

## **Elections Ordinance 1970 Amendment Ordinance 1996**

### **Explanatory Statement**

#### **Introduction**

1. This bill is at the second reading stage, the first reading having occurred at the 3rd session of the 43rd Synod. The bill was deferred to the first session of the 44th Synod under Standing Order 53(2). The bill is not promoted "by request of Synod or Standing Committee".

2. The Elections Ordinance controls the way Synod elections are conducted. Clause 18 of the ordinance requires electors to vote for the exact number of positions that are to be filled. Votes for a number higher or lower than the exact number are informal. The text of clause 18 is as follows -

"18. Votes shall be indicated by placing a cross (X) in the square opposite the name of the candidate or candidates for whom the voter desires to vote. Any voting paper containing more or fewer names marked with a cross than the number of positions to be filled shall be informal."

#### **Purpose of the Bill**

3. The purpose of the bill is to amend the Elections Ordinance 1970 by giving Synod members a choice about how many candidates they vote for, up to the number of persons to be elected.

#### **Elections Ordinance 1970**

4. Many of the ballots conducted by the Synod involve the election of a number of people. There are, for example, 13 elected clerical and 22 lay members of the Standing Committee. There are 22 elected clerical and 22 elected lay members of the General Synod. Members of Synod are required to mark their ballots with the same number of crosses as there are positions to be filled. Votes with more or fewer marks are informal.

5. This bill proposes to allow Synod members to cast a formal vote if they vote for any number of persons, provided that they do not exceed the number of positions to be filled. A ballot conducted under this new rule will require the same level of skill from voters as the present arrangements. A ballot conducted under this new rule will allow candidates to be ranked and the election determined according to the number of formal votes the candidates have received. A ballot conducted under this new rule will require those counting votes to determine whether voting papers are formal or informal by counting the number of candidates voted for and comparing that number with the number to be elected.

6. If this amendment is passed, the instructions on the ballot paper will need to be changed. Those changes are not part of this bill. The form of the ballot paper is governed by regulations made by the Archbishop-in-Council under this Ordinance (Regulation 6 and Schedule H apply here).

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