



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

REPORT ON THE *REPORT OF THE FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION FOR THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, 2022*

**Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and
House Affairs**

Honourable Bardish Chagger, Chair

**JUNE 2023
44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION**

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NOTICE TO READER

Reports from committees presented to the House of Commons

Presenting a report to the House is the way a committee makes public its findings and recommendations on a particular topic. Substantive reports on a subject-matter study usually contain a synopsis of the testimony heard, the recommendations made by the committee, as well as the reasons for those recommendations.

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

has the honour to present its

FORTY-SIXTH REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(3)(a)(vi), the committee has considered the objections filed in respect of the Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, in accordance with section 22 of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, R.S.C., 1985, c. E-3, and has agreed to report the following:

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REPORT ON THE *REPORT OF THE FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION FOR THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, 2022*

INTRODUCTION

On 27 April 2023, pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(3)(a)(vi) and section 22 of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act* (EBRA),¹ the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (the Committee) began its consideration of the objections filed by members of the House of Commons in respect of the *Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario* (the Report and the Commission).

After each decennial census, the number of members of the House of Commons and the representation of each province is adjusted according to the rules found in section 51 and 51A of the *Constitution Act, 1867*.

The chief electoral officer (CEO) is responsible for calculating the number of members of the House allotted to each province. This calculation is mathematical and the CEO exercises no discretion in the matter.

The work of readjusting electoral boundaries is carried out in each province by an independent and neutral three-member electoral boundaries commission. The mandate of these commissions is to consider and report on the division of their province into electoral districts,² the description of the boundaries and the name of each electoral district.

The EBRA provides the rules governing the division of a province into electoral districts. The population of each electoral district must be as close as possible to the electoral quota for the province, that is, the population of the province divided by the number of members of the House of Commons allocated to the province under section 51 of the *Constitution Act, 1867*.

In setting the boundaries of an electoral district, each commission is legally obliged to consider the community of interest, community of identity or the historical pattern of an

1 [Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act](#), R.S.C. 1985, c. E-3.

2 Note that the terms “electoral districts” and “ridings” are used interchangeably in this committee report.



electoral district in the province. Further, electoral districts must have a manageable geographic size, in cases of sparsely populated, rural or northern regions.

A commission may depart from the provincial electoral quota by plus or minus 25% in order to respect the community of interest, community of identity, or the historical pattern of an electoral district, or to maintain the manageable geographic size of sparsely populated districts. In circumstances that are viewed as extraordinary by a commission, the variance from the electoral quota may be greater than 25%.

After coming up with an initial Proposal for the electoral districts in their province, a commission is required to hold at least one public meeting to hear representations by interested persons. After the completion of the public hearings, each commission prepares a report on the boundaries and names of the electoral districts of the province. These reports are tabled in the House of Commons, and referred to the Committee. Members of the House then have 30 calendar days to file objections with the clerk of the Committee to the proposals contained in a report.

An objection must be in writing and in the form of a motion. It must specify the provisions of the report objected to, and the reasons for those objections. An objection must be signed by not less than 10 members of the House of Commons.

The Committee then has 30 sittings days to consider members' objections, unless an extension is granted by the House. The Committee's reports on members' objections are referred back to the relevant commissions, along with the objections, the minutes of the proceedings and the evidence heard by the Committee. The commission then has 30 calendar days to consider the merits of all objections, and prepare its final report.

Once all the commission reports have been finalized, the CEO prepares a draft representation order setting out the boundaries and names of the new electoral districts. This is sent to the Governor in Council who, within five days, must proclaim the new representation order to be in force and effective for any general election that is called seven months after the proclamation is issued.

OBJECTIONS

The Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario was tabled in the House of Commons, and referred to the Committee on 10 February 2023. By the end of the 30-day period, the clerk of the Committee had received 27 objections to the Report from members of the House.

Of these objections, 21 were filed by individual members and two were joint submissions where members were signatories to the objection (i.e., four members filed a joint objection in the region of Halton, Guelph and Wellington, and two members filed a joint objection in the region of Eastern Greater Toronto). Further, with respect to joint submissions, Viviane Lapointe, the member for Sudbury, stated that she filed her objection on behalf of the Northern Ontario Liberal Caucus.

Lastly, 22 of the objections were filed regarding proposed electoral boundaries and five were objections to proposed riding names.

A. Electoral Boundary Changes

1. Northern Ontario

Five members of the House of Commons, whose ridings are in Northern Ontario, filed objections to the Commission's Report. They are: Charlie Angus, the member for Timmins—James Bay; Carol Hughes, the member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing; Viviane Lapointe, the member for Sudbury; Marc Serré, the member for Nickel Belt; and Terry Sheehan, the member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Common between all five objections was a strenuously made contention that their region should not lose one federal seat because of the numerous harmful effects this would have on established communities of interest and identity, the historical pattern of ridings, and meaningful representation for residents. They indicated that the current legislation needed to be re-examined, especially the use of a province-wide electoral quota for assigning populations to each riding, as this method drastically disfavoured their region. However, in the meantime, the members expressed the view that the Commission ought put in place measures that would keep the region at 10 federal members.

Further, many of the members from Northern Ontario decried the consultation component (i.e., both the inadequate public hearings and the absence of a second round of consultations) that led the Commission to arrive at its proposals in its Report.

a) Charlie Angus, the member for Timmins—James Bay

Mr. Angus objected to the Commission's proposal to remove one riding from the region of Northern Ontario (i.e., from 10 ridings in 2012 to nine ridings in 2022). He proposed instead that Northern Ontario maintain 10 ridings.



In his view, the Commission's decision ignored the views of the people Northern Ontario and imposed arbitrary boundary lines that did not reflect the realities or the democratic rights of northern citizens. Further, Mr. Angus stated that the loss of one riding in Northern Ontario was a massive overhaul of the political landscape, has dislocated and shifted jurisdictions, and would reduce the ability of residents to interact with their elected officials. He stated that the geographic size of his current riding was larger than the country of France, yet also had a population count that was superior to 44 other ridings in Canada. At the same time, the Commission was proposing to reduce federal representation in the area.

Mr. Angus indicated that the Commission's decision to remove one riding from Northern Ontario was based on a false principle under which Northern Ontario's population growth was considered slow because it was being compared with the explosive population growth rate of Southern Ontario. He indicated that should this principle be accepted, then the riding count or underrepresentation for the region of Northern Ontario would only continue to decline in future boundary readjustments. In his view, this loss of representation in Northern Ontario exacerbates the long-standing inequities in representation for this region.

Mr. Angus told the Committee that the population of the region has in fact experienced significant growth over the past several years, when compared to the population statistics for the region in previous decades. He noted an increase in immigration to the area from South Asian and Africa.

Mr. Angus noted that, in his view, the changes to the configuration of Northern Ontario's ridings between the Commission's initial Proposal and its Report were dramatic, employed arbitrary boundaries, ignored the consensus heard among presenters at the public hearings, and threaten to break apart regions and communities that have been together culturally, economically and socially for decades. He stated that the reaction to the boundary configurations in the Commission's Report was that of overwhelming objection from every single economic community, cultural organization and political body.

He noted that in the case of the current riding of Timmins—James Bay, the Commission's proposal divides the francophone region of Temiskaming in half. Also, an agricultural district located on Highway 11 was, in his view, being taken apart by the Commission's proposal.

Mr. Angus told the Committee that this was his third experience with federal electoral boundary readjustments. In his experience, these readjustments have been traumatic for Northern Ontario. He stated that it takes 10 years to build communities of interest,

only to have the next Commission's work reconfigure the region as if these communities of interest no longer exist.

Further, Mr. Angus noted that, in 2017, the provincial boundary commission for Ontario decided that Northern Ontario, with 11 ridings, was politically underrepresented. As such, at the provincial level, two new ridings were added to the north. Mr. Angus indicated that, in his view, it was not credible for the federal electoral boundary commission to take a contrary position.

Mr. Angus stated that the Commission did not adequately consider the historical patterns of electoral districts in Northern Ontario, nor did they maintain a manageable geographic size for districts in sparsely populated, rural or northern regions of the province, as is required under section 15 of the EBRA. In his view, the Commission sought to have the ridings in Northern Ontario conform to arbitrary population quotients based on averages driven by Southern Ontario's population.

Mr. Angus stated that boundary proposal for Northern Ontario impairs the abilities of these citizens to obtain effective representation. He indicated that Canada's courts have recognized that Canadian democracy is rooted in the principle that citizens have a right to interact with their elected representatives. He noted that in Northern Ontario a member's office is the face of government services for all manner of issues. In his view, the Commission's proposal to reduce the region's representation by one riding will put many citizens at a disadvantage, when compared to urban residents.

Mr. Angus stated that the Commission heard submissions from municipal, First Nations, economic and community levels, which were all uniform in their opposition to the Commission's proposal to remove one riding from the region. In his view, the credibility of the readjustment process hinges on whether the Commission listens to and reflects the sentiments of impacted citizens.

According to Mr. Angus, should the Commission decide to remove one riding from Northern Ontario, it would send a clear message to the people of the region that they have second-class status, as compared to the economically and politically dominant Southern Ontario.

The Committee supports Mr. Angus' objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.



b) Carol Hughes, the member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing

Ms. Hughes objected to both the elimination of the current riding of Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing and the reduction of total ridings in Northern Ontario from 10 to nine. She proposed instead to maintain the riding of Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, along with 10 ridings for Northern Ontario.

Ms. Hughes noted that, according to the 1991 Supreme Court decision *Reference re Prov. Electoral Boundaries (Sask.)*, Canadian democracy is rooted in the ability for citizens to be effectively represented. In that ruling, it is stated that effective representation and good government compel that factors other than voter parity, such as geography and community interests, be taken into account in setting electoral boundaries. Ms. Hughes indicated that this definition of effective representation was echoed in section 15 of EBRA.

According to Ms. Hughes, Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing is a riding with a vast geography, and encompasses many communities of interest, including distinct francophone communities and 17 First Nations communities, as well as 40 municipalities composed of small towns, rural communities and unorganized townships.

She stated that the challenges to effective representation within these communities are unique. These included infrastructure issues (e.g., cellular phone and high-speed Internet services) and issues for residents seeking to obtain government services but who must travel greater distances, with limited public transportation options, in order to access these services. According to Ms. Hughes, the constituency office of the member of Parliament is often where residents access Government of Canada services, and the Commission's proposal to reduce the number of ridings in Northern Ontario consequently reduces residents' ability to access government services.

Ms. Hughes also noted that the electoral boundaries readjustment process should not present a threat to smaller and rural northern communities, whose voices could be lost if the redistribution exercise focuses mostly on population growth. She stated that the residents of Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing rely on strong political representation to articulate their unique needs and aspirations in Parliament.

She pointed out that, for example, in her view, the voice of Franco-Ontarians in Northern Ontario were being diluted because Dubreuilville and Wawa have been placed in the proposed riding of Sault Ste. Marie.

