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## Alistair MacGregor

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The Honourable Maryam Monsef  
Minister of Democratic Institutions  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Monsef,

I am writing to bring to your attention Bill C-279 that I recently tabled in the House of Commons which would limit any federal election period to a maximum of 46 days.

The legislation would be helpful for your government's commitment to make our electoral system fairer. The all-party committee on electoral reform that will propose solutions to end the first-past the post electoral system will need to look at alternatives to make sure that every vote counts.

The changes from the previous government in the 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament through Bill C-23, *the Fair Elections Act*, allowed political party spending to increase by 1/37 for each day a campaign exceeds 37 days. Prior to the changes, the spending limits were set regardless of the length of the election period. In 2011, political parties could spend up to \$21 million, while during the 78-day campaign of 2015 parties could spend up to \$55 million

On the campaign trail, I heard many complaints about the length of the campaign, which was cynically extended to allow the Conservative Party to outspend its opponents.

Capping the length of election campaigns will also limit the constant barrage of TV and radio ads that Canadians are subject to during extra-long campaigns, save taxpayers' money, and prevent voters from losing interest in the political process as campaigns drag on for longer periods. The 2015 campaign cost taxpayers 150 million more than the 2011 campaign.

As we examine changes to our electoral process, it is not enough to just change the way we elect our representatives. We must also ensure that there is fairness in the system and that all parties compete on a level playing field.

This means we need to prevent the ability of any party from lengthening election campaigns in a bid to spend vast quantities of money from their wealthy donors. Money distorts the ability for all people to have an equal voice in an election, and Bill C-279 seeks to remedy this by placing a reasonable limit on election campaigns.

In this context, I trust that you will lend your support to Bill C-279 in an effort to further improve the health of our democracy.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alistair MacGregor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Alistair MacGregor, MP

Cowichan—Malahat--Langford