

Hi Folks

As I indicated previously, when a common issue is identified by the political parties I will write to all of you to provide the information.

The question has come up with respect to the political party advisory committee and the **demand** that I convene a meeting of the committee.

Section 332 of the Act states:

332. (1) An advisory committee on the political process is established.

(2) The advisory committee shall consist of the Chief Electoral Officer and 2 representatives of each registered party that **had official candidates in at least 1/2 of all electoral districts at the immediately preceding general election.**

During the last provincial election neither the NDP nor the Newfoundland Alliance had official candidates in at least half of all electoral districts at the immediately preceding general election and they have no statutory right to sit on the committee. As you are aware, correspondence was also received from the Liberal Party of Newfoundland advising that they did not feel it was appropriate that a meeting should occur. In the circumstances, it would be highly inappropriate for a meeting to take place. However, if all the political parties or independent candidates want to attend their own meeting for the purpose of identifying common issues to bring to my attention that is your prerogative.

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is an independent statutory office of the House of Assembly and will not become involved in political partisanship between the parties. It is imperative that institutional independence of the Chief Electoral Office be maintained during the electoral process.

Elections NL is working tirelessly to ensure all eligible voters in the province have the opportunity to exercise their right to vote.

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