, you can do that by working and voting for electoral reform.

A Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform appointed by the provincial government has recommended an alternative to our current voting system. It is called the **Mixed Member Proportional (MMP)** system. Ontarians can vote for this new system in a referendum as part of the October 10 provincial election.

The Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system doesn't so much change the way we vote, it adds to it to build more democracy.

### **MMP – Here's how it works**

You get one vote for your local riding candidate, just as you do now. Ninety MPPs will be elected.

You also get another vote for your preferred political party. Thirty-nine MPPs will be elected to province-wide at-large seats. This vote is truly representative of the popular vote.

In other words, Ontarians will continue to elect MPPs by riding, and at the same time, introduce proportional representation leading to increased voter choice and increased accountability—from both parties and elected candidates. You will have a local MPP and a new at-large MPP to turn to for assistance.

### **WHAT MMP MEANS FOR CUPE ONTARIO MEMBERS**

Canada is one of the few major countries still using the antiquated "first-past-the-post" system, which almost always gives one party far more power than it deserves. For example, a winning party may get only 35% of the votes,

but it receives 60% of the seats and 100% of the power. Based on the experiences of other countries who've adopted similar systems, the Mixed Member Proportional (MPP) system gives voters:

- **More choice, giving us two votes**—for our preferred local candidate and for our preferred party;
- **Fairer election results** with parties gaining no more, and no fewer, seats than they really deserve;
- **Stronger representation** with more women and diverse candidates elected;
- **Legislation that reflects the majority view** of the electorate;
- And MMP means that parties like the Ontario New Democrats, that champion public services and social justice values, **gain more seats to reflect their popular vote.**

Every one of us needs to be able to explain MMP to our family and colleagues, and counter opponents of MMP who want to maintain the status quo.

### **The Referendum Ballot Question**

Which electoral system should Ontario use to elect members to the provincial legislature?

- The existing electoral system (First-Past-the-Post)
- The alternative electoral system proposed by the Citizens' Assembly (Mixed Member Proportional)

## Frequently Asked Questions about MMP

### Q. Why should we change from the voting system we have now?

**A. It's outdated and unfair.** Experts believe that the "first-past-the-post" system we use now dates back to the 11th century. Most major democracies scrapped this system in the last 50-100 years because:

- Parties routinely win majority governments—and all the power—with less than half the votes cast;
- Sometimes parties that win the most votes do not win the most seats;
- Only those voters who support the most popular party in a riding can elect someone to sit in the Legislature, while all other voters (often the majority) have no political representation.

### Q. What is "fair voting"?

**A.** Eighty-one countries, including Germany and the Netherlands, use a fair vote system. Fair Vote Ontario believes democracy is about ensuring that legitimate majorities govern and that all voters can be represented by someone who reflects their views, as with MMP.

### Q. Won't proportional representation cause endless minority governments and constant elections?

**A. No.** Currently, Canadians are governed at the federal level by a minority government created by an electoral system with incentives that make these governments short-lived. By comparison, governments that use a fair vote system are not minority governments, but rather majority coalition governments. Generally, parties have come to some type of agreement on government policies and each party has seats in cabinet.

Because parties are required to work with one another in coalitions to pass legislation, the system rewards cooperation, compromise and accountability instead of partisan rigidity, trivial bickering and narrow thinking.

### Q. Won't proportional representation lead to too many parties?

**A. No.** Countries that use fair voting systems only have a marginally higher effective number of political parties represented in parliament. While fair vote would allow a few more parties (like the Greens) to gain seats that reflect their popular support, voters would have greater political choice and a more competitive political environment. MMP eliminates the need for "strategic voting" because your vote would now count for more.

### Q. Would fair voting mean more women or people of diversity are elected to our Legislature?

**A. Yes.** Under our current system, internal party politics too often ensure that "safe" seats go to incumbents. Under MMP, parties will be careful to offer voters more choice by presenting candidate lists that represent their diversity. Parties that fail to do so will risk consequences at the ballot box.

### Q. Would Mixed Member Proportional (MPP) increase voter turnout?

**A. Yes.** Countries using such systems have higher voter participation—up to 5-12% higher. In Ontario, we too often don't vote because we don't think our vote will help elect anyone we support. Under MMP, we can reasonably expect that our vote will mean more.

### CUPE Ontario endorses MMP.

For more information, visit: [www.VoteYesForMMP.ca](http://www.VoteYesForMMP.ca)