

ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

OPTION ONE: STATUS QUO: SMP (FPP)

Strengths of the Current System:

LOCAL REPRESENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

“The current system provides for individuals to be elected representing specific and identifiable areas of the province. This fosters a direct link between and their representatives and ensures that all areas of the province have a spokesperson in the legislature. This system allows politicians to speak authoritatively for their area, enables issues of local concern to be placed on the public agenda, and provides a mechanism for voters to hold representatives directly accountable for their actions.” (Preliminary Statement, 2004)

ONE CATEGORY OF MLA WITH COMMON OBLIGATIONS:

“All Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) have EQUAL STANDING in the legislature and SHARE COMMON OBLIGATIONS and relationships to the electorate.” (Preliminary Statement, 2004)

SMP PROMOTES SINGLE PARTY MAJORITY GOVERNMENTS:

“STYLE OF GOVERNMENT AND REPRESENTATION. The current system promotes the creation of MAJORITY GOVERNMENTS that can claim an electoral mandate. These governments have a security of tenure that allows them to plan confidently for the life of the Legislative Assembly and to implement their program as they see fit. By stimulating winner-take-all competition, the electoral system fosters two-party competition and works to limit the place and influence of minor parties and marginal interests.” (Preliminary Statement, 2004)

“While British Columbia has experienced only majority governments since 1953, there were coalition governments between 1941 and 1952 (Liberal and Conservative parties), and a minority government (Social Credit) from 1952 to 1953.” (Citizens’ Assembly Glossary)

FAMILIARITY AND TRANSPARENT COUNTING:

“Elections generally revolve on the issue of the choice of governments. **Simplicity, FAMILIARITY & TRANSPARENT COUNTING.** The single-member plurality system is familiar and straightforward. Voters are simply required to indicate their preferred candidate from the list of names presented. Winners are determined by a simple count of the ballots and are known almost immediately.” (Preliminary Statement, 2004)

SMP DISCOURAGES FRIVOLOUS AND MARGINAL CANDIDATES FROM RUNNING FOR OFFICE.

Weaknesses of the Current System:

LACK OF PROPORTIONALITY:

“Our single-member plurality system is one in which there is no direct connection between the number of votes a party receives and the number of seats it wins in the Legislative Assembly. The system favours large parties over small ones, creating governments with ‘artificial’ majorities and depriving minority views from finding expression in the legislature.” (Preliminary Statement, 2004)

LACK OF VOTER CHOICE:

“THIS TENDS TO LIMIT EFFECTIVE VOTER CHOICE, leads to many votes not contributing to electing any MLA, and SOMETIMES LEADS TO PARTIES WITH THE MOST VOTES NOT WINNING AN ELECTION.” (Preliminary Statement, 2004)

GOVERNMENT-DOMINATED PARLIAMENTS:

“The system fosters an adversarial style of two-party politics in which government domination of the legislature becomes standard practice. With strong party discipline this ensures centralized decision-making with no effective opportunity for the legislature to hold the government accountable between elections.” (Preliminary Statement, 2004)

SMP OFTEN EXCLUDES LOCAL AND MINORITY INTERESTS:

“The system cannot ensure a strong opposition and, with MLAs required to put party interests above those of their constituencies, LOCAL AND MINORITY INTERESTS ARE OFTEN EXCLUDED. **Impacts on Governance and Voters** Adversarial politics often result in sharp swings in public policy as newly elected governments often undo or reverse the programs of their predecessors. This style

of politics contributes to a growing alienation of voters from the political process, which has been reflected in falling voter turnout rates, especially among young voters.” (Preliminary Statement, 2004)

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT THE LINK BETWEEN VOTERS AND REPRESENTATIVES UNDER SMP IS NOT AS STRONG AS HAS BEEN THEORIZED:

For example, in Canada, a survey indicated that only 46 per cent of respondents remembered the names of more than one candidate for their riding at the last election. This contrasts with 58 per cent and 70 per cent of respondents in Denmark and of the respondents in Iceland respectively who remembered the names of more than one candidate for their ridings under PR List systems. Also, in Canada, this survey indicated that 32 per cent of respondents could not remember the names of any candidate for their riding at the last election. This contrasts with 23 per cent and 17 per cent of the respondents in Denmark and of the respondents in Iceland respectively who could not remember the names of any candidate for their riding at the last election under PR List systems. (P. Norris, *Electoral Engineering* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2004) 239.)

