



**Fair Le Mouvement pour
Vote la représentation équitable
Canada au Canada**

GREATER VANCOUVER CHAPTER

575 Kingsway Vancouver, B.C., V5T 3K3

Email: vancouver@fairvotecanada.org

Phone: 604-940-8444

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VANCOUVER JOINS NATIONAL ELECTORAL REFORM CAMPAIGN

VANCOUVER - Just months after one of the most lopsided election results in British Columbia history, a national citizens' group dedicated to reforming the Canadian electoral system established a Vancouver chapter.

Members of Fair Vote Canada, a grassroots group aiming to put electoral change on the national agenda during the next federal election, met last night to create the local branch. Through local branches in cities across the country, Fair Vote Canada will launch its public education campaign, lobbying effort, and national petition in 2002.

"Fair Vote Canada brings together regular people who are sick of being told their votes are wasted when they vote with their conscience," said spokesperson Arn Keeling, "Our membership includes Greens, New Democrats, Liberals, and many others outside political parties altogether, but who care about their representation."

Canada remains one of a shrinking minority of democratic nations using the so-called "first past the post" system of voting, whereby the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes in their riding wins, no matter how low the percentage of voters they attract. Critics in Canada and in many other countries argue this system discounts ballots cast for "losing" parties in each riding, and radically distorts election outcomes.

Keeling said the Vancouver chapter plans to hold its founding convention early in 2002, and is looking for members to support the national reform campaign. Fair Vote Canada's national strategy calls for a cross-country debate on electoral reform, followed by a referendum on the voting system concurrent with the next federal election. The group meets next on Thursday, November 15, 2001, 7:00 to 9:00 PM, at Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood House, 800 E. Broadway, Vancouver, and invites all those interested in advancing electoral reform to that meeting.

"Fair Vote Canada wants to put the power of democracy back into the hands of the people," Keeling added, "That process starts at the ballot box."

For more information about Fair Vote Canada, visit <http://www.fairvotecanada.org>

-30-

For information on the Vancouver chapter, contact:
Arn Keeling: 604-874-9046, vancouver@fairvotecanada.org