



Progressive Conservative Party of Newfoundland and Labrador

PO Box 8551 ♦ St. Johns, NL ♦ A1B 3P2

February 16, 2021

Mr. Bruce Chaulk, Chief Electoral Officer
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (OCEO (ELECTIONS NL))
39 Hallett Crescent, St. John's, NL A1B 4C4
Email: brucechaulk@gov.nl.ca

Dear Mr. Chaulk:

As the signatories to this letter, we represent more than 1/3 of the members of the Advisory Committee established in 2019 under Part IV of the *Elections Act, 1991*, and we write pursuant to Section 336 of the Act to request an urgent meeting of the Advisory Committee.

Requesting this meeting is our right, and this request “shall” trigger a meeting, because Section 336 of the Act states:

Meetings of committee

336. At the request of the Chief Electoral Officer or of at least 1/3 of its members the advisory committee shall meet as often as is necessary for the proper exercise of its duties. [emphasis added]

Requesting this meeting is not just our right, but also our obligation, because Subsection 337(1) of the Act states:

Duties of committee

337. (1) The advisory committee shall advise the Chief Electoral Officer on the functioning of this Act and in particular on the functioning of the provisions relating to the financing of the political process. [emphasis added]

Meeting with us is also your obligation, because Subsection 337(2) of the Act states:

Duties of committee

337. (2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall consult the advisory committee periodically with regard to the application of this Act. [emphasis added]

As you know, under Section 333 of the Act, our Advisory Committee – as constituted in 2019 – continues to serve until 15 days following the commencement of the 1st session of the Legislature following the 2021 general election. The authors of this Part of the Act in 1992 clearly intended that the Advisory Committee would be functional and be able to give advice during an election campaign period.

Given the extraordinary circumstances we are in during this election campaign, it is imperative that the advisory role of the Advisory Committee be engaged immediately, during the time that the Act is being



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applied in an extraordinary way to the operation of the current election. There was never a time when this advice was more urgently needed.

As you know, this Advisory Committee is an Advisory Committee “on the political process” (Section 332), and it consists of the Chief Electoral Officer as chair (Section 334), plus two representatives of the Progressive Conservative Party of Newfoundland and Labrador and two representatives of the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador – the parties that had official candidates in at least 1/2 of all electoral districts at the immediately preceding general election in 2019 (Section 333).

It is imperative that we do our utmost to ensure the integrity of this election, enabling all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to have access to the right to vote. The purpose of this meeting would be to discuss the various ways in which problems have arisen in granting voters reasonable access to the right to vote, and ways to address these problems.

According to Subsection 337(3) of the Act, the Advisory Committee may make the results of its work public. It is certainly our intention to make the results of our work public.

Please contact us regarding the date of our meeting.

Sincerely,

ROSS WISEMAN

MEGAN DRODGE

Advisory Committee representatives of the
Progressive Conservative Party of Newfoundland and Labrador