Ms. Hughes indicated that she was not opposed to a boundary design for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing in which the communities that compose the riding shared the

core principles of a rural northern electoral district. She also was not opposed to incorporating more rural communities within the existing riding. However, she was opposed to the complete elimination of the riding by incorporating its small constituent communities into ridings with nearby urban centres. In her view, this latter design served to alienate these communities and could reduce their voice in their constituency and Parliament.

Ms. Hughes also pointed out her frustration, along with that of local residents, about the sweeping changes made by the Commission, between their initial Proposal and the Report, to the proposed ridings of Northern Ontario. She noted that the process that was followed did not give citizens an opportunity to voice their concerns.

The Committee supports Ms. Hughes' objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

c) Viviane Lapointe, the member for Sudbury

Ms. Lapointe filed an objection on behalf of the Northern Ontario Liberal Caucus to the proposal made by the Commission to remove one riding from the region of Northern Ontario. She referred to this objection as being collective and strenuous.

Ms. Lapointe noted that while the Commission proposed to remove one riding in each of the regions of Northern Ontario and Toronto, the substantial negative impacts on residents Northern Ontario will be more greatly felt there than in geographically dense, urban Toronto.

She indicated that Northern Ontario was an immense land mass that makes up 87% of Ontario's geography. She added that the reduction of one riding in the region would create undue hardship for its residents and impair equitable access for residents to their member of the House of Commons, and create greater challenges to attract young people, especially women, to consider running for Parliament.

She pointed out further characteristics unique to the region, such as a large Indigenous population and challenges in accessing social services, health care and education. In her view, these matters required targeted policies tailored for the region, but that the Commission's proposal to reduce the region's federal representation cut off an essential avenue for their voice to be heard.

She indicated that the Commission must give further consideration to the clear disparities of voter equality in the province. She stated that she believed the Commission understood this inequality, as evidenced by its willingness to depart from the provincial electoral quota



by more than 25% in the proposed ridings of Kenora—Kiiwetinoong, Thunder Bay—Rainy River and Thunder Bay—Superior North. She further noted that the Commission’s proposal in its Report to create three ridings in the northwest of the region created a significant and harmful domino effect to its northeast.

Ms. Lapointe noted that, in the past, the formula that assigns electoral representation to the provinces has been altered to accommodate for less densely populated areas and to ensure equitable representation in the House of Commons. She indicated that amendments to the *Constitution Act, 1867* and/or the EBRA may be the future avenue to ensure fair and equitable representation can be delivered to northern Ontario. However, she did not accept that the Commission was not able to devise any temporary measures, within the existing legislation, to maintain 10 members for Northern Ontario during the present readjustment process.

The Committee supports Ms. Lapointe’s objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

d) Marc Serré, the member for Nickel Belt

Mr. Serré filed an objection that contains three parts: he proposed that the communities of the former Town of Nickel Centre (i.e., Wanup, Wahnapiatae, Coniston, Garson, Falconbridge and Skead) be kept within the proposed riding of Manitoulin—Nickel Belt; that the region of Northern Ontario retain 10 ridings; and that the proposed riding of Manitoulin—Nickel Belt be renamed Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt (this part of his objection is summarized in the section further below on riding name changes).

Mr. Serré indicated that the boundaries of the proposed riding of Manitoulin—Nickel Belt, in the Commission’s Report, split the communities that once composed Nickel Centre, and place the communities of Garson, Falconbridge, Skead, Wanup, Wahnapiatae and Coniston in the neighbouring proposed riding of Sudbury. He stated that residents of these communities feel that their exclusion from Manitoulin—Nickel Belt is the result of an arbitrary line that slices through the heart of their community, and that this fractures their voice.

In particular, Mr. Serré emphasized that the proposed boundaries for Manitoulin—Nickel Belt will dilute the bilingual and francophone culture, heritage and demographic weight shared across the current riding of Nickel Belt. He noted that 2021 Statistics Canada census data on language indicate that French has experienced a significant decline in Northern Ontario and Canada from 2016 and 2021. To that end, Mr. Serré stated that the proposed riding boundaries for Manitoulin—Nickel Belt place a smaller proportion of French-language speakers in that riding. He indicated that he would not remain

indifferent to that situation and that his constituents would rally together to secure their francophone heritage.

Mr. Serré noted that he does not object to the addition of Espanola and Manitoulin Island to the current riding of Nickel Belt, but that an unintended consequence of this merger was the dilution of French speakers in the riding. He estimated that the addition of Espanola and Manitoulin Island, which are predominantly English-speaking, would reduce the number of French speakers from 35% to 31%, and evinced his concerns that this would adversely affect the services offered to French language communities.

Further, he indicated that Nickel Belt had received the second largest number of public submissions of any riding in Ontario, including colleges, mayors, councillors of the City of Sudbury, organizations, francophones and First Nations.

In respect of maintaining 10 federal ridings for the region of Northern Ontario, Mr. Serré indicated that:

- the proposed loss of a federal riding in the region was devastating;
- these ridings have been in existence since 1952;
- at the provincial level, the region has more representatives;
- the reduction in federal ridings will make it more challenging for residents in the region to be heard;
- the perceived lack of regard given to Northern Ontario by the rest of the province has led to disenchantment among voters; and
- he implored the Commission to ensure fair groupings of communities with similar characteristics, and along the same lines as the status quo, as this afforded communities with better access to the offices of members of Parliament, government services and federal funding programs, as compared with the proposed ridings for Northern Ontario in the Commission's Report.

The Committee supports Mr. Serré's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.



e) Terry Sheehan, the member for Sault Ste. Marie

Mr. Sheehan filed an objection that contains three parts. These are:

- that the current ridings of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasung should maintain their existing electoral boundaries;
- that current riding of Sault Ste. Marie should include the following geographic components: City of Sault Ste. Marie, Prince Township, Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation and townships from the St. Mary's River to the Montreal River area ending in the eastern part of the riding in the townships of Gaudry, Nahwegezhic, Lamming, Hughes, Curtis, Gillmor and McMahon, up to the boundary of Aberdeen; and
- that the region of Northern Ontario should be represented by 10 members of Parliament and not nine.

Mr. Sheehan noted that, with respect to part two of his objection, that the communities he has listed ought to remain in the current riding of Sault Ste. Marie because they have in common socio-economic relations and supports, transportation, health and agricultural networks. Further, Indigenous communities have traditional territory on Bawating.

He indicated that the design for the ridings proposed in the Commission's Report has drawn significant opposition among many residents in the current riding of Sault Ste. Marie. These included individuals, businesses, non-profit organizations, charities, municipal councils and Indigenous Nations.

He noted that no in-person consultations were held in Sault Ste. Marie. Indeed, the nearest such consultations were held in distant Thunder Bay or Timmins, either of which he indicated was about an eight-hour car drive. He stated that this distance would be similar to the travel times that residents in the reconfigured ridings of Northern Ontario would face in order to access in-person services from their member of Parliament. With respect to the virtual hearings put on by the Commission, he noted that many Northern Ontarians have limited, if any, access to broadband Internet that would be adequate enough to participate in virtual meetings.

Under the theme "Northern Ontario Perspective," he stated that the proposed creation, in Northern Ontario, of three ridings that depart from the province's electoral quota by more than minus 25% created inequity, unfairness and an unbalanced representation for all people in the region. He indicated that the Commission's reasons for creating these three ridings could be equally applied to the current ridings of Sault Ste. Marie and

Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking. To that end, he stated that, in his view, the Commission did not use any of the latitude afforded to it under the EBRA for communities located in remote and geographic areas.

In the case of the proposed riding of Sault Ste. Marie—Algoma, he estimated that a member of Parliament would need to drive 1,000 km to serve its residents. Further, he enumerated the roadways in that riding that either frequently closed during the winter months or were considered perilous to travel for other reasons.

Mr. Sheehan noted that the Report proposes to have 11 members of Parliament represent the region of Ottawa. He stated that the region of Northern Ontario is about 300 times larger than Ottawa, and should therefore have at least 10 members.

He also indicated that under the proposed riding configuration for Northern Ontario, reasonable access to invaluable face-to-face meetings between members and constituents does not exist.

Under the theme “Travel and Access,” Mr. Sheehan indicated that riding configuration in the Report would negatively impact the representation of the diverse peoples in Northern Ontario. He noted that future members of Parliament in the region would have to use up the entirety of their day travelling from one area to another, and that this would constrain their work and community engagement.

He noted that, in winter, a member of Parliament who attempted to travel around the proposed riding of Sault Ste. Marie—Algoma could find themselves trapped by weather conditions in a remote or isolated area of the riding. There, they would not be able to carry out any of their representative functions. He also pointed out that highway collisions in the region were frequent and presented a constant danger and a safety issue. He stated that the funding for members’ office budget ought to increase to allow for members with larger geographic ridings to have more than two offices.

Under the theme “Constituents,” Mr. Sheehan noted that placing the residents of the current riding of Sault Ste. Marie into a riding with other communities does not best serve either set of residents. He indicated that the Commission’s Report, in his view, prioritized places, maps, statistics and “Southern Ontario theory,” instead of recognizing the geographic, cultural and linguistic distinctness of Northern Ontario. According to Mr. Sheehan, Sault Ste. Marie was being penalized for the demographics, location and comparison to Southern Ontario. He indicated that there existed a long-standing feeling among residents of Northern Ontario that they are an afterthought to the rest of Canada, and in his view, the Commission’s Report adds injury to this insult.



Under the theme “Legislative and Judicial Perspectives,” Mr. Sheehan indicated that, in his view, effective representation as a principle in electoral law supersedes the idea of voter parity during electoral boundary readjustments. The proposed ridings for Northern Ontario cut several historically tied communities, and created ridings of unmanageable size. He considered this an attack on democratic institutions. He further disagreed with the Commission’s decision to keep the variance from the province’s electoral quota, among all proposed ridings in the province, at under 15% where possible. In this regard, he described the Commission’s work in Ontario as an unfair and unjust redistribution.

Mr. Sheehan stated that Northern and Southern Ontario are vastly different regions and should not necessarily be measured against the same standards and variables.

In support of his contentions, he provided his summary of the Supreme Court cases *Reference Re Prov. Electoral Boundaries (Sask)* and *Raiche v. Canada (Attorney General)* along with his views on how the findings in these cases do not support the Commission’s electoral boundary proposals for Northern Ontario in 2022.

Under the theme, “Indigenous Inclusion,” Mr. Sheehan indicated that he believed Indigenous Nations would receive the most impactful and successful advocacy in Ottawa for services should, if geography permits, the Indigenous Nation be represented by one, or at most two, members of Parliament. Further, he indicated that the federal government can be held to greater account by an Indigenous Nation when it is represented by no more than two members, though ideally by one member. In his view, representation by a maximum of two members would aid in project funding, service broadening and advancement, and intergovernmental supports, advocacy and negotiations.

