

MuniLegislativeReview

From: Meghan Hollett [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2018 9:44 AM
To: MuniLegislativeReview
Subject: I support CASE's call to action to be applied to the Municipal Elections Act

Dear Review Committee,

It is my sincere hope that you will include the Municipal Elections Act in your upcoming review of the Municipalities Act. In particular, I encourage you to act upon the calls to action of the Citizens' Assembly for Stronger Elections. Elections are integral to our democratic system; if they are not carried out in a manner that is transparent, fair, and accessible to all, then there is a failure in our democracy which is unacceptable. This failure in turn means that the needs of those who live in this province are not being adequately addressed. Particulars of improvements that can be made to the Municipal Elections Act and aspects of the current election system that should be reviewed can be found at casenl.ca.

Particularly I call your attention to the need for permanent residents to access their right to vote. To quote CASE's report, section Access to Voting, Enfranchisement of Permanent Residents. Newfoundland & Labrador has the opportunity to be a leading example in Canada to allow all its residents the right to vote in their municipal elections. Allowing permanent residents to vote will include these people in the democratic process which will prove that Newfoundland & Labrador is interested in permanent resident's opinions and as a result can only improve the province's ability to increase retention. I work with permanent residents, my friends are permanent residents, I purchase goods from permanent residents: they are pay taxes and must adhere to the same laws as any other citizen. I request that you consider improving the Municipal Elections Act to ensure that they too, have a voice in the democratic formation of Newfoundland & Labrador's municipalities.

It is incumbent upon this government to include municipal elections in the current review. Should the review of the Municipal Elections Act be postponed and addressed following this review, it will not leave sufficient time for the municipalities to prepare for any changes which may affect them. Elections require a great deal of planning and time to coordinate and organize. I believe there are many ways in which the election process across Newfoundland and Labrador can be improved, and it is crucial that these improvements be addressed now.

Sincerely,
Meghan Hollett