

3125 Tecumseh River Road
Lansing, MI 48906

July 15, 1992

Ross Perot
10444 Strait Lane
Dallas, Texas 75229

Dear Ross,

A few months ago, when you started talking about running for President and mentioned the "electronic town hall", I thought you got the idea from the letter I sent you in 1984 (attached). Later, I learned from our local newspaper that you had been talking about it as far back as 1969. So I can't take the credit, right?

After I wrote the letter, I continued thinking about making the legislative process more democratic, and the following is my idea for a system that allows legislation to be decided by majority vote of the citizens, either directly or through representatives. It is a radical change from the current system, but technically feasible and politically possible if the people of this country believe as I do that this nation should be a democracy and that democracy means rule by the majority.

To achieve real democracy in the United States, I would establish a single legislative body whose members would be selected by individual citizens to vote in their behalf. In effect, I would get rid of the Senate and redesign the House of Representatives. We could keep the size of the House as it is - 435 - or make it larger or smaller. For purposes of this proposal, we will use a size of 100.

The representatives would not represent constituencies defined by geographic boundaries, thereby putting an end to pork barrel politics. Citizens would be able to choose any representative among the 100, and they could switch whenever they wish. A representative's voting power would be proportionate to the number of citizens who have chosen him as their representative, and that number could change from day to day.

A bill could be introduced by any representative. It would become law if within 30 days the votes in favor represent a majority of the registered voters. A bill could also originate as a proposal. A proposal could be registered by any voter. Once registered, other voters could record their support of the proposal. If within one year a proposal accumulates the support of 20% of the voters, it would become a bill.

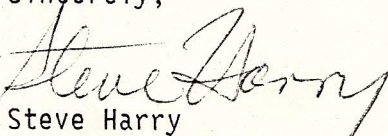
The election of representatives would be a continuous process. In addition to choosing which one of the 100 current representatives would represent them, voters would be able to name a candidate for the House. They would name a candidate if there is a registered candidate whom they prefer to any of the current representatives. A representative's popularity for purposes of representation would not be the same as his popularity for election purposes. His popularity for election purposes

would be decreased by the number of electors who have named candidates. For example, if 10,000,000 citizens have named Representative Jones as their representative, his votes in the House would have the power of 10,000,000 voters. But if 2,000,000 of the people he represents have named a **candidate** as their preferred representative, his support for election purposes would be only 8,000,000. If his support is the lowest of any of the 100 representatives who have served at least one year, he would be replaced when the support of the most popular of all the candidates - Candidate Smith, let's say - reaches 8,000,001. When Candidate Smith takes office, he would become the representative of the 10,000,000 citizens formerly represented by Jones plus those who had other representatives, but preferred Candidate Smith. Any citizens among the 8,000,000 Jones supporters who did not prefer Smith could switch to another representative.

Citizens would be allowed to vote any time, day or night, as often as they wish. They could do so through computer terminals or through touch-tone phones. They could switch representatives or register their support for a proposal or a House candidate. They could also vote directly on bills. A representative's voting power on any given bill would be reduced by the number of his constituents who voted directly. Voters could participate directly as much or as little as they want.

Implementing a system like this would require an amendment to the Constitution. There are two ways to propose an amendment to the Constitution, as provided by Article V. One is by a two-thirds vote of both houses of the Congress. I would not expect Congress to be willing to initiate such an amendment, so we'd have to rely on the other way: a constitutional convention. Congress must call a special convention for purposes of amending the Constitution if requested by two thirds of the state's legislatures. The Constitution offers no guidelines for selecting delegates to the convention, setting its agenda, etc., but it does say that Congress gets to decide whether the proposed amendments will be ratified by three fourths of the states' legislatures or by special conventions in three fourths of the states.

Sincerely,



Steve Harry

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