To that end, Mr. Sheehan noted that the Indigenous Nations of Garden River Nation, Batchewana First Nation and the Historic Metis Nation of Sault Ste. Marie, are located within the current riding of Sault Ste. Marie. However, the Commission’s Report proposed to include into Sault Ste. Marie—Algoma the Indigenous Nations of Mississauga First Nation, Sagamok First Nation, Serpent River First Nation, Thessalon First Nation and Missinabie Cree First Nation territory.

He stated that all Indigenous Nations would be accepted, embraced and supported by Saultites, but that the addition of these nations to the riding of Sault Ste. Marie could result in significant disruptions to their established community ties and relationships to more geographically proximate nations.

In respect of this proposal by the Commission, Mr. Sheehan questioned whether the Commission both put any thought into the division of the territory of Indigenous Nations

within its proposed ridings, and whether these nations were even consulted. He indicated that dividing Indigenous peoples' territories into numerous ridings, in his view, was analogous to the imposed colonial institutions of the Parliament of Canada and the Government of Canada, which were set up in disregard for Indigenous nations.

Lastly, under this theme, Mr. Sheehan noted that in 2017, a provincial commission investigated improving Indigenous representation in the electoral system. The Commission determined that Northern Ontario was underrepresented by two ridings at the provincial level. Mr. Sheehan stated that this finding was in stark contrast to the Commission's proposal to remove one seat in Northern Ontario at the federal level. He stated that, instead, Northern Ontario should maintain 10 ridings, if not be assigned 11 ridings.

Under the theme "Services, Businesses, and Providers," Mr. Sheehan stated the Commission did not fully consider how service providers, agencies and organizational relationships intersect in Northern Ontario. He stated that the Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce has well-established relationships with the city's surrounding areas. Further, partnerships and relations been formed among businesses and organizations that would be disrupted by the Commission's proposed ridings. The riding configuration would also put a strain on small businesses.

Mr. Sheehan noted that service or operational disruptions, along with the need to forge new business relationships, would be improper and would add to the difficulties that small businesses face. He noted that by leaving the ridings in Northern Ontario as they are, businesses would have the personal option to grow their relationships.

Additionally, Northern Ontario is home to the Federal Economic Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor) Mr. Sheehan noted that boundary readjustments proposed by the Commission would most likely lead FedNor to have to redesign its geographic districts.

Under the theme "Member of Parliament Budget and Public Purse Spending," Mr. Sheehan indicated that to apply the current funding levels for a member's office budget to the readjusted boundaries as proposed by the Commission in its Report, would be wholly inadequate and would impair effective representation of residents of Northern Ontario. In Mr. Sheehan's view, it was critical that the Commission consider these factors when readjusting ridings.

The Committee supports Mr. Sheehan's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.



2. Ottawa

One member of the House of Commons, whose riding is in the Ottawa region, filed an objection to the Commission's Report: Marie-France Lalonde, the member for Orléans.

a) Marie-France Lalonde, the member for Orléans

Ms. Lalonde objected to the placement of two communities outside of the proposed riding of Orléans. These communities are Cardinal Creek Village, which the Commission proposed to place in the riding of Prescott—Russell—Cumberland and Blackburn Hamlet, which the Commission proposed to place in the riding of Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester. Ms. Lalonde proposed instead that these two communities be placed in the riding of Orléans.

Ms. Lalonde stated that these two communities form a vital part of the community of identity of Orléans. She stated that their removal from the riding will have a negative impact on the identity and livelihood of residents.

Also, Ms. Lalonde proposed a second option for the Commission's consideration, which she preferred less than her first option. This second option would be to place the entirety of the western portion of St. Joseph Boulevard (i.e., up to Highway 174), and the land surrounding it, in the proposed riding of Orléans.

According to Ms. Lalonde, all of the neighbourhoods that compose Orléans identify themselves as one whole, unique community. In her view, both Cardinal Creek Village and Blackburn Hamlet are naturally affiliated with Orléans. Residents of Orléans share common lifestyle habits, which include shared access to services, groceries, activities, health care and schools. In her view, the Orléans community has a strong sense of identity and pride, and the removal of Cardinal Creek Village and Blackburn Hamlet from Orléans will negatively impact the community's livelihood and sense of belonging.

Ms. Lalonde noted that residents, city counsellors and local associations of Blackburn Hamlet strongly voiced their opposition to their placement in the proposed riding of Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester, during the public hearing stage.

With respect to Cardinal Creek Village, she noted that the community was a new development, located not far from the heart of St. Joseph Boulevard, and that its residents have always associated themselves with being in Orléans.

Ms. Lalonde indicated that the Commission's proposed configuration for Orléans will result in the removal of green space and key community institutions from the riding. In

her view, the Greenbelt, which wraps around Blackburn Hamlet, is part of the Orléans community's shared identity. It allows residents to transition from an urban environment to green space and is a valued and part of the fabric of Orléans. However, the Greenbelt is removed from the riding of Orléans in the Commission's Report. Further, Ms. Lalonde noted that community institutions were also removed from Orléans, such as the Orléans Fruit Farm, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Integrated Command Centre, the Just Food Community Farm, and many recreational parks and trails.

In particular, Ms. Lalonde referred to the Orléans Fruit Farm, which is a francophone family-owned business, as a landmark in Orléans and part of the heritage and history of the community, and that it ought to remain in the riding of Orléans.

Ms. Lalonde also noted that the riding configuration for Orléans and its neighbouring ridings will make it more difficult for neighbourhood issues to be discussed on the federal political stage.

Further, Ms. Lalonde noted that the population deviations from the provincial electoral quota for Orléans and Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester to be well below 25%. Indeed, she indicated surprise that Cardinal Creek Village and Blackburn Hamlet were removed from Orléans and placed in Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester, considering that the riding configurations in the Report for Orléans indicate that it will decrease from 139,309 to 126,662, while Ottawa—Vanier will increase from 118,806 to 127,255. She stated that this change resulted in 12,647 people being displaced from the riding with which they have a natural affiliation.

Lastly, in respect of her proposed second option (i.e., retain in Orléans the western portion of St. Joseph Boulevard), Ms. Lalonde indicated that her proposal would have almost no consequences with respect to population numbers. Rather, she stated that St. Joseph Boulevard belongs to the cultural and linguistic identity of Orléans. She indicated that the properties and land along that stretch of road are part of the proud heritage of Orléans and that the road itself is in many ways a bond of belonging as francophones and as proud Franco-Ontarians.

The Committee supports Ms. Lalonde's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

3. Eastern Greater Toronto Area

Seven members of the House of Commons, whose ridings are in the Eastern Greater Toronto Area, filed objections to the Commission's Report. They are: Michael Coteau, the member for Don Valley East; Han Dong, the member for Don Valley North;



John McKay, the member for Scarborough—Guildwood; Robert Oliphant, the member for Don Valley West; Salma Zahid, the member for Scarborough Centre; and a joint submission was filed by Jen Yip, the member for Scarborough—Agincourt and Shaun Chen, the member for Scarborough North.

Most of these members objected to the Commission's decision to abandon Victoria Park Avenue as a hard political boundary between North York and Scarborough. Further, they expressed dissatisfaction about the extent of the changes proposed by the Commission, for their region, between its initial Proposal and Report. In their view, for the Commission to have made such drastic and unforeseeable changes after the closure of the public hearings lent procedural unfairness to the process and ought to have necessitated a second round of public consultations.

For their part, Ms. Yip and Mr. Chen filed an objection in support of the electoral boundary configuration for the proposed ridings of Scarborough—Agincourt and Scarborough North, as found in the Commission's Report.

a) Michael Coteau, the member for Don Valley East

Mr. Coteau objected to the elimination of the current riding of Don Valley East and, more broadly, to the configuration in the Commissioner's Report for the ridings in the Eastern Greater Toronto Area, which do not respect Victoria Park Avenue as a political boundary of historical significance between North York and Scarborough. His objection is based on:

- the lack of due process, procedural fairness, public notice and opportunities for public input during the ongoing process;
- the lack of recognition about the role that the current riding of Don Valley East plays in the settlement and support for newcomers, and racialized and Muslim residents, along with the negative impact that would be caused by the elimination of the riding; and
- the distinctiveness and historical significance of the North York communities that comprise Don Valley East.

Mr. Coteau indicated that the sequential nature of the current electoral boundaries readjustment process has, in the past and at present, given rise to unfairness and lack of public consultation throughout the process. He noted that following the public hearings, the Commission made major changes to the boundary proposals for the region of eastern Toronto and Scarborough. However, the process does not provide this iteration of the Commission's work to be subject to further public input about the changes being

proposed. Mr. Coteau stated that the Commission was aware of this procedural flaw and noted that it has been a recurrent problem recognized by past Commissions.

Mr. Coteau made two recommendations that, in his view, could help to improve the process:

- that the Commission use its legislative authority to provide public notice and allow for public consultation regarding its final report; and
- that the Committee study the issue of public participation in the review of boundaries and make recommendations in order to provide opportunities for public input after the Commissions' initial Proposal and Report.

Mr. Coteau stated that the proposed boundaries would have an adverse effect on communities of interest and identity in the region. He indicated the elimination of Don Valley East would reduce the visibility and voice of the large and vital Muslim communities in the region by consolidating them into one less electoral riding. He stated that this same effect would occur to all visible minorities and immigrants in the current riding of Don Valley East.

Further, Mr. Coteau indicated that the elimination of Don Valley East would hinder government services to a number of immigrants, and have cascading effects on the representation at the provincial and municipal level. Overall, the proposed boundaries would, in his view, lead to a more inequitable parliamentary system.

Mr. Coteau noted that past electoral boundary readjustments, as well as the present process, have resulted in Commissions cutting up and separating the communities of North York. In his view, this constant rearranging of communities into different ridings disrupted the area's entire support system, including police services, school districts, and the catchment area for the hospital and for not-for-profit organizations. He stated that this continued splitting up of the ridings of North York did not allow for stability within the community or long-term planning.

He also explained that the proposal to move Flemingdon Park, a low-income enclave, to the new riding of Don Valley South would negatively impact that community, as their unique service needs and voice would be lost amid the more affluent neighbourhoods in the new riding. Indeed, he stated that the residents of Flemingdon Park are often working multiple jobs, doing essential work, or struggling to stay in school. He contrasted their situation with the more affluent and well-connected residents who reside in other parts of Toronto and who can advocate for themselves.



Mr. Coteau also called to the Commission's attention the distinctiveness of the villages of North York. These included Don Mills, Victoria Village, Parkwoods O'Connor, Fenside and Bermondsey, communities that he described as successful, stable and in possession of their own unique history. For example, Don Mills was the first planned community in Canada and many of the neighbourhoods in the area emulated its approach to building a community. He indicated that merging the riding of Scarborough Centre and Don Valley East would also impact provincial, municipal and school boundaries.

