



# Yukon Legislative Assembly

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

May 15, 2024

Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform  
c/o Sara McPhee-Knowles, Chair  
P.O. Box 2703  
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

Dear Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform,

I am writing in response to a request to provide opening remarks at your commencement dinner on Saturday May 25<sup>th</sup> in Whitehorse. In lieu of opening remarks, please accept this letter.

My name is Currie Dixon, and I am the Leader of the Official Opposition, the Leader of the Yukon Party, and the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Copperbelt North. My caucus represents 8 of the 19 seats in the 35<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly and we secured over 39% of the popular vote in the last territorial election. Recognizing what appears to be a general deference to academic credentials amongst the YCAER, I would also like to note that I hold a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Political Science from St. Francis Xavier University and a Master of Arts in Political Science from the University of Northern British Columbia.

As you may already know, our caucus did not support the creation of a Citizens' Assembly. We voted against the creation of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform (SCER) on May 26, 2021, and we subsequently voted against the creation of the Special Committee on the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform (SCYCAER) on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Since both motions passed despite our votes, we were compelled to participate in the work of both of these Special Committees, and did so in good faith throughout the existence of each. Furthermore, on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, our caucus voted against the Motion Respecting Committee Reports No. 8, which concurred in the report and the terms of reference for the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.

If you would like to understand the reasons behind these votes, I encourage you to review Hansard and the arguments made during the debates on each of the respective days. In particular, I would point you to my comments made on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, which you will find on Hansard pages 4342-4343 on the Yukon Legislative Assembly website.

While I will not repeat all the arguments we have made in the Legislature, in short, our caucus does not feel that this Citizens' Assembly has legitimacy nor is it a "representative body of Yukoners." At the time of writing this letter, an announcement has been made that the Assembly members have been appointed, but we are still unaware of the names of the members. Our

understanding is that the members were chosen from a pool of 1,793 Yukoners who self-identified willingness to sit on this Assembly during the public consultation that occurred from January to March of 2023. It was never communicated to Yukoners at the time that it might be the only opportunity to identify oneself to participate in the future if an Assembly were formed someday.

As a result, once the public learned that the Legislative Assembly had voted by a relatively narrow margin to form a Citizens Assembly, literally tens of thousands of Yukoners were excluded from the process, and had no opportunity to ask for a chance to be part of a Citizens Assembly. Choosing this Assembly's membership from so limited a number of Yukoners is deeply problematic, especially since tens of thousands of other Yukon people were sidelined.

In the 2021 Election, none of the Yukon's three major political parties mentioned a Citizens Assembly in their respective platforms. None of those three parties has a mandate from voters to embark on this exercise.

As such, our caucus will not be participating in any of the functions of this Assembly as we feel that doing so would lend credence to an exercise that we believe lacks democratic legitimacy.

While I don't know who the members of the Citizens' Assembly are at this point, I expect it is made up of well-intentioned Yukoners, and I would extend my thanks for your willingness to participate. While we disagree with the process, we respect people who choose to get involved in discussions about the Yukon's future, and any person who tries to make a positive contribution of their own in any way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Currie Dixon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "D".

Currie Dixon  
Leader of the Official Opposition