


5. SUBMISSION ON THE ISSUE OF CONSTITUENCY ARRANGEMENTS FOR DISTRICT HEALTH BOARDS UNDER STV



The Ministry of Health is currently holding discussions with District Health Boards regarding a proposal that, instead of being elected from constituencies within their area, members of District Health Boards be elected at large for the 2004 and subsequent elections. This proposal stems from a belief that because of the use of single transferable voting (STV) for the 2004 District Health Board elections, all candidates will have an equal opportunity to be elected.

This proposal was discussed by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum at its meeting on 21 September, when it was agreed to express strong opposition to this proposal, principally on the grounds that it would seriously disadvantage candidates in rural areas. The Forum has written to the Ministry of Health stating that the retention of rural constituencies is a necessity to ensure fair representation on Health Boards for rural people and that they are treated fairly together with the large populations of Christchurch and Timaru.

I believe that the Christchurch City Council should lend its support to the submissions made by Zone 5, on the basis that rural members can bring a different perspective and understanding of the issues affecting rural communities.

Recommendation: That the Ministry of Health be advised that the Christchurch City Council strongly supports the submissions made by Zone 5, seeking the retention of constituencies for the 2004 District Health Board elections.