Mr. Coteau supported Victoria Park Avenue as a hard line because it has, historically, been an important landmark to the residents of Scarborough. He stated that it should be maintained as a political boundary and should not be crossed. In his view, Victoria Park Avenue is acknowledged by government agencies and service providers (e.g., hospitals, police divisions and school boards) as an easy to understand dividing line that residents believe makes sense.

He recommended that the Committee object to the elimination of the riding of Don Valley East. He further recommended to the Commissions that they ought to follow, as a first principle, minimizing harm and disruptions to communities. He suggested that the EBRA be reviewed to add a greater range of flexibility when considering what constitutes communities of interest, communities of identity and historical boundary patterns.

Lastly, Mr. Coteau submitted to the Committee letters of support for his objection, which included those signed by: 24 members of Parliament; 23 city councillors; the member of the provincial Parliament (MPP) for Don Valley North; a school board trustee; local organizations; and two community mosques. Further, he submitted more than 500 emails that supported his objection and a petition signed by 952 residents.

The Committee supports Mr. Coteau's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

b) Han Dong, the member for Don Valley North

Mr. Dong objected to the boundary configuration for the proposed riding of Don Valley North.

Mr. Dong based his objection on the importance of recognizing and considering communities of identity, respecting historical patterns when determining electoral boundaries, and the variance of changes to the riding of Don Valley North between the Commission's initial Proposal and the Report.

Mr. Dong's objections about the proposed configuration for Don Valley North involve the following matters:

- The Commission has disregarded Victoria Park Avenue as an important landmark to the residents of both North York and Scarborough. According to Mr. Dong, Victoria Park Avenue is the landmark that distinguishes residents of Pleasant View, Henry Farm and Hillcrest Village as residents of North York. Previously, North York was its own municipality for over 100 years prior to the amalgamation of the City of Toronto, and to this day, continues to have a unique identity. The Commission's proposal in its Report would instead incorporate these North York communities into the proposed riding of Scarborough—Agincourt would place the geographic area of the proposed riding of Don Valley North with 84% of it in the City of Scarborough.
- The neighbourhood of Pleasant View and portions of the neighbourhoods of Henry Farm and Hillcrest Village, are proposed to be removed from the current riding of Don Valley North, despite having historically been a part of the City of North York.
- Previously and at present, the boundaries that circumscribe Don Valley North are major roadways. Mr. Dong finds the usage of the Don River as a proposed boundary to be inconsistent with previous configurations for the riding. He explains that the boundary should be placed along the Don Valley Parkway rather than the Don River.

Lastly, Mr. Dong noted his concern about the significant changes that the Commission has put forward between its initial Proposal and the Report. He noted that he, along with residents of Don Valley North, were afforded no opportunity for community feedback or consultation about the Commission's Report.

c) John McKay, the member for Scarborough—Guildwood

Mr. McKay objected to the proposed configuration of the riding of Scarborough—Guildwood as found in the Commission's Report. He noted that he considered acceptable the Commission's initial Proposal for Scarborough—Guildwood.

Mr. McKay indicated that the proposed riding would divide the contiguous neighbourhoods with shared concerns in the western part of the current riding of Scarborough—Guildwood. Further, it would disrupt well-established relationships among constituents and community groups that exist throughout the current riding. In



his view, the proposed changes would result in file and casework transfers that would lead to additional delays and backlogs in already slow-moving portfolios like citizenship and immigration.

Mr. McKay told the Committee that the current riding of Scarborough—Guildwood receives roughly \$100 million annually through the Canada child benefit program.³ He noted that the high use of this program was an indication that parts of this riding were relatively impoverished, particularly north of Kingston Road. He stated that, under the proposal in the Commission’s Report, the more affluent part of the riding of Scarborough—Guildwood (i.e. Guildwood) are removed and less affluent part is added. He indicated that the wisdom on the part of the Commission was, to him, not obvious, about making a needy riding even more needy and with less representation.

Lastly, Mr. McKay stated that his objection was as much about the inadequacy of the process followed to arrive at the Commission’s Report, as it was about the substance of the Report. He stated that proposed configuration for the ridings in Eastern Greater Toronto Area bear no relationship to communities of interest, geographical sensibilities, historical truths, nor to the maintenance of the former City of Scarborough.

He noted that he submitted no objection during the public hearing stage to the Commission’s initial Proposal because it respected the integrity of Scarborough. However, he stated that he felt blindsided by the proposals for Scarborough found in the Commission’s Report, as these butchered the current riding of Scarborough—Guildwood and bore no relationship to any past proposal. He noted that the Commission, in making significant changes between the initial Proposal and the Report, provided no opportunity for community input on the new proposed changes.

d) Robert Oliphant, the member for Don Valley West

Mr. Oliphant objected to the inclusion of the community of Governor’s Bridge in the proposed riding of Don Valley South.

According to Mr. Oliphant, Governor’s Bridge does not share a community of interest with the surrounding neighbourhoods in current riding of Don Valley West. He noted that Governor’s Bridge was physically divided from the rest of the riding by a large valley. Further, Governor’s Bridge had closer social and cultural ties to Rosedale as opposed

3 The Canada child benefit is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency. It is a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help with the cost of raising children under 18 years of age.

to Leaside, and the houses and traffic patterns in Governor's Bridge closely resembled the Rosedale community.

He stated that during the previous electoral boundaries readjustment process, the Commission at that time stated that it was not persuaded that Governor's Bridge shared a community of interest with Don Valley West. Further, he indicated that the Commission had not received any submission that suggested that there was a shared community of interest between Governor's Bridge and Don Valley West.

Lastly, Mr. Oliphant stated that the population of Governor's Bridge represented about 0.5% of the population of the proposed riding of Don Valley South. As such, his proposal to shift it to the adjacent proposed riding of University—Rosedale would not create a domino effect.

The Committee supports Mr. Oliphant's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

e) Salma Zahid, the Member for Scarborough Centre

Ms. Zahid filed an objection to the configuration of the proposed ridings in the City of Scarborough.

Ms. Zahid objection has several components. These are:

- The lack of procedural fairness that arose because the Commission made major and unjustified changes to the configuration of the ridings in Scarborough, between its initial Proposal and its Report. These changes were made without effective consultation with the communities impacted by this new proposal.
- The proposed ridings in Scarborough do not give full consideration to important communities of interest in Scarborough Centre, including one of the largest Muslim communities in the Greater Toronto Area.
- The Commission disregarded Victoria Park Avenue as the traditional western border of Scarborough and, as such, the Commission's riding proposals for that city merge together communities with very different socio-economic profiles.



Ms. Zahid proposes instead that the ridings of Scarborough be readjusted to keep communities of interest together and strengthen the Scarborough representation in the area ridings.

In respect of the matter of a lack of procedural fairness, Ms. Zahid stated that during the public hearings, the Commission heard submissions about the socio-economic and ethnic makeup of the residents of Scarborough. Yet, following the public hearings, the Commission nonetheless proposed major changes to their initial Proposal. These included eliminating the current riding of Don Valley East and making major boundary changes to Scarborough Centre, Scarborough—Guildwood and Scarborough—Rouge Park.

Ms. Zahid stated that the current process, as provided for by the EBRA, allows for major changes following the period of public consultation and that this is a glaring flaw in the process. In her view, the law ought to limit the changes that the Commission can make following the public hearings to minor changes made in response to public feedback because there is no opportunity for the Commission to hold any meaningful public consultations after Report has been presented in the House of Commons.

Secondly, Ms. Zahid indicated that the proposed boundaries for Scarborough impact a variety of communities of interest in the city. These include the largest concentration of Muslims in the Greater Toronto area, many new immigrants, refugees and marginalized persons, and a large Tamil community. Dividing these communities into two ridings would adversely impact their access to resources and businesses, as well as create confusion about where and how they can access support from the federal government. They would also divide the catchment area for three schools in the area that serve members of marginalized communities. She stated that, under the Commission's proposed boundaries in its Report, many residents of the current riding of Scarborough Centre would be asked to elect a schoolboard trustee who was responsible for their children's school. This would make it more challenging for parents to effectively advocate for their children and access resources needed to succeed in an at-risk neighbourhood.

Thirdly, Ms. Zahid stated the western border of Scarborough ought to remain Victoria Park Avenue. However, the riding's borders were still extended across this traditional line to include parts of the Don Valley ridings. She indicated that these are different socio-economic communities and therefore dilutes the representation of the riding.

These revisions are proposed in consultation with and with the support of the members for Scarborough—Guildwood and Scarborough—Rouge Park.

Ms. Zahid proposed boundaries would result in a riding that is 68% Scarborough instead of the 55% Scarborough as proposed by the Commission. Due to this factor, she suggests that the riding maintain its traditional name of Scarborough Centre as the name is familiar with residents.

f) Joint Submission

Two members of the House of Commons filed a joint objection in which they stated that they accepted the electoral boundary proposals, as proposed by the Commission in its Report, for the following two proposed ridings: Scarborough—Agincourt and Scarborough North. The two members are Jen Yip, the member for Scarborough—Agincourt and Shaun Chen, the member for Scarborough North.

The letter stated that the members accepted the Commission's electoral boundary proposals based on the following reasons:

- that six Scarborough ridings are maintained;
- that Scarborough voices were heard and noted with empathy in the Commission's final report;
- that the riding names of Scarborough—Agincourt and Scarborough North remain distinct and separate; and
- that the communities of interest in northern Scarborough are protected, including the streets of McCowan, Pharmacy, Victoria Park and Warden, and the neighbourhoods of Agincourt, L'Amoreaux, Malvern, Milliken, Steeles, and Tam O'Shanter-Sullivan.

4. Northern Greater Toronto Area

One member of the House of Commons, whose riding is in the Northern Greater Toronto Area, filed an objection to the Commission's Report: Anna Roberts, the member for King—Vaughn.

a) Anna Roberts, the member for King—Vaughn

Ms. Roberts objected to the non-inclusion of the entirety of the Township of King's Ward 6 in the proposed riding of King—Vaughn. In her view, excluding Ward 6 from the riding of King—Vaughn divides and isolates an important and close-knit community.



In her objection, Ms. Roberts provided excerpts from local historical texts about the Holland Marsh and its transformation from a marsh to an agricultural settlement, beginning in the 1920s. She stated that since 1925, the Holland Marsh has had a significant historical ties to the Township of King. Ms. Roberts also provided historical excerpts from a text about Glenville. The text reviewed the industry that arose in Glenville beginning in the 1800s. She stated that Glenville established the first industrial sector in the area, and that today, many residents of King continue to buy their produce from the local farmer's market. Ms. Roberts also noted that the community of Ansnorveldt is credited with being home to the first year-round settler in the area, dating back to 1934.

Ms. Roberts indicated that residents of Ward 6 hold the view that their placement in the current riding of York—Simcoe and proposed riding of New Tecumseh—Gwillimbury diminishes their voice in federal consultations. She also noted that these residents pay their taxes to the Township of King.

