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75 Year Old Walking from Kingston to Ottawa for Proportional Representation

All are invited to join

Toronto, ON: Ron Weigand, 75, is bringing together his two enthusiasms—long-distance walking and electoral reform. He will walk 200 km, beginning in Kingston on May 20, stopping in Perth Road Village, Westport, Perth, Smith Falls, Merrickville, Rideau River Provincial Park, Manotick and Hog's Back Park in Ottawa, ending with a rally on Parliament Hill at noon on Monday, May 29, two days before the vote to endorse the recommendations of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform is expected to take place.

The goal is to talk about proportional representation (PR) in communities along the way and to influence politicians to vote yes on the Special Committee's recommendations supporting PR. PR is the name of a family of electoral systems in which every vote counts towards electing a representative in line with each voter's intention.

A core group is being mobilized to complete the full distance. This core group will be joined for short distances at the send-off in Kingston and at other points all along the route. As they approach the National Capital Region, various "flash-mob" entry points will "grow" the march until it arrives on the Hill. The walkers will be welcomed on the steps of Parliament by Nathan Cullen, Elizabeth May and other politicians who support proportional representation from 12:15 to 1:30 on May 29. Ron is hoping his own MP for Scarborough North, Liberal Shaun Chen will be among those who are there to meet him on the Hill.



Ron, a retired IT consultant, launched this initiative out of a personal commitment to improving our democracy. He has engaged with Fair Vote Canada to help make this commitment a reality.

"I asked myself, 'What can I contribute to the PR movement?' I've been walking seriously for over twenty years and have done the 800 km Camino Santiago in Spain, so walking is something I could do. Even in the planning stages, the walk has exceeded my expectations."

On Feb. 1 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau changed his mind on his election promise to make 2015 the last election under first-past-the-post. Ron considers our current system antiquated and unfair. "I'll walk every year I can until we get proportional representation. I want to leave a legacy of better democracy for my grandchildren. My message to those who would abandon the promise of electoral reform despite the passionate desire for change felt by so many Canadians is this: We are not going away!"