



July 28, 2023

The Honourable Randy Weekes
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Chair, Board of Internal Economy
Room 129, Legislative Drive
Regina, SK S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Further to my submission to the Board of Internal Economy on June 30, 2023, and in response to letters sent to my office by the Honourable Jeremy Harrison, Government House Leader (July 5, 2023) and from Ms. Nicole Sarauer, Opposition House Leader (July 7, 2023), **I am writing to request that the Board of Internal Economy provide direction with respect to the framework to be used during Saskatchewan's next general election, scheduled for October 28, 2024.**

I submitted a General Directive to the Board on June 12, 2023, for the Board's consideration. Upon learning that further, more specific information would be needed, I submitted on June 30 a series of six specific CEO Directives that, if approved by the Board, would allow the implementation of a modernized election process consistent with what my office has proposed over two election cycles.

I have subsequently received correspondence from both Mr. Harrison and Ms. Sarauer, but I have yet to receive a response from the Board as to which CEO Directives have been approved or rejected. As of today, I remain uncertain whether the Board has arranged to meet in the coming weeks.

On page 9 of my June 30 submission, I outlined a potential path forward under circumstances in which the combined use of electronic poll books and vote counting equipment is rejected by the Board. My recommendation and my hope remain that the Board will allow all elements of modernization to move forward. If this is untenable, I would then follow the partial path forward described on page 9. I will reiterate though, as outlined on page 7 of the June 30 submission, that should the CEO Directive implementing vote counting equipment be rejected, the CEO Directives allowing for electronic poll books and vote anywhere must be considered withdrawn. Consistent with what was described on page 9 of that letter, I would then submit a new CEO Directive allowing for a partial implementation of electronic poll books along with updated provisions for counting ballots. Regardless, though, legislation dictates that this decision must be communicated to me by the Board.

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Given significant operational constraints in preparing for an October 2024 general election, along with the ongoing administration of three by-elections, I recently advised my team to begin preparing for a general election that *does not include* vote counting equipment but *does include* electronic poll books in a set of urban constituencies. This would result in a decoupling of electronic poll books from vote counting equipment – I have provided extensive information to the Board on the risks of such an approach – on May 10, June 12, June 23, and June 30. Abandoning an approach in which electronic pollbooks and vote counting equipment are used in tandem (and, therefore, not following best practice) will require Elections Saskatchewan to introduce compensatory measures in order to maintain the vote’s integrity. Doing so introduces greater complexity and further risk in itself. Ultimately, however, my office will follow the direction it is given by the Board in a manner consistent with legislation.

I had requested on June 12 that a Board decision be made by June 30. After providing further information on June 30, I extended that request to today, July 28. Letters from Mr. Harrison and Ms. Sarauer suggest that there is now alignment for a Board meeting by “mid-August.” **While my June 30 submission stated that I would withdraw the CEO Directives submitted to the Board if a decision could not be made by July 28, I will extend this request again to August 18, 2023.**

In the interests of electoral operational certainty and in ensuring that my team can deliver an election with the required elements of accessibility and integrity, this is the latest possible date I can extend to. **On August 18, should I not hear from the Board as to a path forward, I will withdraw all CEO Directives in writing, and transition to administering an election consistent with existing legislation.**

I want to thank the Board for its continued guidance and leadership. I am available as needed to answer questions from Board members.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Boda, D. Phil., Ph.D.

Chief Electoral Officer

Province of Saskatchewan

cc: The Honourable Jeremy Harrison, Government House Leader
Ms. Nicole Sarauer, Opposition House Leader
Members, Board of Internal Economy

