



February 17, 2021

Honourable Derek Johnson
Minister of Municipal Relations
Room 317 Legislative Building
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8
Email: minmr@leg.gov.mb.ca

Honourable Cliff Cullen
Minister of Education
Room 168 Legislative Building
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8
Email: minedu@leg.gov.mb.ca

Dear Ministers Johnson and Cullen,

On behalf of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) and Manitoba School Boards Association (MSBA), we are writing to jointly request that *The Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act* be formally amended in order to establish enabling authority for electronic voting to meet the needs of all Manitobans.

As you are aware, our organizations have a joint interest in this issue as we have both long-shared the objective of enhancing accessibility for voters through multiple modalities. When we first raised this matter with the Manitoba Government in 2015, many jurisdictions across Canada had only recently researched and tested the feasibility and effectiveness of alternative voting technologies. Since that time, many lessons have been learned from initial pilot initiatives such as the need for appropriate legislative and administrative frameworks to govern the electronic voting process, sufficient security protocols, and clear technical specifications, norms and standards. Meanwhile, current electronic voting methods are more reliable and secure than ever before due to advances in technology.

Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the introduction of electronic voting technologies would also help keep Manitobans safe during this period of social and physical distancing. However, notwithstanding the pandemic, the Canadian and international experience has demonstrated that such options have served to increase voter turnout under regular circumstances, which remains an important consideration for all partners who have an interest in promoting the exercise of Manitobans' democratic rights.

AMM and MSBA therefore believe that the introduction of similar options in Manitoba are compelling. With the next municipal and school board elections in Manitoba scheduled for October 2022, all stakeholders have a considerable window in which to formally explore options and consider implementation strategies in time for these elections.

In closing, thank you for your attention to this matter and we shall look forward to hearing from you regarding how we can collaborate and share perspectives related to the introduction of electronic voting in Manitoba.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kam Blight', with a stylized, overlapping loop structure.

Kam Blight
President
Association of Manitoba Municipalities

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan M. Campbell', with a cursive style.

Alan M. Campbell
President
Manitoba School Boards Association