



The Atlantica Party



2021 Nova Scotia Election Concerns

To His Honour The Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc, ONS, QC

Your Honour,

The Atlantica Party formally requests a cancellation, pause or extension to the ongoing provincial election.

My name is Jonathan Dean, and I am the longest-serving political leader in NS and have the honour of having registered two political parties in Nova Scotia. I have grave concerns that the format of the current election is contrary to the public interest for six reasons:

1. The Atlantica Party has submitted a formal complaint to the National News Media Council regarding the systematic bias in the media during this election which appears to be meant to manipulate the outcome of the election.
2. The Elections Act allows for elections as short as 30 days, which means only 20 days are available for campaigning after nominations close. Since Nova Scotia is the only province without fixed date legislation, this combination creates a too short “surprise” election. For the smaller parties with fewer resources, run by unpaid volunteers with families and full-time jobs, thirty days is not enough time to find a full slate of candidates and conduct an effective campaign. I can attest to this from our experience in the last election and our current experience in this election.
3. The shortness of the election undermines civic engagement. In longer campaigns, civic organizations such as unions, citizens associations and others would host candidate get-togethers, debates and meet-and-greets. The last election saw the end of these events as too little time was available. Given this rare summer election suddenly called during the warm vacation time after a COVID lockdown, it seems this impact will be even graver.
4. A short election is not enough time to debate the issues. The larger parties want to narrow “the issues” down to a comfortable few or one, but that must be resisted. Many



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pressing issues need discussion and debate in this province, for instance, clear-cutting, the legacy of Bill 4, recall, our COVID response, cannabis policy, provincial debt, coastal protection, resource development, legislative reform, declining voter turnout, debt servicing charges, the last budget, stagnate population, MLA compensation and benefits, the closure of the Legislature during COVID and so on.

5. This style of election signals to the public that elections are more of a nuisance to be endured than a chance for the public to have their say. As a result, there is a real danger that voter participation will decline further.
6. Voting has commenced, yet the nomination process is still open. As a result, voters do not have complete information about their choice of potential representatives.

Will this election become yet another “echo chamber” of old party spin supported by compliant media, or will it be conducted in the light of day on a level playing field? Which will produce a legitimate result? Which will be in the public interest?

We request a remedy for these concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Dean

Leader

The Atlantica Party