

Motion regarding Electoral Boundary Changes in Northern Ontario

WHEREAS the proposed Federal Electoral Boundary Commission has proposed to remove one of the electoral ridings from Northern Ontario;

WHEREAS the proposed riding of Manitoulin-Nickel Belt would remove the municipalities of St. Charles, Markstay-Warren and West Nipissing from the current Nickel Belt riding;

WHEREAS the municipalities of French River, Killarney, St. Charles, Markstay-Warren and West Nipissing work together under the umbrella of the Sudbury-East Municipal Association (SEMA) for the betterment of each municipality. Currently SEMA is comprised of one geopolitical entity and any changes would fragment, diminish, and reduce access to federal representation for area residents;

WHEREAS the Commission is not taking into consideration the uniqueness of the said municipalities in Sudbury-East including the difficulty in competing for limited amounts of funding. Any changes to the current configuration would exacerbate the situation;

WHEREAS the Commission did not take into considering that the current Sudbury-East boundaries include a large portion of francophone citizens. By removing St. Charles, Markstay-Warren and West Nipissing would make it extremely difficult to advocate for our francophone population and would be detrimental for those municipalities being forced into mostly anglophone ridings;

WHEREAS the proposal to diminish Northern Ontario's voice in Parliament and will have detrimental effect on participatory democracy and regional development as issues in Northern Ontario are significantly different than those in Southern Ontario;

WHEREAS the Electoral Commission did not take under consideration that the courts have rules that representation in Canada's democracy is no based merely on population but on regions of interest and the right of citizens to engage with their elected representative;

WHEREAS any changes to electoral boundaries should be based on the principles of maintaining communities of interest within the boundaries that equitable in terms of culture, language, and geography;

WHEREAS the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission is seeking public input on its proposed riding boundary changes, yet has scheduled on ONE in person consultation in Northern Ontario to be held in Timmins;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Council calls on the Electoral Boundary Commission to not reduce the number of MPs for Northern Ontario and it respects the current geographical boundaries for those in Sudbury-East.

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