Also, in Canada, a survey indicated that 22 per cent of respondents had contact with their MPs in the last year. This figure was much better than that for other SMP countries. British citizens and American citizens were surveyed and only 13 per cent and 12 per cent of respondents had contact with their elected representative in the last year. However, in Iceland (under a part list system) 31 per cent of respondents had contact with their elected representative within the last year. (Norris 241.)

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT WESTMINSTER SYSTEMS IN GENERAL AND BRITISH COLUMBIANS IN PARTICULAR HAVE A LONG STANDING TRADITION OF USING MULTI-MEMBER DISTRICTS:

“... The traditional pattern of representation in Britain before the 1832 reform was for each county and each enfranchised borough to return two members. It was not until 1885 that this pattern of dual representation was first seriously challenged and the double-member constituency became the exception rather than the rule. It was, however, an exception [*sic*] which lasted well into the twentieth century so that even in the election of 1945 there were fifteen districts [*sic*] which returned two members....

... Similarly in Canada.... Even in the 1960s some 20 percent of the members of the provincial legislatures were elected from districts returning more than one member....

Most multi-member districts are a result of the application of the principle that the boundaries of electoral districts should conform with the boundaries of other governmental units – counties, cities, etc., a principle which itself may be based on a deep sense of tradition... There is also the possibility that the necessity of

conforming to existing boundaries may reduce the opportunities for gerrymandering...

The British Columbia Commission of Inquiry into the Redefinition of Electoral Districts devoted a whole section to the matter of single – versus multi-member constituencies.... The arguments presented in support of multiple ridings, said the commission, were few and mostly weak. Perhaps the strongest argument was that ‘two or even three members may help to preserve the unity of a riding.’ Two other arguments demonstrated, in the Commission’s view, ‘an abdication of political responsibility in favour of local caution.’ These arguments were, first, that by electing members of more than one party, a constituency ‘could play it safe and maximize its chances of having a representative of the government side.’ Secondly, the district could increase its chances of being represented by a Minister of the Crown.” (T. H. Qualter, *The Election Process in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1970) 118–123.)

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT SMP CAN GIVE RISE TO SPOILED BALLOTS DESPITE ITS SIMPLICITY:

In the 1953 Canadian Federal Election return, 1.06 per cent of the ballots were rejected. Of these spoiled ballots the breakdown was as follows: 36.5 per cent were deliberately spoiled by the voter; 13.0 per cent were left blank; 18.4 per cent showed a vote for more than one candidate; 5.8 per cent were rejected because the voter wrote something on the ballot; 6.0 per cent were rejected because the voter rank ordered his or her preferences among the candidates; 14.5 per cent were rejected because the voter used some symbol other than an “X”; 4.2 per cent were rejected because a pencil had not been used; and 1.6 per cent were rejected erroneously by the election officials. (Qualter 161.)

AN MLA WITH A SAFE SEAT HAS NO INCENTIVE TO PROVIDE GOOD CONSTITUENCY SERVICE:

“Under the plurality system, an MP with a safe seat has no particular incentive to be a good constituency member and because by convention one MP does not encroach upon the constituency of another, the elector has no redress if he is ill-served by his MP.” (Vernon Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System: The Referendum and Electoral Reform in British Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 258.) See also the following for Wappel’s attitudes on constituent service:

[<http://www.petergolding.com/press%20releases%202001/pr010510.htm>]

SMP ALLOWS FOR THE ELECTION OF CONDORCET LOSERS:

“The plurality procedure can produce an outcome which is a Condorcet loser. Hence, the plurality winner might lose in a pairwise majority contest with every other candidate [or party as the case may be].” (Dummett 172.)

SMP IN BRITISH COLUMBIA HAS LED TO OVERAMPLIFICATION AND THE DISTORTION OF CHANGES IN POPULAR OPINION:

“Electoral reform might be desirable, from a democratic viewpoint, when the existing rules seriously dampen or overamplify or distort changes in popular opinion.... Overamplification means that small shifts in party votes result in huge shifts in their seat shares; it can result from use of plurality rule in excessively few districts.... In contrast, by distortions we mean unsystematic and unpredictable outcomes which contravene the notion that more votes should mean more seats; this is the case when a party with fewer votes obtains more seats or a party increasing its votes share from one election to the next sees its seats share reduced.” (M. S. Shugart & R. Taagepera, *Seats and Votes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) 220–221.)

