

Electoral reform town hall greets enthusiasts and skeptics

By Sarah Sobanski

Hastings-Lennox and Addington MP Mike Bossio hosted an electoral reform town hall last week to inform community members about alternatives to Canada's first past the post (FPTP) voting system.

The hall was organized after the government appointed the Special Committee of Electoral Reform June 7. It is examining alternative, mandatory and online voting systems.

With FPTP, MPs are elected as long as they gather a higher number of votes than their competitors in their ridings. This candidate's party then gains a seat in the House of Commons. The party with the most seats in the house becomes the elected party.

The FPTP system has been criticized because the MP elected doesn't need over 50 per cent of the vote to win, nor does the elected party need 50 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons to become the governing party. Other criticisms include that voting for an individual candidate doesn't always give the voter the power to select the party he or she believes aligns most with their political ideals. Alternatively, voters might choose a candidate because they agree with his or her party's political platforms most, even if they feel a different candidate is best for their area.

Bossio suggested that Canada's current electoral system needs improvement at best. It doesn't work as democratically as another system might.

"There are a lot of people who say you Liberals want to game the system," said Bossio to those who packed Club 580 Aug. 18. "[But] we've ruled for 80 years versus the Conservatives for 58. We have done quite nicely by this system."

He added, "As Canadians we have to do the right thing because it's the right thing to do. This [new] system might not benefit us the most, [where first past the post] benefits us. Research shows that the party that brings in electoral reform loses the next election."

Attendees were provided with an information package that detailed alternative voting systems used by other national governments across the globe.

While many agreed that FPTP was no longer effective, they also recognized that other systems, such as the alternative vote system used in Australia, weren't perfect either.

Many attendees were wary of possible risks to their security when it came to online voting. Bossio maintained that secure systems, like those used for online currency Bitcoin, could be put in place to limit risks. Indeed, people buy and sell this currency securely on sites like [Zipmex](#) all the time, so surely similar measures could be put in place for voting.

If you don't know much about Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies then we would recommend you look at this [bitcoin prime review](#) to find out more about it so you can learn more about the security of it all as well as find some potential investment opportunities. After learning about Bitcoin, some people might decide that they want to start investing. If that's the case, then it's important to purchase some Bitcoin and then start trading it. In order to do this, some people might use News Spy or the [best stock market app india](#) has as these also trade in bitcoin. For those who aren't sure which one to pick or which one is more reliable it might be worth a little more research. Reading this [News Spy Betrugs](#) (News Spy scam) article here may increase people's confidence in the site, allowing them to trade their Bitcoin.

As for mandatory voting, it was a firm no for almost all who made it out Thursday night.

"Why a stick and not a carrot?" asked one man. He suggested that it was better to encourage voting through initiatives and

sponsorship for voting, than it was to demand Canadians vote.

"Not voting is still a vote," agreed another man. He suggested that Canadians were still expressing their ideals to the government by not voting. For example, not voting could show that the voter doesn't support any of the running parties.

Bossio suggested that the hall was to get people in the know. The special committee is in place to research a system that would work, even if it meant making a hybrid system from other systems in the world.

"I didn't run to win the election, I ran to make positive change. If I lose the next election because of that then I'm OK with that," said Bossio.