Further, she stated that as the other larger municipalities that compose the proposed riding of New Tecumseh—Gwillimbury continue to increase in population, the rural and agricultural issues and matters of concern for the residents of Ward 6 will grow increasingly separate from those of the residents of New Tecumseh—Gwillimbury.

Ms. Roberts noted that including Ward 6 in King—Vaughn would only add an additional 1,165 residents to the overall population of the riding. She stated that the mayor and councillor of the Township of King are supportive of her proposal, as is Mrs. Avia Eek, the current councillor of Ward 6, who, along with her family, are third-generation Holland Marsh farmers.

5 Brampton, Caledon, and Dufferin

One member of the House of Commons, whose riding is in the Brampton, Caledon, and Dufferin region, filed an objection to the Commission's Report: Ruby Sahota, the member for Brampton North.

Ms. Sahota, who is a member of the Committee, recused herself from the discussion and consideration of her objection.

a) Ruby Sahota, the member for Brampton North

Ms. Sahota objected to the Commission's proposal in its Report to divide the community of Springdale⁴ into three separate ridings. Instead, she proposed that Springdale, in its entirety, be placed in a single federal riding, so that its interests can be best represented.

Ms. Sahota noted that in the Commission's initial Proposal, nearly the entirety of Springdale was kept intact and placed in the proposed riding of Brampton—Chinguacousy. However, in the Report, Springdale was divided between the three proposed ridings of Brampton North—Caledon, Brampton—Chinguacousy Park and Brampton East. She referred to the difference between the initial Proposal and the Report as a complete deviation, and stated that residents did not proactively attend the public hearings because they could not have anticipated such an outcome.

In Ms. Sahota's view, Springdale is a community of interest and identity with a shared historical origin. By dividing Springdale into three ridings, the singular voice of its residents and community leaders is detrimentally affected. She stated that it was disheartening to imagine a large, marginalized population struggling to navigate through three distinct ridings in order to engage with their elected representatives effectively.

Her objection provided a historical account of Springdale. It was a planned town within the city of Brampton, which was announced in 1991 and built by 2004. The plan for Springdale included a hospital, schools, churches and places of worship, a public library, parks, a police station and fire stations, a public transit terminal, a shopping centre and plazas, and large swaths of green space and parks.

Since its completion, Springdale has been a community of interest and identity within the current riding of Brampton North. Indeed, from 2004 to 2015, the federal and provincial riding for the area was called Brampton North—Springdale. Springdale currently accounts for 56% of the riding's population. It is a predominantly Sikh community, with Punjabi as the second-most spoken language. It is home to a large and diverse group of newcomers, immigrants and seniors. Ms. Sahota noted that regional and city councillors who represent the area support her objection and have referred to Springdale as a community that exemplifies the essence of Canadian society, and is a tightly woven fabric where diversity is cherished. She noted that the community

4 Ms. Sahota's objection delineated the boundaries of Springdale. These are: a northern boundary of Countryside Drive, a western boundary of Heartlake Road, a southern boundary of Bovaird Drive and an eastern boundary of Tobram Road.



supports, groups and resources that residents are engaged in and reliant on were in fact built intentionally for their common use.

In the Report, the proposed configuration of Springdale into three ridings divides many important community resources, programs and facilities from those who use them. These include the division into separate ridings of a major community centre, places of worship, locations for youth and seniors' programs (e.g., the Save Max Soccer Centre), businesses and the Trinity Commons Transit terminal.

Ms. Sahota indicated that Springdale had a population in 2021 of about 70,646. She acknowledged that placing all of Springdale in a single riding would have a domino effect on nearby ridings. However, in her view, the advantages of maintaining this community of interest were greater than concerns about population deviations in the associated ridings. She indicated that she was confident that the Commission could reconfigure the ridings in the area, without exceeding a 15% deviation from the provincial quota, to allow the community of Springdale to be whole in a single riding.

The Committee supports Ms. Sahota's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.⁵

6. Halton, Guelph, and Wellington

Two members of the House of Commons, whose ridings are in the Halton, Guelph, and Wellington region, filed objections to the Commission's Report. They are: the Honourable Michael Chong, P.C., the member for Wellington—Halton Hills; and the Honourable Karina Gould, P.C., the member for Burlington.

a) The Honourable Michael Chong, P.C., the member for Wellington—Halton Hills

Mr. Chong objected to an apparent mapping error that resulted in the inclusion of three dwellings being erroneously placed in the proposed riding of Kitchener—Conestoga instead of the Wellington—Halton Hills North. Mr. Chong proposed that the boundary division between Wellington—Halton Hills North and Kitchener—Conestoga be adjusted to reflect that the odd-numbered addresses on Splint Road are included in Wellington—Halton Hills North.

⁵ Ms. Sahota, who is a member of the Committee, recused herself from the discussion and consideration of her objection.

In the Commission's Report, it is stated that the Townships of Centre Wellington, Guelph/Eramosa and Puslinch are to be components of the proposed riding of Wellington—Halton Hills North.⁶

However, three dwellings from Guelph/Eramosa have been placed in the current riding of Kitchener—Conestoga. They are located in Ariss, Ontario, at 5879, 5883 and 5887 Splint Road, and all have a postal code of N0B 1B0. They are the only three addresses in Guelph/Eramosa that are placed in Kitchener—Conestoga.

Mr. Chong's objection stated that the boundary line for the Township of Guelph/Eramosa includes the east side of Splint Road, and includes all odd numbered houses on Splint Road.

Further, Mr. Chong indicated that the mayor of Guelph/Eramosa confirmed with his office that 5879, 5883 and 5887 Splint Road, Ariss, Ontario, N0B 1B0, are in the Township Guelph/Eramosa and its residents pay their property taxes there.

Lastly, Mr. Chong noted that this mapping error arose during the 2012 redistribution process, and that the maps used for the current redistribution process repeat this error.

The Committee supports Mr. Chong's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

b) The Honourable Karina Gould, P.C., the member for Burlington

Ms. Gould filed an objection in support of the boundary configuration and riding name for the proposed riding of Burlington, as found in the Commission's Report.

She commended the Commission for engaging in dialogue with the communities of Burlington, for taking the communities' concerns into consideration, and for the Commission's hard work in finding the best solution.

Ms. Gould's objection listed the three elements to the boundary configuration and name of the proposed riding of Burlington, as found in the Commission's initial Proposal, which were of concern to residents, and subsequently addressed by the Commission in its Report. These were:

⁶ Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, *Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario*, 2022, p. 203.



- the removal/transfer of sections of the neighbourhood of Elizabeth Gardens to the neighbouring proposed riding of Oakville—Lakeshore;
- the removal/transfer of sections of the neighbourhoods of Tyandaga and Brant Hills to the neighbouring proposed riding of Burlington—Milton West; and
- the name of Burlington—Lakeshore instead of Burlington.

Ms. Gould indicated that the Commission’s revisions, as found in its Report, to its initial Proposal for the riding of Burlington, had addressed the concerns raised by herself and the residents of the current riding of Burlington during the public hearings. Indeed, the configuration for the riding of Burlington in the Report was, in her view, strongly supported by residents and they do not want subsequent boundary changes to occur.

The Committee supports Ms. Gould’s objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

7. Hamilton and Niagara

One member of the House of Commons, whose riding is in the Hamilton and Niagara region, filed an objection to the Commission’s Report: Vance Badawey, the member for Niagara Centre.

a) Vance Badawey, the member for Niagara Centre

Mr. Badawey objected to the placement of a portion of the northern boundary of the proposed riding of Niagara South, as found in the Commission’s Report.

This boundary is overlaid atop of St. David’s Road/Sir Isaac Brock Way for almost the entirety of its length. However, at Brock University’s campus, the boundary dips southward, following Highway 406, Decew Road and Lake Moodie. Mr. Badawey proposed that this dip southward be eliminated and that the boundary follow St. David’s Road/Sir Isaac Brock Way west of Highway 406 and through the southern portion of Brock University’s campus. He noted that his proposal matches the proposed boundary between Niagara South and Niagara West, as found in the Commission’s initial Proposal.

Mr. Badawey indicated that the Commission’s proposal to keep Brock University in its entirety in a single federal riding, ignored the municipal boundary between Thorold and St. Catharines. On the matter of keeping Brock University in a single riding, Mr. Badawey also added that:

- at the public hearings, this concern was not raised in any presentation;
- Niagara College has its campus locations in two separate federal ridings (i.e. in the proposed ridings of Niagara North and Niagara South);
- his proposal affects about 100 students who live in a newly created student residence; and
- there are student residences for Brock University located all over the cities of Thorold and St. Catharines.

Further, the proposed northern boundary of Niagara South placed Thorold's City Hall in the neighbouring riding of St. Catharines, effectively cutting Thorold's centre of government off from the city itself, which is located in Niagara South. The proposed northern boundary also placed the newly built Canada Games Park, which services the residents of Thorold, in the riding of St. Catharines. Further, the headquarters of the Niagara Regional government were also placed in St. Catharines.

Mr. Badawey stated that Thorold City Hall, Niagara Regional Government Headquarters and the Canada Games Park arena, in his view, were intended to exist in the Municipality of Thorold and the proposed riding of Niagara South. He indicated that his objection was supported by Thorold's mayor and city council, who stated their desire to have their community remain whole in a single riding with a single federal representative.

8. South Central Ontario

Four members of the House of Commons, whose ridings are in South Central Ontario, filed a joint objection in support of the Commission's Report, for the proposed ridings of Cambridge, Kitchener—Conestoga, Kitchener South—Hespeler and Waterloo. They are: Valerie Bradford, the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler; the Honourable Bardish Chagger, P.C., the member for Waterloo; Tim Louis, the member for Kitchener—Conestoga; and Bryan May, the member for Cambridge.

Ms. Chagger, who is a member of the Committee, recused herself from the discussion and consideration of her objection.

a) Joint Submission

Four members of the House of Commons filed a joint objection in which they stated that they accepted the electoral boundary proposals, as proposed by the Commission in its



Report, for the following four proposed ridings: Cambridge, Kitchener—Conestoga, Kitchener South—Hespeler and Waterloo.

The four members are Ms. Bradford, Ms. Chagger, Mr. Louis, and Mr. May.

The letter stated that the members accepted the Commission's electoral boundary proposals for the Region of Waterloo, and appreciated that the Commission took communities of interest into consideration in making its decisions.

The Committee supports this objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.⁷

9. Southwestern Ontario

One member of the House of Commons, whose riding is in the Southwestern region, filed an objection to the Commission's Report: Peter Fragiskatos, the member for London North Centre.

a) Peter Fragiskatos, the member for London North Centre

Mr. Fragiskatos objected to the placement of the northern boundary of the proposed riding of London Centre.

