

Fax Message for **Kate Fearon**

from Carmel Roulston 2 pages in total

Kate

at this late stage I'm about to question whether mixed system A is actually the best to highlight. I feel it could be subject to some of the same criticisms as the Forum election received: i.e. that giving two seats to the top ten parties disproportionately benefits the very smallest parties at the expense of the slightly bigger. Why not have one seat each for the top 20 or, distribute the additional seats according to a straightforward quota?

Anyway, ring me when you've had a chance to think about this: I'll be out at a meeting tomorrow a.m. but will be at home this p.m., after 7.

I still prefer the 2-part ballot paper to the system the Greens propose, because it is simply clearer.

**In favour of mixed systems (in general):**

they allow familiar electoral systems to be combined with those aiming to redress or iron out disproportionalities

in particular, they allow for a link between Members and constituents to be retained, for regional differences to be reflected (e.g. urban/rural interests) and for independent candidates to have a good chance of winning

**Against such systems:**

they are more complex and may confuse some voters

they may lead to perceived differences in status between "constituency" and "list" members

**For System A (or some variant):**

smaller constituencies allow for very close member-constituent link

the list element allows smaller parties with support widely distributed across NI to have a chance of election

the system allows a wide range of choice to voters

**Against:**

the small list may encourage the idea that list members have a lesser status

the relatively small constituencies unfairly reward larger parties and the list may be too small to compensate for this

**For System B:**

larger constituencies allow for greater proportionality in the constituency part of the election

the larger list allows for better proportionality overall

all parties will have list members and so there should be fewer status problems

voters would have a good range of choices

**Against:**

new constituency boundaries would be required, which might in itself lead to contention

this system would be much less familiar and would require a lot of voter education