

Election Day In Ontario Should Be A Statutory Holiday

Our communities have grown increasingly diverse, and our local electoral system should embrace that diversity.

Elections are a vital part of our democracy, yet 37% of Ontarians cite being too busy or out of town as reasons they did not vote in a recent election. It's time for bold moves if we hope to reduce the barriers for Ontarians to participate in the electoral process and make their voices heard.

Announcing my plan to recognize Election Day as a statutory day of civic celebration

Along with declaring Election Day a statutory holiday, I'm calling for advance voting to be extended to four days and held over a weekend. Our province needs change and electoral reform is a vital part of that change. I introduced a Private Member's Bill allowing municipalities to conduct elections using ranked ballots which became a government bill – and in 2018 London became the first city to use it! That's democracy – and the change we need. My reform plan includes rolling out this successful initiative province-wide and making our future Ontario election one that is entirely decided by ranked ballots.

Why ranked ballots

Unlike the current system, ranked ballots allow voters to rank their choices on the ballot. If the candidate with the most support does not obtain more than 50% of the votes, the candidate with the least support is dropped off the ballot and their supporters' second place votes are distributed to the candidates left on the ballot. This continues until a candidate obtains more than 50% of the votes. The system can be implemented using a preferential ballot with instant runoff to determine the candidate who receives 50% of the vote.

What this will mean for Ontarians

Ranked ballots can offer more opportunity for young and diverse candidates to represent us. The ranked ballot system incentivizes candidates to be less partisan, and more principled in order to win their supporters' second choice. Additionally, voters can support the candidate of their choice without fear that their vote has been wasted in a winner-takes-all, first-past-the-post system. As part of this plan, an education program would be developed to inform the public on the new electoral process and would be implemented before the 2026 election.

If you believe that Ontario needs change, join [Team Mitzie](#), [donate to the campaign](#) and [vote for me at the LEMs](#) on February 8th or 9th.