Currently, and in the Commission's initial Proposal, this boundary runs over open land north of, and parallel to, Sunningdale Road. Mr. Fragiskatos's objection supported this placement for the northern border for London Centre. However, in the Commission's Report, this boundary is shifted south to Fanshawe Park Road.

It is also worth noting that London West, London Centre and London—Fanshawe have been assigned a shared northern border, which runs in a straight line across the top of all three ridings, currently, in the initial Proposal and in the Report.

Mr. Fragiskatos indicated that the proposed northern border for London Centre divided communities of interest that have enjoyed close connections and ties for several decades, and placed them into separate ridings. He stated that one such community was the Stoneybrook area. Residents there share the same high schools, community centre, shopping centres, and fire and ambulance services. In his view, should such a community

⁷ Ms. Chagger, who is a member of the Committee, recused herself from the discussion and consideration of her objection.

be broken up by a boundary readjustment, then a very important principle in the boundary readjustment process has been broken.

In his view, the Commission's decision was over-reliant on maintaining a low variance from the province's electoral quota and did not meet the requirement of ensuring that communities of interest remain intact.

His written objection provided excerpts from letters that his office had received expressing dissatisfaction with the Commission's Report. In one letter, a resident stated that the changes proposed in the Report to all of the ridings of London represented sweeping alterations, upset historical patterns and communities of interest or identity. The resident noted that:

- many of these changes came following the public hearing stage of the boundary readjustment process, which did not allow for him to object to the configuration proposed in the Report;
- his dwelling has been located in an urban London riding for over 40 years, but that under the proposed configuration for London in the Report placed his dwelling in a large, rural riding (i.e., the proposed riding of Middlesex—London), which did not respect his community of interest or identity;
- matters of concern to Londoners who live north of Fanshawe Park Road will no longer be considered in an urban context, but rather in the context of a large rural riding; and
- the office his member of Parliament will presumably be located geographically distant from residents who live north of Fanshawe Park Road.

Mr. Fragiskatos pointed out that Josh Morgan, Mayor of the City of London, supported his objection. In his view, the mayor's perspective on this issue spoke volumes about how the community felt. Mr. Fragiskatos provided a further excerpt from a letter written by Mr. Morgan. It stated that, under the configuration for London in the Report, about 37,000 Londoners would lose a dedicated federal representative based in London. He stated that these constituents have distinct and unique urban concerns, which are difficult to reconcile alongside those of predominantly rural areas to the north, southeast and southwest of London.



Mr. Fragiskatos indicated that London has a unique identity, concerns and challenges. He stated that placing 37,000 urban residents into a rural riding was inappropriate, if not irresponsible.

B. Electoral District Name Changes

1. Northern Ontario

a) Marc Serré, the member for Nickel Belt

Mr. Serré objected to the proposed riding name of Manitoulin—Nickel Belt. Instead, he suggested that Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt would provide a better geographic description of the area encompassed by the riding. In his view, the Commission ought to consider using the name Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt because:

- the riding name Nickel Belt has been used for that geographic area since 1952;
- it brought together the municipalities that compose the riding;
- residents of the proposed riding have told Mr. Serré that they prefer his proposed riding name as they better relate to and identify with it;
- it ran parallel with the Public Health Sudbury and Districts geographic area, and so offered clarity to residents seeking vital health information;
- his proposed name change was supported by the Sudbury East Manitoulin Health Unit, and regional mayors and councils; and
- his proposed name is a region of Northern Ontario that represents the semi-urban and semi-rural nature of the riding.

The Committee supports Mr. Serré’s objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

2. Eastern Greater Toronto Area

a) Melissa Lantsman, the member for Thornhill

Melissa Lantsman, the member for Thornhill objected to the proposed riding name of Vaughan—Thornhill and indicated that she objected to anything similar to that proposal.

Ms. Lantsman stated that Thornhill is a unique pocket in Greater Toronto Area. It was established in 1794, and residents of Thornhill to continue to identify as “Thornhillers” despite currently being residents of either the City of Vaughan or Markham, depending on where they live.

Further, Ms. Lantsman indicated that the proposed riding name would likely engender confusion among residents of the region, as the proposed riding includes a part of both the cities of Markham and Vaughan. The residents of the Markham portion of the riding may wrongly believe that they are a part of the neighbouring riding of Markham—Thornhill.

She told the Committee that her proposed name change had the support of, and/or was not objected to, by the members of Parliament in the neighboring ridings, as well as the Ward 1 counsellor for Markham, and many residents of the current riding of Thornhill.

The Committee supports Ms. Lantsman’s objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

b) Robert Oliphant, the member for Don Valley West

Mr. Oliphant objected to the name of the proposed riding of Don Valley South. Instead, he indicated that a more representative name for that riding would be Don Valley West.

Mr. Oliphant stated that the name proposed by the Commission in its Report was inconsistent with the geographical placement of the riding. He noted that the entirety of the proposed riding of Don Valley South lies to the west of the East Don River. As such, the proposed name to Don Valley South would be inconsistent with the geographical placement of the riding.

Further, he noted that the configuration of the proposed riding of Don Valley South features a shift mostly latitudinally, notably to absorb the neighbourhoods west of the East Don River, as compared with current riding of Don Valley West. He noted that this shift appeared to be necessitated by the need to ensure population equality.

Mr. Oliphant stated that 94.5% of the proposed riding of Don Valley South has, at one time or another, been called Don Valley West. As such, the name change proposed by the Commission would, in his view, confuse residents of the current riding.

Mr. Oliphant indicated that during the previous boundary readjustment process, proposals to rename the riding from Don Valley East to Don Valley South had been rejected by the Commission at that time because its original name was more closely



aligned with its geographical location. Therefore, he stated that it would be inconsistent to change the name of Don Valley West to Don Valley South during the current boundary readjustment process based on the same reasoning that prevailed a decade ago.

Lastly, he stated that his proposed riding name had widespread support, including from the local MPP, the city councillor, and the residents' associations.

The Committee supports Mr. Oliphant's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

c) Salma Zahid, the member for Scarborough Centre

Ms. Zahid filed an objection to the proposed riding names in the City of Scarborough. Should the Commission agree with her objection and readjust the riding configurations in Scarborough, she proposes that the riding Scarborough Centre retain this name, as it is familiar to most residents and will help avoid confusion.

The Committee supports Ms. Zahid's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

d) Joint Submission

Two members of the House of Commons filed a joint objection in which they stated that they accepted the riding names, as proposed by the Commission in its Report, for the following two proposed ridings: Scarborough—Agincourt and Scarborough North. The two members are Jen Yip, the member for Scarborough—Agincourt, and Shaun Chen, the member for Scarborough North. They indicated that that the riding names of Scarborough—Agincourt and Scarborough North ought to remain distinct and separate.

The Committee supports the members' objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

3. Central Ontario

a) Doug Shipley, the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte

Doug Shipley, the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, objected to the proposed riding name of Barrie-North—Springwater—Oro-Medonte. He suggested that the current name of the riding be maintained.

Mr. Shipley indicated that, initially, he considered Barrie-North—Springwater—Oro-Medonte an appropriate riding name because it could reduce confusion among residents in the City of Barrie about which riding they reside in.

However, he indicated that public feedback about the proposed name has indicated that residents find the name cumbersome. Further, confusion arose among residents because of the ordering of places within the proposed name itself, with some residents viewing the name as suggesting that the riding represented North Springwater.

Lastly, Mr. Shipley stated that the addition of the word “North” was not needed and that changing the current riding name had cost implications that did not need to be incurred.

The Committee supports Mr. Shipley’s objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

4. Halton, Guelph and Wellington

a) The Honourable Karina Gould, the member for Burlington

Ms. Gould filed an objection in support of the riding name for the proposed riding of Burlington, as found in the Commission’s Report.

In the initial Proposal, the Commission gave the riding the name of Burlington—Lakeshore. However, following the public hearings, the Commission changed its proposal and reverted to the riding’s current name of Burlington.

Ms. Gould indicated that the Commission’s revisions had addressed the concerns raised by herself and the residents of the current riding of Burlington. Indeed, in her view, the proposed riding name of Burlington in the Report was strongly supported by residents.

The Committee supports Ms. Gould’s objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

5. Hamilton and Niagara

a) Tony Baldinelli, the member for Niagara Falls

Tony Baldinelli, the member for Niagara Falls, objected to the proposed riding name of Niagara North. He suggested that the riding instead be named Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake.



Mr. Baldinelli's objection was based on the following reasons:

- His proposed name reflects and represents the only two municipalities in the riding (i.e., Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake) in a short, accurate and descriptive manner.
- As municipalities, both Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake are popular tourism destinations (e.g., viniculture). His proposed name provides recognition and honours both municipalities, while highlighting their significance and place in Canada's tourism industry.
- Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake are home to the largest number of War of 1812 battlefield sites anywhere in Canada. Recognizing both of their names in the riding name would honour and highlight their significance and place in Canadian history.
- In his view, the proposed riding name Niagara North is inaccurate, misrepresentative and risks confusion among residents because the north part of the Niagara region stretches across the entire shoreline of Lake Ontario, and therefore encompasses many municipalities, which are located in other federal ridings (i.e., St. Catharines and Niagara West).
- The Commission's proposed riding name of Niagara North may be a convenient geographic counterpart to the proposed riding of Niagara South. However, the name Niagara North does not reflect the close connections between Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake, nor do they relate or resonate with the residents who live in these two communities.
- Mr. Baldinelli also noted that his proposed riding name orders Niagara Falls before Niagara-on-the-Lake because Niagara Falls is the larger municipality of the two in terms of population and economy, and, in his view, Niagara Falls is Canada's top leisure tourism destination.
- His objection is supported by the Lord Mayor of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Mayor of the City of Niagara Falls.

The Committee supports Mr. Baldinelli's objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

6. Southernmost Ontario

a) Irek Kusmierczyk, the member for Windsor—Tecumseh

Irek Kusmierczyk, the member for Windsor—Tecumseh objected to the proposed riding name of Windsor—Tecumseh, as found in the Commission’s Report.

Mr. Kusmierczyk suggested that the riding instead be named Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore. He indicated that this change would serve to better reflect the boundary change made for that riding, whereby the Commission moved the eastern boundary to encompass the Municipality of Lakeshore.

The Committee supports Mr. Kusmierczyk’s objection and recommends that the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario consider it favourably.

APPENDIX A LIST OF WITNESSES

The following table lists the witnesses who appeared before the committee at its meetings related to this report. Transcripts of all public meetings related to this report are available on the committee’s [webpage for this study](#).