SMP REQUIRES EXPENSIVE AND ARBITRARY REDISTRICTING PROCEDURES:

“On the other hand, one should also beware of apparent simplicity of rules that may hide complications elsewhere. Thus, the simple SMP rule INVOLVES RELATIVELY HIGH DISTRICTING AND VOTER REGISTRATION COSTS. It has embroiled the United States in complex and INTERMINABLE GERRYMANDER AND REDISTRICTING ISSUES. When the entire package is considered, even Single Transferable Vote looks simple in comparison” (Rein Taagepera, “Designing Electoral Rules and Waiting for an Electoral System to Evolve” 1999 at <http://www.nd.edu/~kellogg/pdfs/taageper.pdf>)

OPTION TWO: AV IN SMD

Strengths of the Alternate Vote in Single Member Districts:

ESSENTIALLY THE STRENGTHS ARE THE SAME AS THOSE FOR SMP EXCEPT AS DISCUSSED IN “WEAKNESSES OF THE ALTERNATIVE VOTE IN SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICTS” BELOW. HOWEVER, AV (SMD) HAS THE FOLLOWING EXTRA STRENGTHS:

ENHANCED VOTER CHOICE (Compared to SMP) AND GREATER LIKELIHOOD THAT VOTERS WILL VOTE HONESTLY.

GUARANTEE THAT THE LOCAL MLA WILL NOT BE A CONDORCET LOSER. The winning candidate for each SMD must be able to beat by a majority of the votes each candidate alive at the last round of eliminations.

GREATER LIKELIHOOD THAT LARGE PARTIES WILL COOPERATE WITH SMALLER ONES. Rather than warning voters not to split their votes, larger parties will try to get the lower preference votes of voters who vote for minor parties.

UNDER AV (SMD) VOTERS CAN SIGNAL TO PARTIES WHICH COALITIONS THEY WOULD PREFER. This can be done through the ranking of candidates across multiple parties. If most of the voters for Party A and most of the voters for Party B, rank candidates for each other's party higher than for candidates of Party C, the leadership of Party A and the leadership of Party B will realize that the voters may be signalling the desire for a coalition between Party A and Party B.

Weaknesses of the Alternate Vote in Single Member Districts:

ESSENTIALLY THE WEAKNESSES ARE THE SAME AS THOSE FOR SMP EXCEPT AS DISCUSSED IN "STRENGTHS OF AV (SMD)" ABOVE. HOWEVER, AV (SMD) HAS THE FOLLOWING EXTRA WEAKNESSES:

MIGHT ENCOURAGE SOME CANDIDATE AND PARTY PROLIFERATION.

COMPLEXITY, LACK OF **FAMILIARITY & LACK TRANSPARENT COUNTING**. AV (SMD) requires a preferential ballot which is more complicated for voters than a categorical choice.

AV IS NOT MONOTONIC. A preferential voting system is monotonic if more first place votes can never hurt a candidate. Under certain (rare) circumstances, voters under AV (SMD) may hurt a candidate by voting for him or her. However, note that STV will also be non-monotonic. (S. J. Brams & P. C. Fishburn, "Some Logical Defects of the Single Transferable Vote, " *Choosing an Electoral System: Issues and Alternatives*, eds. A. Lijphart and B. Grofman (New York: Praeger, 1984) 147-151.)

OPTION THREE: MIXED MEMBER PROPORTIONAL (SMP + LIST)

Strengths of MMP (SMP + List):

IDENTIFIABLE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES:

MMP provides for individuals to be elected representing specific and identifiable areas of the province. This fosters a direct link between and their representatives and ensures that all areas of the province have a spokesperson in the legislature. This system allows politicians to speak authoritatively for their area, enables issues of local concern to be placed on the public agenda, and provides a mechanism for voters to hold representatives directly accountable for their actions.

SOME MEASURE OF PROPORTIONALITY:

For example, the German system secures a nearly perfect proportionality of party representation. (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 220.)

AVOIDANCE OF PARTY PROLIFERATION:

“The results in Germany have demonstrated an elimination rather than a proliferation of new parties. In the first *Bundestag* there were ten parties (counting the CDU and the CSU as one party). By 1961, there were only three parties.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 221.)

STABLE GOVERNMENTS:

Germany has had strong and stable two party coalition governments since it introduced MMP. (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 221.)

