

Debates Commission Forces 117 Community Debates to Move

Debates on the Environment will now take place on October 3

TORONTO, August 9, 2019 – “100 Debates on the Environment,” an unprecedented initiative to provide voters with an opportunity to engage their candidates on the environment, has been forced by the actions of the National Leaders’ Debates Commission to switch the date of 117 community all-candidates debates across every part of Canada. The new date is October 3rd.

100 Debates publicly announced in early June that it would be hosting its community events across the country all on October 7, an announcement that was covered on CBC and other national media. Despite the initiative’s success in rallying citizens in 117 ridings to host environment-themed all-candidates debates on that date ([complete list of debates here](#)), the Debates Commission decided last week to host the national English-language leaders’ debate on the same date. This action runs contrary to the [Commission’s mandate](#), which states that it must not “preclude other organizations from producing or organizing leaders’ debates or other political debates.”

“We have debates confirmed in nearly a third of all the ridings in Canada, and our top priority is to continue growing,” said Sabrina Bowman, Executive Director of GreenPAC. “While the Commission’s actions are disappointing, we need to put this behind us and provide certainty for the hundreds of volunteers organizing debates in their communities.”

“When we launched this project with the goal of 100 debates, we knew it was ambitious,” said Ryan Worms, Communications Director at Equiterre, “No debate project of this scale had ever taken place in Canada - nearly a third of all ridings, and still growing. We know Canadians want elected leaders that care about the environment, but the support for this project has been nothing short of astounding.”

At least half of the 117 Debates have confirmed venues that will now have to be re-booked. Some debate hosts paid for the deposits on these venues from their own personal funds. In several cases, scheduling difficulties will mean that they will lose the opportunity to hold these events and for communities to have this meaningful forum to engage candidates on the environment – an issue that pollsters identify as the [top issue in the election](#).

“The 100 Debates initiative is getting thousands of Canadians involved in our democratic process,” said Emma Bugg, lead organizer in Ottawa-Vanier. “The Commissioner’s decision may be a significant setback, but we need to move on to ensure the climate crisis and other environmental issues remain at the forefront of public debate in this election period.”

100 Debates is continuing to discuss with the Debates Commission ways to collaborate to make both initiatives more successful.

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ABOUT 100 DEBATES ON THE ENVIRONMENT:

100 Debates on the Environment is a project coordinated by GreenPAC. Visit www.100debates.ca for more information on the project and for a list of local debates.

RIDINGS WITH CONFIRMED DEBATE ORGANIZERS

Alberta

Banff—Airdie
Calgary Centre
Calgary Confederation
Calgary Heritage
Edmonton Strathcona

BC

Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam
Cowichan—Malahat—Langford
Delta
Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke
Kelowna—Lake Country
Kootenay Columbia
North Okanagan—Shuswap
Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge
Richmond Centre
South Okanagan—West Kootenay
Vancouver East
Vancouver Granville
Victoria
West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea
to Sky Country

Manitoba

Elmwood—Transcona
Winnipeg South
Winnipeg South Centre

New Brunswick

Beauséjour
Fredericton
Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe
New Brunswick Southwest

Newfoundland and Labrador

Long Range Mountains

Northwest Territories

Northwest Territories

Nova Scotia

Cape Breton Canso
Cumberland Colchester
Halifax
Halifax West
Kings—Hants
Sydney—Victoria

Ontario

Ajax
Barrie—Innisfil
Bay of Quinte
Beaches—East York
Brampton South
Burlington
Davenport
Don Valley West
Dufferin—Caledon
Eglinton—Lawrence
Elgin—Middlesex—London
Etobicoke—Lakeshore
Flamborough-Glanbrook
Guelph
Kanata—Carleton
Kingston and the islands
Kitchener Centre
Kitchener—Conestoga
Kitchener South-Hespeler
Leeds—Grenville— Thousands Islands
and Rideau Lakes
London—Fanshawe
London North Centre
London West
Milton
Newmarket—Aurora
Nipissing—Timiskaming
Northumberland—Peterborough South
Oakville
Oakville North—Burlington
Orleans
Ottawa Centre
Ottawa South
Ottawa Vanier
Ottawa West—Nepean
Parkdale—High Park
Perry Sound—Muskoka
Peterborough—Kawartha
Pickering—Uxbridge
Richmond Hill
Sarnia—Lambton
Scarborough Guildwood
Simcoe North
Sudbury
Thunder Bay—Superior
North

Toronto Centre
Toronto—Danforth
Toronto—St. Paul's
University—Rosedale
Waterloo
Wellington—Halton Hills
Windsor West
York Centre

PEI

Charlottetown

Quebec

Abitibi—Témiscamingue
Ahuntsic-Cartierville
Bécancour—Nicolet—
Saurel
Berthier—Maskinongé
Brome—Missisquoi
Hochelaga
Hull—Aylmer
Joliette
LaSalle—Émard—
Verdun
Laurier--Sainte-Marie
Longueuil--Saint-Hubert
Louis-Hébert
Laval—Les Îles
Outremont
Pontiac
Portneuf—Jacques-
Cartier
Rosemont—La Petite-
Patrie
Québec
Saint-Maurice—
Champlain
Shefford
Sherbrooke
Terrebonne
Trois-Rivières
Vaudreuil—Soulanges

Saskatchewan

Regina-Lewvan
Saskatoon—University

Yukon

Yukon

ABOUT GREENPAC:

Launched in 2015, GreenPAC is Canada's non-partisan non-profit organization that works to build environmental leadership in politics. GreenPAC's other initiatives include a political internship program on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, as well as a non-partisan endorsement program for aspiring political candidates with a demonstrated commitment to the environment. Visit www.greenpac.ca for more information.

For more information or interview requests including with local organizers, please contact:
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