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Michael Coteau, M.P., Don Valley East	2023/04/27	67
Han Dong, M.P., Don Valley North		
Melissa Lantsman, M.P., Thornhill		
Hon. John McKay, P.C., M.P., Scarborough—Guildwood		
Hon. Robert Oliphant, P.C., M.P., Don Valley West		
Salma Zahid, M.P., Scarborough Centre		
Marie-France Lalonde, M.P., Orléans	2023/05/02	68
Anna Roberts, M.P., King—Vaughan		
Ruby Sahota, M.P., Brampton North		
Doug Shipley, Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte		
Charlie Angus, M.P., Timmins—James Bay	2023/05/04	69
Vance Badawey, M.P., Niagara Centre		
Tony Baldinelli, M.P., Niagara Falls		
Peter Fragiskatos, M.P., London North Centre		
Carol Hughes, M.P., Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing		
Viviane Lapointe, M.P., Sudbury		
Marc G. Serré, M.P., Nickel Belt		
Terry Sheehan, M.P., Sault Ste. Marie		

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos. 67 to 69 and 77](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Bardish Chagger
Chair

Report on the Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario: Conservative Dissenting Report

This Dissenting Report reflects the views of the Conservative Members of Parliament who serve on the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (“PROC”): MP John Nater (Vice Chair of the Committee, Perth—Wellington), MP Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L’Érable), MP Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe), and MP Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton).

Introduction

There are sixteen Notices of Objection in response to the Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario requesting electoral boundary changes (the “Boundary Objections”). The Boundary Objections are made by MP Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay), MP Vance Badaway (Niagara Centre), the Honourable Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills), MP Michael Coteau (Don Valley East), MP Han Dong (Don Valley North), MP Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre), MP Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasung), MP Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans), MP Vivian Lapointe (Sudbury), the Honourable John MacKay (Scarborough—Guildwood), the Honourable Rob Oliphant (Don Valley West), MP Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan), MP Ruby Sahota (Brampton North), MP Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie), Marc G. Serré (Nickel Belt), and MP Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre).

There are six Notices of Objection requesting electoral boundary name changes (the “Name Objections”). The Name Objections are made by MP Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls), MP Irek Kusmierczyk (Windsor—Tecumseh), MP Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill), MP Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte), as well as by MPs Oliphant and Serré.

Additionally, The Honourable Karina Gould (Burlington) submitted an objection in support of the Commission’s report as it pertains to the Burlington riding. MP Shaun Chen (Scarborough North) and MP Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt) submitted a joint objection in support of the Commission’s report as it pertains to their respective ridings. Finally, there is a joint objection in support of the Commission’s report as it pertains to the Region of Waterloo signed by MP Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler), the Honourable Bardish Chagger (Waterloo), MP Bryan May (Cambridge), and MP Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga).

We respectfully disagree with the conclusions of the Report of PROC to support the Boundary Objections, except for the targeted Boundary Objections of MPs Chong, Roberts, and Oliphant. We note that PROC reported back but did not endorse the objection of MP MacKay. We do not support this objection. We concur with the report of PROC to support the Name Objections of MPs Baldinelli, Lantsman, and Shipley. We take no position with regards to the other Name Objections.

The Northern Ontario Objections

Five Northern Ontario MPs submitted notices of objection. The objections of MPs Angus, Hughes, Lapointe, and Sheehan are primarily focused on maintaining ten ridings in Northern Ontario. As such, we will analyze these objections collectively. MP Serré’s objection also argues

for the status quo of ten Northern ridings, however, raises substantive issues specific to the proposed Manitoulin—Nickel Belt riding. As such, we will analyze MP Serré’s objection separately.

Respectfully, we submit that no changes should be made to the Commission’s final proposal for Northern Ontario ridings.

The Angus, Hughes, Lapointe, and Sheehan Objections

MPs Angus, Hughes, Lapointe, and Sheehan argue that the Commission should add a seat to Northern Ontario, thereby maintaining the status quo of ten northern ridings. Collectively, the MPs make three general arguments: (1) the Commission gave undue weight to population parity relative to the provincial quota (the “Quota”); (2) the loss of a riding would significantly and negatively impact effective representation for Northern Ontario; (3) the Commission should use its discretion to deem additional Northern Ontario ridings as “extraordinary circumstances” ridings.

The assertion that the Commission used a “mathematical formula” to eliminate a Northern Ontario riding without attaching appropriate weight to other factors pursuant to the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, R.S.C., 1985, c. E-3 (the “EBRA”), is without merit.¹ It is evident, based on its report, that the Commission carefully considered factors such as communities of interest and identity, manageable geographic size, as well as the historical pattern of electoral districts. However, the Commission appropriately recognized, based on the of the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *Reference re Provincial Electoral Boundaries (Sask.)*, [1991] 2 S.C.R. 158, that voter parity must be the “primary concern” in drawing electoral boundaries.²

Having regard for voter parity being the “primary concern”, the Commission had to address that five of the ten existing Northern Ontario ridings fall more than 25% below the Quota.³ When the boundaries were drawn in 2012, only one riding, Kenora, which was deemed an “extraordinary circumstances” riding fell below 25%.⁴ The population parity challenge faced by the Commission was compounded by “uneven population shifts across the province” over the past decade, with Northern Ontario growing by a mere 2.8% compared to 11.2% across the rest of Ontario.⁵ This has resulted in “patterns of voter under-representation and over-representation.”⁶ As the Commission noted, if all ten ridings were maintained they would on average be 73% of the Quota, and that “[c]ontinued gaps in population growth between Northern Ontario and the rest of the province will only make this disparity more acute.”⁷

¹ Objection of Vivian Lapointe, p.1.

² Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, p.9.

³ *Ibid.*, 34

⁴ *Ibid.*, 34

⁵ *Ibid.*, 5

⁶ *Ibid.*, 34

⁷ *Ibid.*, 38

To achieve relative parity to the Quota, the Commission could have eliminated two Northern Ontario ridings. However, the Commission was of the view that a further reduction would “imperil effective representation.”⁸ It should be noted that even after the loss of one riding, the average deviation for Northern Ontario ridings is -18.5% relative to the Quota, underscoring the reasonableness of the Commission’s decision. Taken together, we submit that the Commission reasonably balanced non-population factors relevant to effective representation, while respecting that population parity is the “primary concern.”

In a related argument against the loss of a Northern Ontario riding, the objectors in general cited challenges associated with representing sparsely populated, geographically large ridings. While these are legitimate challenges, they are not new to MPs from Northern Ontario. Most Northern Ontario MPs must address these challenges with the existing boundaries. To claim that the loss of a single Northern Ontario riding will create “undue hardship” is unpersuasive.⁹

It is further argued that the Commission, having deemed three ridings as “extraordinary circumstances” ridings, should categorize other Northern Ontario ridings in the same way.¹⁰ Respectfully, this was already considered by the Commission. The Commission determined that while “geographic size” might apply to other ridings, other factors, including “their social and physical geography” merited special consideration for the three ridings.¹¹

While the objectors were critical of the Commission’s decision to eliminate one Northern Ontario riding, they did not offer a solution, beyond imploring the Commission to maintain the status quo. Without more, this is unrealistic, having regard for the population of Northern Ontario relative to the rest of the province. Moreover, to maintain ten Northern Ontario ridings, the Commission would have to eliminate a riding elsewhere in Ontario. This would likely result in a disruptive cascading effect across the province. We submit that it is not reasonable at this stage of the process to ask the Commission to make significant changes across the province to maintain the ten-riding status quo for Northern Ontario. The time to make such arguments, in our opinion, is during the public consultation process. Such arguments were already forcefully made at that stage and were reasonably rejected by the Commission.

The Serré Objection

MP Serré argues that the communities of Coniston, Falconbridge, Garson, Skead, Wanup, and Wahnapiatae be moved from the Sudbury riding to Manitoulin—Nickel Belt. We respectfully disagree.

These communities except for Skead were placed in the Sudbury riding in the Commission’s initial proposal. The Commission noted in its final report that it received support during the consultation process on the way in which it drew Sudbury.¹² In its final proposal, the

⁸ Ibid., 36

⁹ Evidence, Procedure and House Affairs Committee, 4 May 2023 (Vivian Lapointe).

¹⁰ Objection of Terry Sheehan, p.3.

¹¹ Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, p.40.

¹² Ibid., 44

Commission added Skead to Sudbury, based on “submissions made by individuals and elected municipal representatives” who argued that all communities of Nickel Centre be situated in Sudbury.¹³

MP Serré argues that placing these communities, particularly Coniston and Garson, in Sudbury significantly dilutes the Francophone speaking population of Manitoulin—Nickel Belt. We disagree. With a sizeable 31% Francophone speaking population, the Commission reasonably kept Franco-Ontario communities of interest together, in the face of the task of having to make significant adjustments to the boundaries of Northern Ontario ridings. As the Commission noted, Manitoulin—Nickel Belt was altered from the initial proposal “based on feedback from the Franco-Ontarian community.”¹⁴ As for Coniston and Garson, these communities are part of Sudbury, which, as the Commission notes has a strong Franco-Ontarian influence, with 17% of its population being Francophone speaking.¹⁵

The Toronto Objections

The Coteau, MacKay and Zahid Objections

The objections of MPs Coteau, MacKay and Zahid have overlapping issues pertaining to the eastern part of Toronto, including Scarborough. As such, we will analyze them together. Respectfully, their objections should be rejected.

Contrary to their collective assertions that the Commission did not respect procedural fairness and public input, the riding boundaries for Toronto, and in particular Scarborough are a result of significant public input during the consultation process.

The Commission reasonably decided to eliminate one Toronto riding, having regard for the slower population growth over the past decade of 6% compared to provincial average of 11.7%.¹⁶ The Commission’s decision to eliminate Don Valley East and merge it with neighbouring ridings is supported by the fact that the riding is a substantial -18.48% from the Quota.¹⁷

This decision and the cascading effect that it has had on the riding map of Scarborough should be viewed through the wider lens of the riding map of Toronto as a whole. As the Commission acknowledged, the initial proposal for Toronto was “widely criticized by elected officials, civic organizations, and the general public.”¹⁸ The initial proposal of the Commission to eliminate an entire riding in Scarborough was “seen as another act against a part of Toronto which feels it has suffered a long series of setbacks and disappointments.”¹⁹ Based on this input, the Commission’s final proposal provides that “the loss of a district is shared between Scarborough

¹³ ibid., 44

¹⁴ ibid., 43

¹⁵ ibid., 43

¹⁶ ibid., 48

¹⁷ ibid., 48

¹⁸ ibid., 51

¹⁹ ibid., 51-52

and the rest of Toronto.”²⁰ Moreover, the Commission’s final proposal has the benefit of constraining the cascading effects to the eastern portion of Toronto, allowing “the remainder of the City to remain very close to the existing boundaries.”²¹

The general criticisms of the map by the objectors are, in our opinion, unpersuasive. We acknowledge that Victoria Park Avenue has long been a recognized demarcation between the former cities of North York and Scarborough. However, the Commission was faced with Toronto-wide considerations, given uneven population growth, with Don Valley East and most Scarborough ridings being significantly below the Quota. Given this, the Commission’s decision to configure two ridings that traverse Victoria Park Avenue is reasonable. We observe that MP Jean Yip, whose Scarborough riding, as redistributed, extends into the former city of North York, is supportive of the Commission’s final proposal, as is fellow Scarborough MP Shaun Chen.²² There is also precedent with respect to riding boundaries for parts of Scarborough being connected with neighbouring communities. For example, the easternmost parts of Scarborough were connected to Pickering in the former Pickering—Scarborough East riding between 2004 and 2015. Likewise, neighbourhoods in North York and Scarborough were part of the same York—Scarborough riding between 1979 and 1988.

