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Date 02.02.2007	Circ. 17000	Page A5	1 / 1

Ron Green has heard it all

■ ST. CATHARINES MAN PART OF THE CITIZENS ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM

OSPREY NEWS NETWORK
ST. CATHARINES

Change it. Leave it alone.
Proportional representation.
Representation by population.

Ron Green has heard it all since November when the St. Catharines man began meeting with voters to find out what kind of electoral system they want in Ontario.

Green is one of three Niagarans randomly chosen to be part of the Citizens Assembly on Electoral Reform. Throughout the province, 104 people took stock of Ontarians' opinions on the type of voting system they want to elect provincial governments.

"What I heard from people is overwhelmingly we need change," Green said. "There were some people who got up and said, 'Don't change anything.'"

Proportional representation was the most common request Green got from political junkies and concerned citizens who attended two meetings in Niagara and one in Burlington this winter on electoral reform.

The information gathered from the public meetings will be compiled

THE FACTS

What: Meet the local Citizens Assembly

When: Thursday, Feb. 8 at 8 p.m.

Where: St. Catharines Centennial Library, 54 Church St.

and used to help assembly members decide the best electoral system for Ontario.

The goal is to create a system that will result in the most effective and accountable government, and boost voter turnout at the polls.

But Green was mum on how he'll vote.

"The main idea was for all of us to keep an open mind. We're supposed to be neutral. We're just trying to find people to convince us what way to go," he said.

Anyone curious about what Green and his fellow Niagara assembly members, Salvacion Villamil of Niagara Falls and Stephanie Jones of Welland, heard at the public meetings can find out when the trio gathers at the St. Catharines Public Library next Thursday to talk about their experiences - ones that Green found rather profound.

"The more I got into it, the more I realized how important it is. It's ground-breaking. It's history," he said.

"It's people looking out for the best interests of Ontario. I feel we're going to accomplish something that's going to benefit everyone."

