

Making Canadian Democracy more Democratic

Honourable Michael Chong

May 6, 2016

9:00am – 4:30pm

Outline

Purpose: The purpose of this workshop is to introduce students to the recent democratic Reform Act and the process by which the reform is introduced in the House of Commons.

1. *The state of democracy in Canada's House of Commons*
 - *Where is political power found in the House of Commons?*
 - *How is representation failing?*
2. *The Reform Act*
 - *What is it?*
 - *Critiques of the Reform Act and the alternative voting systems*
3. *What is a Private Member's Bill (PMB) and how does it work?*
4. *Going forward*
 - *What has been the impact of the Reform Act?*
 - *What additional reforms are needed to improve democracy?*

Required Reading List

"The Real Outsiders." The Samara Institute.

<http://www.samaracanada.com/research/active-citizenship/the-real-outsiders>

"Lost in Translation." The Samara Institute.

<http://www.samaracanada.com/research/parliament-system/lost-in-translation>

"Conservative MPs break ranks more often than opposition." Bill Curry and Stuart A. Thomson, The Globe and Mail.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/conservative-mps-break-ranks-more-often-than-opposition/article8156279/>

The Public Whip

<http://www.publicwhip.org.uk/> ("Top Rebel MPs" page)

Reform Act, 2014

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=I&DocId=8058690>

Recommended Readings

Reform Act – Legislative Summary

http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/LegislativeSummaries/bills_ls.asp?Language=E&ls=C586&Mode=I&Parl=41&Ses=2&source=library_prb

“The Reform Act’s legislation of political parties more than justified.” Andrew Coyne, National Post.
<http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/andrew-coyne-the-reform-acts-legislation-of-political-parties-more-than-justified>

“Healthy political systems require checks on power.” Op-Ed, Ottawa Citizen.
<http://ottawacitizen.com/life/op-ed-healthy-political-systems-require-checks-on-power>

“MP’s Reform Act may not be perfect, but it’s the change Canada needs.” Lori Turnbull, The Globe and Mail.
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/mps-reform-bill-may-not-be-perfect-but-its-the-change-canada-needs/article15758420/>

“Parliamentary reform must reach down to the riding level.” Alison Loat, The Globe and Mail.
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/parliamentary-reform-much-reach-down-to-the-riding-level/article15820507/>

“Canada’s Electoral Process: Frequently Asked Questions.” Library of Parliament.
<http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/ResearchPublications/2005-46-e.htm>

“The Legislative Process.” House of Commons’ Procedure & Practice.
<http://www.parl.gc.ca/Procedure-Book-Livre/Document.aspx?sbdid=DA2AC62F-BB39-4E5F-9F7D-90BA3496D0A6&sbpid=I&Language=E&Mode=I>

“Private Members’ Business.” House of Commons’ Procedure & Practice
<http://www.parl.gc.ca/Procedure-Book-Livre/Document.aspx?sbdid=DFC709E5-ED90-48E5-B7EC-02E6D98BF07B&sbpid=95CC0D60-C400-4B42-BA5B-8789C97FDD57&Language=E&Mode=I>

“The Outsiders’ Manifesto: Surviving and Thriving as a Member of Parliament.” The Samara Institute.
http://www.samaracanada.com/docs/default-source/mp-exit-interviews/samara_report_the_outsiders_manifesto.pdf?sfvrsn=4