While many residents of the former cities of North York and Scarborough identify as such, the demographics of Don Valley East and Scarborough Centre are reasonably similar. The ridings have many immigrants, as well as a significant Muslim population. They are also relatively similar on a socio-economic basis, and have many common issues of concern amongst residents, including immigration processing, transportation, and housing. There is no evidence that residents will be disadvantaged in representation because the riding traverses Victoria Park Avenue.

The Commission faced a difficult task in drawing riding boundaries in Toronto. While hard decisions had to be made, the Commission’s decisions respecting the eastern part of Toronto, including Scarborough are appropriate and should be maintained.

The Dong Objection

The boundary lines drawn by the Commission for Don Valley North are reasonable. As the Commission noted, the reconfiguration of the riding is the “result of the merger of Don Valley East and its neighbouring districts,” which we support for reasons provided above. We further observe that the decision of the Commission to use the Don River as a boundary line is appropriate as it is a natural demarcation. We note that no objection to this demarcation was raised MP Rob Oliphant whose existing Don Valley West riding has been impacted by the Commission’s decision to use the Don River as a boundary.

²⁰ Ibid., 53

²¹ Ibid., 52

²² Objection of Jean Yip and Shaun Chen.

The Oliphant Objection

In our opinion, the minor boundary adjustment proposed by MP Oliphant makes sense. Based on the submissions of MP Oliphant, we are persuaded that the Governor’s Bridge neighbourhood more appropriately belongs in University—Rosedale. Shifting the approximately 400 residents, based on this proposal, will have a negligible impact on the populations of these ridings.²³

The Badaway Objection

We observe that the boundary line drawn by the Commission between Niagara South and St. Catharines, that is being challenged by MP Badaway, reflects public input to the Commission. In that regard, the Commission heard several submissions to keep Brock University within a single riding.²⁴

In his testimony, MP Badaway indicated that his proposed adjustment to the boundary would result in adding approximately 100 residents to Niagara South.²⁵ That is not accurate. We estimate that the proposed adjustment would add closer to 1000 new residents to Niagara South. While normally a shift of 1,000 people would not be significant, we observe that Niagara South is already +13.5% from the Quota – by far the largest regional deviation.

We do not find persuasive MP Badaway’s submission that the boundary line should be adjusted so that the headquarters of the Niagara Regional government be situated in Niagara South. Several ridings overlap with the jurisdiction of the Niagara Regional government, including the St. Catharines riding.

However, we agree with MP Badaway’s submission that Thorold’s city hall more appropriately belongs in the same riding as much of the rest of the City of Thorold, Niagara South. We observe that the Commission can adjust the boundary such that Thorold’s city hall be placed in Niagara South, without adding to the population of the riding, and keeping the Brock University campus whole in St. Catharines. We respectfully request that the Commission favourably consider this more targeted adjustment.

The Chong Objection

We respectfully request that the Commission adopt MP Chong’s objection. The objection seeks to correct a minor oversight by the Commission, which placed three addresses in the Guelph Eramosa Township in the riding Kitchener—Conestoga instead of Wellington—Halton Hills.

²³ Evidence, Procedure and House Affairs Committee, 27 April 2023 (Rob Oliphant).

²⁴ Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, p.124.

²⁵ Evidence, Procedure and House Affairs Committee, 4 May 2023 (Vance Badaway).

The Fragiskatos Objection

In our opinion, the objection of MP Fragiskatos is unpersuasive. If adopted, it would result in a significant cascading effect for Southwestern Ontario ridings that would necessarily undo many boundary adjustments the Commission made, based on public feedback, between its initial and final proposal.

MP Fragiskatos objects to “the fact that approximately 37,000 Londoners will live in a rural riding (Middlesex—London) that are separated from the rest of London.” He argues that the Commission placed “undue weight on the population Quota and not enough weight on keeping intact established communities.”

In drawing riding boundaries for London, an urban-rural configuration in one or more ridings is necessary, having regard for population. Accordingly, in both the initial and final proposal the Commission drew urban-rural ridings that included parts of London.²⁶

However, the Commission made significant adjustments between the initial and final proposal to Southwestern Ontario ridings, based on public input, impacting London. This input urged the Commission to “restore three primarily urban districts in London, as opposed to two urban districts and two urban-rural mixed districts contemplated in the proposal” and to keep municipalities and counties whole.²⁷ Consistent with this, the final proposal restores three urban London ridings, while keeping Elgin and Middlesex Counties whole.²⁸

We submit that the urban-rural Middlesex—London riding is reasonably drawn, and keeps communities of interest together, including Middlesex County. The southern boundary of Middlesex—London, Fanshawe Park Road, is a main arterial road, providing an appropriate and clear demarcation.

MP Fragiskatos argues that the Stoneybrook area will be separated from communities that it shares schools, a community centre, shopping centre, and fire and EMS services with.²⁹ However, as the Commission observed, these are not bona fide communities of interest relevant to the drawing of federal riding boundaries.³⁰

MP Fragiskatos argues that the concerns of urban Londoners who live in Middlesex—London will be “significantly diminished if not done away with altogether.”³¹ Respectfully, this is without merit. London comprises of approximately one-third of the population of the riding, and therefore will have significant weight with whoever is the MP. MP Fragiskatos essentially conceded this point in his testimony at PROC, stating: “we're talking about 37,000 people, not 370 people.”³² Moreover, representing London and Middlesex County should not prove

²⁶ Objection of Peter Fragiskatos, p.3.

²⁷ Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, p.138.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.138-139

²⁹ Objection of Peter Fragiskatos, p.1.

³⁰ Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, p.21.

³¹ Objection of Peter Fragiskatos, p.2.

³² Evidence, Procedure and House Affairs Committee, 4 May 2023 (Peter Fragiskatos).

difficult, given the “huge connection” between the two, as observed by MP Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex).³³

The Lalonde Objection

We respectfully submit that MP Lalonde’s objection is not practicable, having regard for population. As the Commission noted, the existing Orléans riding is a significant +19.49% above the Quota. If adopted, MP Lalonde’s proposal would result in a similar deviation, which would be nearly double the largest regional deviation, Ottawa West—Nepean.³⁴ It would also be one of the largest deviations in the province. This is more problematic considering that Orléans boasts an annual growth rate of approximately 20%. Moreover, Cardinal Creek Village, which MP Lalonde proposes be moved into Orléans, is a new development, and is expected to experience population growth.

MP Lalonde’s community of interest arguments are not persuasive. There is no evidence to suggest that Blackburn Hamlet has a closer connection to Orléans than Ottawa—Vanier. In fact, at PROC MP Lalonde acknowledged that residents of Blackburn Hamlet “don’t even at this point refer to themselves as Ottawa or Orléans”, and that they “consider themselves one entity.”³⁵ That certain landmarks and parks that will be in Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester instead of Orléans, has no bearing on the ability of Orléans residents to access and enjoy these places and spaces. The Commission identified such concerns as “unnecessary” to the “consequences of redistribution.”³⁶ Further, that Francophone family-owned business will be in Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester rather than Orléans, should not have any real impact, from a Francophone perspective. Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester and Orléans both have substantial and similar Francophone populations of 27% and 31%, respectively.³⁷

The Roberts Objection

We respectfully request that the Commission adopt MP Roberts objection. MP Roberts requests that the Commission transfer King Township’s Ward 6 from New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury to King—Vaughan. This minor adjustment will make King Township whole within the King—Vaughan riding. This adjustment is consistent with the approach that the Commission has taken of keeping municipalities whole, where reasonably possible.³⁸ Ward 6 has a population of only 1,165 residents³⁹. Therefore, this proposed adjustment will have a negligible impact on the populations of King—Vaughan and New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, and no cascading effect.

³³ Evidence, Procedure and House Affairs Committee, 4 May 2023 (Lianne Rood).

³⁴ Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, p..

³⁵ Evidence, Procedure and House Affairs Committee, 2 May 2023 (Marie-France Lalonde).

³⁶ Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario, p.21.

³⁷ Ibid., 73

³⁸ Ibid., 22

³⁹ Evidence, Procedure and House Affairs Committee, 2 May 2023 (Anna Roberts).

The Sahota Objection

We respectfully submit that the riding boundaries drawn by the Commission for the Brampton area are reasonable. In our observation, the Commission had a difficult task in the Brampton area, having regard for the significant and uneven population growth. The deviation range relative to the Quota for the existing ridings in the Brampton area is a massive 49.6%.

MP Sahota is effectively asking the Commission to redraw the boundaries for the Brampton area to keep Springdale whole. The Commission noted, there were many different submissions relating to historical patterns and communities of interest to consider in Brampton. Making Springdale whole would effectively require the Commission to draw the other Brampton area ridings around Springdale, creating a cascading effect that would likely sever communities of interest and identity that the Commission appropriately accounted for in drawing the Brampton area map. MP Sahota's request to prioritize Springdale over all other communities in Brampton is unreasonable.

The Baldinelli, Lantsman, and Shipley Name Change Objections

We respectfully request the Commission to adopt the name changes proposed by MPs Baldinelli, Lantsman, and Shipley.

With respect to MP Baldinelli's objection, we agree that a name change from Niagara North to Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake more accurately describes the riding. The proposed name includes the two municipalities in the riding. Moreover, as MP Baldinelli notes, the name Niagara North is confusing, because north Niagara transcends the riding.⁴⁰

MP Lantsman notes that the Vaughan—Thornhill riding consists of both the City of Vaughan and the City of Markham, and yet only Vaughan is included in the riding name. The entirety of the riding encompasses an area that is known as Thornhill with residents identifying as Thornhillers.⁴¹ Accordingly, the standalone name of Thornhill, in our opinion, is a better descriptor of the riding.

During the consultation process, MP Shipley had proposed changing the name of his riding by adding the word "North" to clarify that the riding consists of roughly the northern half of Barrie. The Commission accepted the substance of this submission. However, French translation issues necessitated the word "North" be placed after "Barrie", and not before as MP Shipley proposed.⁴² In his objection, MP Shipley states that he has heard local feedback that the new name is "cumbersome."⁴³ Moreover, contrary to the intention, the new name creates confusion.⁴⁴ Accordingly, reverting to the riding's existing name should be adopted.

⁴⁰ Objection of Tony Baldinelli.

⁴¹ Objection of Melissa Lantsman, p.2

⁴² Evidence, Procedure and House Affairs Committee, 2 May 2023 (Doug Shipley).

⁴³ Objection of Doug Shipley.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Respectfully submitted,

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