

# Written Submission

on the 2025 Electoral Boundaries Commission Interim Report

**Name/Nom** Lee Ross

**Date** December 9, 2025

## **Submission/Message**

Dear Members of the Commission,

I am writing to provide feedback on the Commission's review of electoral boundaries and representation in the Northwest Territories. Specifically, I urge the Commission not to increase the number of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and, if anything, to consider reducing the current number.

The Northwest Territories currently has 19 MLAs serving a population of approximately 46,000 people, one of the lowest resident-to-representative ratios in Canada. This results in one of the highest costs per capita for legislative governance in the country. At a time when the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) faces significant fiscal challenges including wildfire recovery costs, health system pressures, and infrastructure deficits the priority should be cost containment and efficiency, not expansion.

Adding more MLAs will increase expenditures on salaries, benefits, office operations, and administrative support. These funds could be better directed toward urgent needs such as housing, healthcare, and infrastructure. The GNWT's own fiscal sustainability strategy emphasizes the need to reduce expenditure growth and improve efficiency to avoid breaching the federally imposed borrowing limit. Expanding the legislature would run counter to these objectives.

Moreover, constituents currently have timely access to their MLAs, and legislative debates often see duplication of points rather than unique contributions. Increasing the number of MLAs would likely amplify redundancy rather than enhance representation.

# Written Submission

on the 2025 Electoral Boundaries Commission Interim Report

Finally, the unique governance context of the Northwest Territories, where Indigenous governments play a significant role in legislative development under protocols and the UNDRIP Implementation Act, already provides robust representation for nearly half of the population.

Recommendation:

We do not need more MLAs to echo that there is a housing, healthcare, and Infrastructure deficit in the NWT. Maintain the current number of MLAs at 19 or consider reducing, as previously proposed. This approach aligns with fiscal responsibility, efficiency, and equitable representation.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Sincerely,  
Lee Ross