

January 2010 / janvier 2010

[\(Cliquez ici pour la version française.\)](#)

For the latest news on voting system reform, visit www.fairvote.ca.

- **FVC supporters spread the word on fair voting at January 23 rallies**
- **FVC organizes joint statement from 132 political scientists**
- **FVC sends open letters to PM and party leaders: fix the problem**
- **Fair Vote Canada elections – are you a member? interested in running?**
- **FVC campaign finance reform effort to be expanded**
- **Quebec reformers launch “Urgence démocratique” campaign**
- **Pollster says online voting and proportional representation could increase voter turnout**

FVC supporters spread the word on fair voting at January 23 rallies

Fair Vote Canada members and supporters were out in force at the January 23 anti-prorogation rallies, spreading the word about the need for electoral reform. Volunteers were carrying signs, distributing flyers and gathering signatures on the FVC Declaration of Voters' Rights ([see photos here](#)).

While individual members were active at many of the rallies across the country, FVC chapters had an organized presence in Ottawa, Port Hope, Kingston, Barrie, Peterborough, Toronto, Oakville, London, Waterloo, Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Vancouver and Victoria.

FVC National Council member Shoni Field addressed the Vancouver rally, drawing applause for her call for electoral reform. Chapter volunteers reported a good response from rally participants to the Declaration of Voters' Rights - with reports of many new signers in Victoria, Regina, Toronto, and Kingston.

We encourage Fair Vote members and supporters to stay active in local groups focused on any democracy issue, whether it's prorogation or other concerns. The people in these groups care about democracy and are a ready audience for the fair vote message. As always, though, let's remember that Fair Vote Canada is multi-partisan and that electoral reform is not about partisanship, but voter equality, regardless of our political views.

FVC organizes joint statement from 132 political scientists

On January 5, Fair Vote Canada announced that 132 Canadian political scientists from 36 universities and colleges co-signed [a statement calling for federal electoral reform](#) within the next five years.

Among the signers were the President-elect of the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA), six former presidents of CPSA, the current Secretary General of the International Political Science Association (IPSA) and a former Secretary General of IPSA. The statement drew good media coverage, including news articles, an interview on CBC News Network's Power and Politics, and a mention in The Economist.

FVC sends open letters to PM and party leaders: fix the problem

On January 12, Fair Vote Canada sent and issued open letters to the Prime Minister and opposition leaders calling for immediate action on Canada's democratic deficit.

"The fix is not difficult. Amend the Canada Elections Act to guarantee every adult Canadian man and woman equal representation of their own choice in the House of Commons. Then establish a swift process to produce the necessary electoral reform. That would make Canada, at last, a democracy...". The full text of the letters are [available here](#).

Fair Vote Canada elections coming – are you a member? Are you interested in being a candidate?

In April, members in good standing of Fair Vote Canada will be eligible to cast votes and run for office in the election of FVC's National Council. Members will elect candidates to fill seven seats on the 15-seat National Council.

To vote or run, you must be a member in good-standing, meaning your annual membership dues have been paid. We encourage members from all parts of the country, all walks of life and all points on the political spectrum to consider candidacy. Most National Council business is conducted by email, with periodic conference calls and one in-person meeting in conjunction with the AGM.

New members joining before February 23 will be eligible to vote and run for office. The candidate nomination deadline is March 15 (candidates are self-nominated).

Those interested in running or with questions are invited to contact the Elections Committee at office@fairvote.ca.

FVC campaign finance reform effort to be expanded

In December, Fair Vote Canada helped win a campaign to have the Toronto City Council adopt a ban on corporate and union campaign contributions for municipal elections in Toronto. The same ban is in place for federal elections, provincial elections in Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Quebec, as well as all municipal elections in Quebec.

Representatives from several Ontario chapters of FVC met in early January with Vote Toronto, which initiated the Toronto campaign, and Prof. Robert MacDermid, a campaign finance expert, to discuss the possibility of launching a provincial campaign finance reform

project. People interested in this campaign in Ontario, or in launching similar campaigns in other provinces, are encouraged to contact our office: office@fairvote.ca

Quebec reformers launch “Urgence démocratique” campaign

The Mouvement pour une démocratie nouvelle (MDN), the leading electoral reform organization in Quebec, has launched a campaign to rally community groups, unions and activists to press for a draft bill on electoral reform by June 2010, which would allow a new voting system to be used in the next election, expected in 2013.

Quebec was the first province in recent times to seriously consider electoral reform. Unfortunately, the major parties have each reneged on commitments to institute proportional representation. The new campaign by MDN is designed to break the logjam and force action in the near future.

For a thorough overview of electoral reform efforts in Quebec, as well as more information on this campaign, [visit the MDN website](#).

Pollster says online voting and proportional representation could increase voter turnout

Frank Graves, President of EKOS polling, said "online voting combined with proportional representation could dramatically increase the engagement of under-45 Canada and frankly reshape the political landscape."

Quoted in the Globe and Mail, Graves was commenting on an [EKOS poll](#) which asked respondents about the best ways to increase voter turnout. The top two items were online voting with 33 per cent and proportional representation with 29 per cent, both well ahead of mandatory voting with 23 per cent and public education campaigns with 16 per cent.