

Written Submission

on the 2025 Electoral Boundaries Commission Interim Report

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Submission/Message

Statement Opposing Proposed Redistribution of MLA Seats in the NWT
Preserving Equitable Representation for All Communities

The recent proposal by the Government of the Northwest Territories (NWT) to redistribute MLA seats, likely based on population, raises significant concerns regarding fair and equitable representation for all communities within the territory. While adjusting seat distribution may appear logical from a purely demographic standpoint, it risks undermining the fundamental principles of consensus government that define the NWT's unique political system.

The suggested addition of another seat for Yellowknife, the capital, would increase the city's influence in the Legislative Assembly. This change would inevitably dilute the representation of smaller, more remote communities—communities whose voices have historically required protection against the dominance of larger urban centers. The strength of the NWT's consensus government lies in its commitment to ensuring that every region, regardless of population size, has an effective voice in the decisions that shape our collective future.

Adopting a redistribution model like the federal system, where densely populated regions such as the Greater Toronto Area wield disproportionate power, would be a step backward for the NWT. Our territory's consensus model was designed specifically to avoid such imbalances by fostering collaboration and ensuring that the unique perspectives and needs of smaller communities are not overshadowed by urban interests.

I strongly oppose the proposed redistribution of MLA seats. Instead, I urge the Government of the NWT to uphold the spirit of consensus government by prioritizing equitable representation over strict population-based seat allocation. The voices of smaller communities' matter and must remain central to our legislative process.