

Good afternoon,

I have confirmed that my name is on the list to present at the LAC but I have yet to receive a time. I am therefore submitting my notes in written form, but still request the opportunity to speak in person. Please advise.

My understanding is that one of the primary roles of an MLA is to represent the people in their electoral district. Since the time the legislature reconvened this week, I have been puzzling about my perception, wondering if I grossly misunderstood the democratic system currently governing our province.

So I turned to trusty ol' Google. I searched for a job description for NS MLAs. I searched for twenty-four minutes before I found anything online that even remotely began to describe the role of an MLA. Then I found something that shed some light on the matter. In 2006, the Honorable Barbara MacDougall wrote a report entitled "Commission of Inquiry on the Remuneration of Elected Provincial Officials" (accessed at <http://www.gnb.ca/legis/promos/CRC-CER/Vol2/NS-e.pdf>). This report was commissioned in order to review MLA salaries. Although the executive summary holds some interesting revelations in terms of a lack of public engagement with this process, of note are the references to the duties of an MLA. On page 7 of the report, MacDougall (2006) writes, "An MLA must reflect him or her constituents' concerns in legislative discussions, and also reflect back to the public the reason he or she supports or challenges the legislation." Furthermore, MacDougall (2006), claims, "MLAs are expected - and rightly so - to serve the interests of their constituents: those who voted for them and those who did not."

My initial impression of one of the fundamental roles of an MLA being to represent their constituents would appear to be accurate. My question is, where is the data to support that the majority of constituents in 34 Liberal ridings support Bill 75? In a data-driven society, surely the MLAs are keeping records of all contact made with their constituents. According to MacDougall (2006), MLAs must "reflect back to the public the reason he or she supports or challenges the legislation".

I am calling on all MLAs to report their data to the public. No need for charts and graphs, a simple tally will do. For each MLA, please indicate: how many points of contact did you have from your constituents requesting that you support Bill 75? And how many points of contact did you have from your constituents requesting that you challenge Bill 75? Stephen McNeil does not hold the majority of residences in the 34 Liberal electoral districts, so his viewpoint should not be dictating the decision of any MLA besides his own (being the elected representative for his own electoral district). MLAs of NS, it is your responsibility "to serve the interests of [your] constituents: those who voted for [you] and those who did not," (MacDougall, 2006). Please be prepared to provide your constituents with the data to support your decision when it comes time to cast your vote.

Thank you,

Trisha Munroe