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### **New research analyzes how well Canadians interests are represented in the House of Commons, with surprising results.**

Samara's latest survey research shows that only 27% of Canadians think Ottawa deals with the issues they feel are important in a satisfactory way. In a piece of original research, Samara tested that assumption. Are Canadians interests represented by the House of Commons?

"Canadians only see a small slice of what actually happens in the House of Commons," says Michael MacMillan, Samara's Co-Founder and Chair. "This research is meant to cut through the theatrics and get to the substance of what is said by our Members of Parliament."

After analyzing 11 weeks of transcripts from the House of Commons—approximately 3.7 million words—Samara concluded that, taken as a whole, Parliamentary discussion is **more aligned** with the issues Canadians prioritize than Canadians might expect—though there is room for improvement.

In "Lost in Translation or Just Lost?" Samara found:

- The House is more reflective of the issues Canadians care about than Canadians might expect.
- Times in the House day when parties generally exert less control are more aligned with Canadians' interests than times at which parties set the agenda.
  - Routine Proceedings and MP Statements are when MPs can speak more freely and promptly raise issues, and were more aligned with Canadians' interests.
  - Government Business and Oral Questions are strictly controlled by the party and showed less alignment.
  - The venue that occupies the greatest amount of time on the House calendar—Government Business—is consistently the least reflective of Canadians' interests.
- Certain parties were more closely aligned with Canadians: NDP showed the highest alignment, followed by the Conservatives, with the Liberals as the least well-aligned party.

"Canadians know there's more to Parliament than what happens in the House of Commons. In our age of open data and increased transparency, the House is not set up to show Canadians what is actually happening in their democracy." says Alison Loat, Co-founder and Executive Director of

Samara. “In order to remain relevant to Canadians, Parliament must better communicate its purpose and work to Canadians so that Canadians feel represented.”

## About Samara’s Democracy Reports

“Lost in Translation or Just Lost?” is part of the [Samara Democracy Reports](#) series, which is designed to shine a light on Canada’s democratic system and increase Canadians’ understanding of politics. Previous reports examined the attitudes of people who do not vote, explored how politics is discussed on Twitter, analyzed how the media cover politics and offered citizens’ performance reviews for MPs.

## About Samara

[Samara](#) is a charitable organization dedicated to improving political participation in Canada. Through research and educational programs, Samara reconnects citizens to politics.

Samara’s initial research project was the first-ever [exit interviews for former Members of Parliament](#).

Our areas of research include:

- Members of Parliament
- Political parties
- Citizens attitudes towards politics
- Citizen participation and voting behaviour
- Political journalism and writing

Our research and information on our programs can be found at [www.samaracanada.com](http://www.samaracanada.com). We are always available to comment on our areas of research.

You can also follow Samara on [Twitter](#) or [Google+](#), or join the [Facebook](#) group.