INCREASED REPRESENTATION FOR WOMEN AND VISIBLE AND ETHNIC MINORITIES:

“Maori and women have gained representation [under MMP], the former in numbers proportionate to their presence in wider society while women have done less well (28% in 2002), although better than under FPP (21% in 1993).” (McLeay 2004)

MORE EFFECTIVE LEGISLATURE:

“Parliament in New Zealand has become more assertive. This is due to several factors: the multi-party Parliament, leading to the parties competing with one another for media attention and, also, to carve out their own distinctive policies; the succession of minority governments; and the existence of an established (before MMP) system of parliamentary committees. Legislation is frequently

amended in committee; and the committees carry out inquiries of policies and government administration.” (McLeay 2004)

Weaknesses of MMP (SMP + List):

MINOR PARTY MAY EXERCISE DISPROPORTIONATE POWER:

It should be noted that a party’s power is not a deterministic direct function of the proportion of seats it has in the assembly. Rather, a party’s power is a probabilistic function of the likelihood that the given party will become a pivotal member of a minimum connected winning coalition.

“In New Zealand, during post-1996 coalition negotiations, the minor party’s choice of coalition partner did not coincide with pre-election statements (discrediting MMP itself). There are now seven parties in the New Zealand Parliament.” (McLeay 2004)

LOCAL CONSTITUENCY VOTE MAINLY DETERMINED BY PARTY CONSIDERATIONS ALONE. HENCE, LIMITED RESPONSIVENESS OF REPRESENTATIVE TO LOCAL ISSUES:

“The main function of the constituency vote is to elect a constituency representative who is usually chosen on party lines.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 220.)

AN MLA WITH A SAFE SEAT HAS NO INCENTIVE TO PROVIDE GOOD CONSTITUENCY SERVICE:

“Under the plurality system, an MP with a safe seat has no particular incentive to be a good constituency member and because by convention on MP does not encroach upon the constituency of another, the elector has no redress if he is ill-served by his MP.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 258.)

THE LARGEST POLITICAL PARTIES (AND NOT THE VOTERS) LARGELY DETERMINE WHO WILL BE ELECTED IN LOCAL CONSTITUENCIES (ESPECIALLY IN SAFE SEATS). JUST LIKE SMP. HENCE, LIMITED VOTER CHOICE:

“Even if primaries were accepted, they would offer less than the elector could secure under the single transferable vote. For only the paid-up party member would participate in choosing a candidate [under MMP].” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 257.)

PARTY INSIDERS AND NOT THE VOTERS RESOLVE FACTION DISPUTES WITHIN PARTIES:

“The power given to the parties to select candidates means that when a party is divided into factions, each faction’s representation in the legislature will depend upon the decisions of selection committees and party meetings, and not its support amongst the electorate.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 257.)

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTORTIONS OF SMP REMAIN:

“The constituency seats for the larger parties show the same sort of lopsided regional distribution as is seen in SMP voting. These distortions create perverse incentives for certain political parties to favour some regions over others.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 220.)

VOTERS DISLIKED DUAL CANDIDATURE:

“Voters in New Zealand distrusted the party list MPs, regarding them as unaccountable to electors.” (McLeay 2004)

FRICITION BETWEEN TWO CATEGORIES OF REPRESENTATIVES:

Consider the following observations concerning the Welsh Assembly (Allard, 2004) (See Written Submission 0485):

AMS [i.e. MMP] creates two categories of elected representatives. This is an intrinsic defect of additional member systems. Although in the Assembly constituency and regional list Members have equal rights, there remains a perception that list seats are consolation prizes for parties [sic] which failed to win constituency seats.

Constituency Members are viewed as having greater legitimacy as representatives of issues in their constituencies, while regional list Members are not regarded as local representatives in the same way.

There have been accusations that List Members have concentrated their energies in constituencies in their regions where there are future prospects of winning constituency seats. If the Welsh Assembly were to acquire greater powers, it must be anticipated that the tensions between list and constituency AMs will increase.

SIGNIFICANT ROLE PLAYED BY ONE-SEAT ALTERNATIVE THRESHOLD:

“Voting weight and party campaign distortions.” (McLeay 2004)

UNDER MMP WITH SMP, THERE IS NO CLEAR WAY FOR VOTERS TO SIGNAL TO PARTIES WHICH COALITIONS THE VOTERS MIGHT PREFER.

