

A **Petition** for a people-initiated **Referendum**,
as provided for by the Cayman Islands
Constitutional Order 2009, to call for **Single
Member Constituencies/One Person, One Vote**
to be implemented for the next General
Elections to be held May 2013.

March 2012

INTRODUCTION

The principle of “**One Person, One Vote**” or “**One Man, One Vote**” is a common feature of elections in most democratic societies and is generally deemed to be a just and fair way for elected officials to represent citizens equally. It has also been established to ensure that each voter is able to exercise his/her franchise ONCE during an election and that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in the process of government.

A significant number of Cayman Islands electors, having expressed their desire for better governance and in the spirit of true democracy, believe that it is in the national interest of the Cayman Islands to adopt an electoral system of Single Member Constituencies more popularly known as “One Man, One Vote” prior to the General Elections in May 2013.

This view accords with the recommendations of the Electoral Boundaries Commission (EBC), which in its report tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 24 June 2010, established 16 SINGLE MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES for Grand Cayman and offered two alternatives for the Sister Islands: (a) One constituency with two representatives, or (b) two constituencies with one representative each.

On Page 16 of the report, the EBC noted: “Every public meeting that the EBC held in Grand Cayman, **the majority of persons attending expressed a preference for single member constituencies with the voting system of One Person, One Vote.**”

This finding is also reflected in a Chamber of Commerce Survey in 2008 in which **OVER 80 PER CENT** of the people of the Cayman Islands support single member constituencies and “One Person, One Vote”.

Now wherefore, we, as duly registered electors representing all three beloved Isles Cayman, humbly present this petition, to bring about a Referendum in accordance with Section 70 of the Constitution of the Cayman Islands for the adoption by Cabinet of eighteen Single Member Constituencies on all three beloved Isles Cayman as represented by the map attached to this petition as a matter of priority and in any event, not less than six (6) months prior to the **General Elections in May 2013.**”

CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENCES.

People-initiated referendums

Section 70. (1) Without prejudice to section 69, a law enacted by the Legislature shall make provisions to hold a referendum amongst persons registered as electors in accordance with section 90 on a matter or matters of national importance that do not contravene any part of the bill of rights or any other part of this constitution.

- (2) Before a referendum under this section may be held
 - a) there shall be presented to Cabinet a petition signed by not less than 25 percent of persons registered as electors in accordance with section 90
 - b) the Cabinet shall settle the wording of a referendum question or questions within a reasonable time period as prescribed by law;
And
 - c) the cabinet shall make a determination on the date the referendum shall be held in a manner prescribed by law.

(3) Subject to this constitution, a referendum under this section shall be binding on the Government and the Legislature if assented to by more than 50 percent of persons registered as electors in accordance with section 90.

Electoral Boundary Commission

Section 88. (1) An electoral Boundary Commission shall be appointed from time to time at such time as the Governor, acting after consultation with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, may determine; but

- (1) The first such commission shall be appointed as soon as practicable after the date of commencement of the constitution; .. ***This was done on October 26, 2009***

Section 89 (1) An Electoral Boundary Commission shall, as soon as practicable after its appointment, review the boundaries of the electoral districts into which the Cayman Islands are divided and taking into account the changes or proposed changes if any, in the number of electoral districts or of elected members of the Legislative Assembly, shall submit a report to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly containing its recommendations for any changes in the number and boundaries of the electoral districts.

Report completed by EBC and tabled in Legislative Assembly on June 24, 2010 containing three recommendations;

- 1. The addition of two seats to the electoral district of George Town and one to the electoral district of Bodden Town.**
- 2. The creation of a seventh electoral district with three seats to be called Prospect-Spotts.**
- 3. The division of Grand Cayman into sixteen single member electoral districts and two options for the Sister islands one electoral district with two seats or two electoral districts with one seat each.**

NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE BY THE GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE REPORT TO-DATE.

Right to vote.

Section 92 (1) Any person who is registered as an elector in an electoral district shall, while so registered, be entitled to vote at any election in that district for an elected member of the Legislative Assembly, unless he or she is prohibited from so voting by any law in force in the Cayman Islands

Law as to elections.

Section 93. (1) Subject to this Constitution, a law enacted by the Legislature may provide for the election of members of the Legislative Assembly, including (without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power) the following matters

- c) the division of the Cayman Islands into electoral districts for the purpose of elections.

NOTE.

The above references to the relevant sections of the Cayman Islands Constitutional Order 2009 are provided for easy reference to demonstrate that what the Petition is asking for is fully supported and envisioned by the modernized Constitution now in force in the Cayman Islands.

