



Response from Dalton McGuinty

*January 14, 2005
Ms. Rosemary Speirs
Chair
Equal Voice
1815 Altona Road
Pickering, Ontario
L1V 1M6*

Dear Ms. Speirs:

Thank you for writing to me about women's representation in government and our efforts to revitalize our democratic institutions. I welcome your views on this important issue. My colleagues and I believe it is vital to have effective representation of women in our democratic system. Our government will involve Ontarians directly in improving the quality of our democracy, modernizing our political institutions, and restoring public faith in government. We established the Democratic Renewal Secretariat, the first of its kind in Ontario, to modernize our democratic institutions so that they more fully reflect the realities of the 21st century.

I am pleased to announce that our government has created a Citizens' Assembly, with members from communities across Ontario, to re-examine our first-past-the-post electoral system and recommend possible changes. If the assembly recommends an alternative, we will hold a referendum on that alternative. In addition, we will establish a citizens' jury — which will be asked to make recommendations to the government regarding changes in how provincial political parties and election campaigns are financed.

I appreciate the specific issues you raised. As they will also be of interest to the Honourable Michael Bryant, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal, I have passed along a copy of your correspondence to him for his information.

The people of Ontario deserve to have direct input in their democratic institutions, and we are eager to hear what Ontarians have to say. We have a responsibility to ensure that the public's voice is heard loud and clear, and has an impact. Thanks again for sharing your concerns with me. Please accept my best wishes.

Yours truly,
Dalton McGuinty
Premier
c: The Honourable Michael Bryant