SECRET NEGOTIATIONS AMONG PARTIES:

“THERE ARE SECRET NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN PARTIES AFTER ELECTIONS, DURING THE GOVERNMENT FORMATION PROCESS. These negotiations determine the following: government policies, perhaps a formal coalition agreement; the working rules of the coalition; the allocation of cabinet posts (according to relative party strengths); and the selection of ministers.” (McLeay 2004)

PARTIES WERE SLOW TO ADAPT TO THE NEW DEMANDS OF CAMPAIGNING FOR THE LIST VOTE. (McLeay 2004)

ADVERSARIAL RATHER THAN CONSENSUAL STYLE POLITICS. (McLeay 2004)

MMP (SMP + LIST) ALLOWS ELECTION OF CONDORCET LOSERS IN THE LOCAL CONSTITUENCY SEATS:

“The plurality procedure can produce an outcome which is a CONDORCET LOSER. Hence, the plurality winner might lose in a pairwise majority contest with every other candidate.” (Dummett 172.)

OPTION FOUR: MIXED MEMBER PROPORTIONAL (AV + LIST)

Strengths of MMP (AV + LIST):

ESSENTIALLY THE STRENGTHS ARE THE SAME AS THOSE FOR MMP (SMP + LIST) EXCEPT FOR THOSE ITEMS DISCUSSED IN “WEAKNESSES OF MMP (AV + LIST)” BELOW. HOWEVER, MMP (AV + LIST) HAS THE FOLLOWING EXTRA STRENGTHS:

UNDER MMP (AV + LIST) VOTERS CAN SIGNAL TO PARTIES WHICH COALITIONS THEY WOULD PREFER:

This can be done through the ranking of candidates across multiple parties. If most of the voters for Party A and most of the voters for Party B, rank candidates for each other's party higher than for candidates of Party C, the leadership of Party A and the leadership of Party B will realize that the voters may be signalling the desire for a coalition between Party A and Party B.

ENHANCED VOTER CHOICE (Compared to MMP (SMP + List)) AND GREATER LIKELIHOOD THAT VOTERS WILL VOTE HONESTLY.

GUARANTEE THAT LOCAL MLA WILL NOT BE A CONDORCET LOSER:

The winning candidate for each SMD must be able to beat by a majority of the votes each candidate alive at the last round of eliminations.

Weaknesses of MMP (AV + LIST):

ESSENTIALLY THE WEAKNESSES ARE THE SAME AS THOSE FOR MMP (SMP + LIST) EXCEPT AS DISCUSSED IN “STRENGTHS OF MMP (AV + LIST)” ABOVE. HOWEVER, MMP (AV + LIST) HAS THE FOLLOWING EXTRA WEAKNESSES:

COMPLEXITY, LACK OF FAMILIARITY & LACK TRANSPARENT COUNTING.

“AV requires a preferential ballot which is more complicated for voters than a categorical choice.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

AV IS NOT MONOTONIC:

A preferential voting system is monotonic if more first place votes can never hurt a candidate. Under certain (rare) circumstances, voters under MMP (AV + LIST) may hurt a candidate by voting for him or her. However, note that STV will also be non-monotonic. (Brams & Fishburn 150-151.)

OPTION FIVE: SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE

Strengths of the Single Transferable Vote:

BROAD PROPORTIONALITY:

“PR-STV provides the benefits of proportional representation—a close match between seats shares and vote share of parties. It permits candidates to be elected who appeal to a particular constituency, whether geographical, party-based, or based on some other characteristic.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

Indeed, STV allows for the representation of any group larger than a Droop Quota so long as all the members of the group place the same set of candidates as the highest ranked candidates on their respective ballots. Hence, less group organization is required for the protection of minorities under STV than under cumulative voting, limited voting, or proportional approval voting. (Dummett 282.)

STV ALLOWS FOR THE ELECTION OF INDEPENDENTS:

“STV DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes). Of 166 TDs in the Irish parliament, 13 are independents, most of whom were elected [at the general election on 17 May 2002] on local issues.

“Independents have been elected to the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, the last being in 1949.” (Citizens’ Assembly Glossary)

EXTENSIVE VOTER CHOICE:

“It gives the voter the opportunity to vote for individual candidates as well as parties, and to choose among candidates of the same party or different parties. Even where the choice is between a small number of large parties, the voters have a choice of which of a party’s candidates they prefer. There can be fierce competition between candidates of the same party over which of them is to be elected.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

“Even if primaries were accepted, they would offer less than the elector could secure under the single transferable vote. For only the paid-up party member would participate in choosing a candidate. The single transferable vote, by contrast, offers to every elector the right to choose a candidate without involving a separate primary election.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 257.)

STV ALLOWS FACTIONAL DIVERSITY WITHIN PARTIES AND ALLOWS THE VOTERS TO SETTLE DISPUTES AMONG FACTIONS WITHIN ANY PARTY. (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 257.)

WEAKENING OF PARTY DISCIPLINE:

“WEAKENING OF PARTY DISCIPLINE. This means that parties do not have the ability to guarantee victory to a particular candidate—there are no safe seats under PR-STV. Each candidate must maintain his or her own personal appeal to the voters. Candidates may see their major rival as a member of their own party rather than a member of an opposing party. As a consequence, the ability of parties to discipline their candidates is weakened.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

CANDIDATES RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL CONCERNS:

“CANDIDATES ARE HIGHLY RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL ISSUES: Irish politics is characterized by brokerage politics rather than class politics. LOCAL ISSUES ARE AS IMPORTANT AS NATIONAL ONES, and successful candidates must build a local support base. Tasmania, although small (about twice the size of Vancouver Island), is strongly regionalized with local issues dominating politics. Candidates must have strong constituency support in addition to party endorsement.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

“Politics [in Ireland], therefore is strongly localist, even parochial, and a candidate can easily lose his seat, if by concentrating upon the grand political issues, he neglects to cultivate his constituency. In 1977, 86 per cent of the members of the Dail had been born either in the constituency which they represented or in an adjacent constituency, and 93 per cent lived in their constituency or one adjacent to it.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 247.)

STV ALLOWS FOR STABLE, SINGLE PARTY MAJORITY GOVERNMENTS:

“In Tasmania, most governments have been single party majority governments. Tasmania had a Labor Party government from 1937 until 1969.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

Tasmania had a two party system until recently. Tasmania now has a three party system (the Greens have recently won some seats), but still has a stable, one party majority government. (Tasmania Election Results are at the following website:

<http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/tpl/Elections/ahares.htm>) In Malta, there is currently a two party system with a single party majority government. (Malta election results are at <http://www.maltadata.com>)

REPRESENTATIVES WOULD HAVE EQUAL STANDING AND SHARE COMMON OBLIGATIONS:

Under STV, as under the current system, all Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) would have EQUAL STANDING in the legislature and SHARE COMMON OBLIGATIONS and relationships to the electorate.

UNDER STV VOTERS CAN SIGNAL TO PARTIES WHICH COALITIONS THEY WOULD PREFER:

This can be done through the ranking of candidates across multiple parties. If most of the voters for Party A and most of the voters for Party B, rank candidates for each other's party higher than for candidates of Party C, the leadership of Party A and the leadership of Party B will realize that the voters may be signalling the desire for a coalition between Party A and Party B. Consider the following:

“The system facilitates agreement between the parties because it does not require, as in Britain, an electoral pact involving the withdrawal of candidates to secure co-operation. Every elector can still vote for the party and candidate of his [or her] first choice so long as he [or she] transfers in accordance with the coalition agreement. But he [or she] cannot, of course, be compelled to transfer.... Thus, the single transferable vote prevents coalitions being constructed in the proverbial smoke-filled rooms; voters have to endorse it if it is to prove effective.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 245.)

Weaknesses of STV:

THERE IS NO SINGLE, GEOGRAPHICALLY DEFINED, LOCAL MEMBER.
(Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

NEED FOR LARGER GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRICTS:

“The major issue is the geographical size of electoral districts. Voters outside the lower mainland and Vancouver Island would find themselves in ridings at least 3 times or 5 times bigger than at present.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

COMPLEXITY, LACK OF FAMILIARITY & LACK TRANSPARENT COUNTING:

“PR-STV requires a preferential ballot which is more complicated for voters than a categorical choice.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

Electoral Formula is complicated and counterintuitive. Another objection to STV is that there will be too many candidates standing for election in each multi-seat riding, which will be too confusing for the voters. Some versions of STV do not allow for a recount. The percentage of invalid votes is 1.5 percent in Ireland and 3.8 percent in Australia. This compares to 1.4 percent invalid votes in Canada. (David Farrell, *Electoral Systems* (New York: Palgrave, 2001) 202.) In Tasmania, invalid votes range from 3.5 per cent to 5 per cent. (J. F. H. Wright, “Australian Experience with Majority-Preferential and Quota-Preferential Systems,” *Electoral Laws and Their Political Consequences*. eds. B. Grofman and A. Lijphart (New York: Agathon, 1986) 124–137 at 133.)

WITH VERY LARGE DISTRICT MAGNITUDES STV ALLOWS FOR THE ELECTION OF CRANK CANDIDATES AND CRANK PARTIES AND BECOMES MUCH MORE COMPLICATED FOR THE VOTERS AND FOR THE TELLERS:

For example, consider the New South Wales Legislative Council [<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rp/1998-99/99rp22.htm>] and the Former New York City Council [http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/history/public_history/PR/intro.html]).

“In New York, specifically in the 1937 city council election, the single transferable vote encouraged multiple candidacy to the point that veritable bedsheets were produced, with battalions of names competing for a relatively small number of seats. In the borough of Brooklyn alone ninety-nine candidates competed for nine seats, requiring sixty counts of the ballots and three weeks to declare final elected candidates.... In the borough of Brooklyn in 1937 this figure [for exhausted ballots] was about 150,000 or about 21 percent of the votes cast.” (A. J. Milnor, *Elections and Political Stability* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1969) 87-88.)

RESPONSIVENESS OF CANDIDATES TO LOCAL ISSUES DECLINES AS THE DISTRICT MAGNITUDE SIZE RISES ABOVE SEVEN OR THE GEOGRAPHIC SIZE BECOMES LARGE UNDER STV.

WITH SMALL DISTRICT MAGNITUDES STV IS SIGNIFICANTLY LESS PROPORTIONAL THAN IS MMP AND MAY GIVE RISE TO DISTORTIONS.

“.... There have been some highly anomalous results in the Irish Republic. Consider, for example, the results of the general elections in 1965, 1969 and 1973.... In 1965 and 1969 Fianna Fail won an overall majority of the seats in the Dail on less than 50 per cent of the vote. On each occasion it had fewer votes than Fine Gael and Labour combined. Indeed, in 1969 the total votes cast for Fine Gael and Labour together totalled over 50 per cent, yet Fianna Fail, with a smaller share of the vote than in 1965, increased its majority. In 1973, by contrast, Fianna Fail gained a higher vote than in 1969, and the Fine Gael / Labour total share of the vote was lower than in 1965 or 1969. Yet Fine Gael and Labour won an overall majority of the seats, and Fianna Fail was relegated to the Opposition benches.” (Vernon Bogdanor, *What is Proportional Representation?* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1984) 99.)

In Malta, which has five member districts, the majority of the seats went to the party that did not have the most votes in 1981 and in 1987. Deviation from PR was only three per cent. However, in a very close election such distortions are possible. (Shugart & Taagepera 237.)

ONE PARTY MAJORITY GOVERNMENT LESS LIKELY:

“PR-STV is more likely to produce coalition governments than plurality or majority systems.” (Weekend 4 - Session 2 Notes)

UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN.

In Ireland and Malta women are under-represented in their respective assemblies (especially when compared to List-PR systems and MMP). However, the causes of this under-representation are not clear. (<http://www.maltadata.com/m-women.htm>)

STV IS NOT MONOTONIC.

A preferential voting system is monotonic if more first place votes can never hurt a candidate. Under certain (rare) circumstances, voters under STV may hurt a candidate by voting for him or her. However, note that MMP with Alternate Vote in the constituencies will also be non-monotonic. (Brams & Fishburn 150-151.)

STV DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE ELECTION OF A CONDORCET WINNER WITHOUT TRUNCATION OF PREFERENCES.

A Condorcet winner is a candidate (or party) that can defeat every other candidate (or party) in a pairwise majority contest with each. However, on this criterion, STV performs much better than SMP. (Brams & Fishburn 150-151.)

OPTION SIX: *MMM (STV + AV)*

“From 1926 to 1959 Alberta operated under two different electoral systems, using the alternative, or preferential, ballot in the rural single-member districts, and the single transferable vote in the two multi-member districts of Edmonton and Calgary... The detailed results published after each Alberta provincial election, which gives figures for both the first and the final count in each constituency, make it possible to assess the consequences of the preferential or single transferable vote, although ... they are surprisingly minor consequences.” (Qualter 131–133.)

A total 293 Alberta MLAs won election under the five general elections. Of these, a total of 272 contests were unchanged in the later stages of counting. A total of 21 of these contests resulted in the first count being overturned by later counts. (Qualter 132.)

Strengths of MMM (STV + AV):

THE STRENGTHS OF *MMM (STV + AV)* ARE THE SAME AS THOSE FOR THE SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE, EXCEPT FOR ITEMS DISCUSSED UNDER “WEAKNESSES OF *MMM (STV + AV)*” BELOW. HOWEVER, *MMM (STV + AV)* HAS THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL STRENGTHS:

IDENTIFIABLE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES FOR RURAL AREAS:

MMM (STV + AV) provides for individuals to be elected representing specific and identifiable RURAL AREAS of the province. This fosters a direct link between voters and their representatives and ensures that RURAL AREAS of the province have a spokesperson in the legislature. This system allows politicians to speak authoritatively for their area, enables issues of local concern to be placed on the public agenda, and provides a mechanism for voters to hold representatives directly accountable for their actions.

MAJORITY SINGLE PARTY GOVERNMENT IS MORE LIKELY UNDER *MMM (STV + AV)* THAN UNDER STV OR MMP.

MMM (STV + AV) ALLOWS FOR RURAL CONSTITUENCIES OF THE SAME PHYSICAL SIZE AS UNDER SMP:

“Low DM (1) in rural areas. This way IT IS POSSIBLE TO LIMIT THE PHYSICAL SIZE OF THE AREA without violating equal vote standards (equal numbers of voters per representative).” (Weekend 4 – Session 3 Notes)

MMM (STV + AV) PROVIDES FOR SOME PROPORTIONALITY AND ALLOWS FOR MORE RESILIENT BOUNDARIES THAN UNDER SMP:

“Higher DMs in urban areas. This allows for a PROPORTIONAL ELEMENT to be built into the overall electoral system. Multi-member districts in urban areas are not as difficult to design and can do away with the need to draw arbitrary boundaries within communities.” (Weekend 4 – Session 3 Notes)

ADJUSTABLE PROPORTIONALITY:

“The degree of overall proportionality is dependent on the balance between the two kinds of districts. The more multi-member districts the more proportional the election results can be; the more single-member districts the more disproportional the results.” (Weekend 4 – Session 3 Notes)

Weaknesses of MMM (STV + AV):

THE WEAKNESSES OF *MMM (STV + AV)* ARE THE SAME AS THOSE FOR THE SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE, EXCEPT FOR ITEMS DISCUSSED UNDER “STRENGTHS OF *MMM (STV + AV)*” ABOVE. HOWEVER, *MMM (STV + AV)* HAS THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL WEAKNESSES:

MMM (STV + AV) DOES NOT TREAT VOTERS OR PARTIES EQUALLY OR FAIRLY:

The group (or party) that represents the majority in the DM=1 ridings will be permanently and systematically over-represented in the Assembly. Whereas, any group (or party) that is a minority in the DM=1 ridings will be permanently and systematically excluded from proportionate representation in the Assembly.

HENCE, THIS ACTS AS A GERRYMANDER IN FAVOUR OF WHICHEVER PARTY OR GROUP FORMS THE MAJORITY IN THE DM=1 RIDINGS. CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

“Irish governments have been able to ... [implement] partisan boundary revisions transforming three-member constituencies into four-member constituencies where they are weak, since two seats can occasionally be won on 37.5 per cent of the vote, and can usually be won on a vote of 42 per cent, and transforming four-member constituencies into three member constituencies where they are strong, since 47 per cent of the vote will normally secure two out of the three seats unless the vote of the opposition is completely solid.” (Bogdanor, *The People and the Party System* 247.)

“... A mix of M = 3 [i.e., DM =3] and M = 2 or 4 [i.e., DM = 2 or 4] must be avoided so as to prevent “magnitude gerrymander.” (Shugart & Taagepera 226.)

HOWEVER, THE POTENTIAL FOR GERRYMANDERING IS MUCH GREATER UNDER *MMM* ($STV + AV$), BECAUSE IT HAS A MUCH GREATER RANGE OF DISTRICT MAGNITUDES.