

Our democracy needs strengthening.

Nearly half of Canadians [think it's getting weaker](#).

In the run-up to this year's federal election, the Samara Centre for Democracy is asking for your commitment to immediate, concrete change.

The **nine actions** outlined here are practical and simple, and can be accomplished in the first year of a new Parliament. They should have cross-party support. They require minimal public spending. Most don't even require legislation. All that's needed is political will.

Parliament



To empower independent and thoughtful representatives, the parties should:

1 - Liberate debate by ending the use of [Whips' lists](#) of approved speakers, and creating a [parallel debate chamber](#).

2 - Free committees to do non-partisan work by changing the standing orders to elect committee chairs in the House, and elect committee members in caucuses.

3 - Empower MPs to scrutinize government by changing the Standing Orders to end omnibus bills, and committing Government to more transparent accounting.

Parties



To embrace transparency and share power, the parties should:

4 - Respect Canadians' privacy by bringing parties under meaningful [privacy legislation](#) with external oversight.

5 - Clean up nomination races by requiring greater transparency, stronger rules, and public reporting.

6 - Reduce the power of the party leader by opting into the provisions of [the Reform Act](#) to make caucus decision-making more democratic.

People



To open new avenues of participation for ordinary Canadians, and help deepen and enrich our civic culture, the parties should:

7 - Empower citizens to set the agenda by requiring Parliamentary debates on [petitions](#) that gather enough support.

8 - Invest in lifelong civic learning by supporting local and national community groups to educate and empower citizens.

9 - Enable a true two-way conversation between citizens and their representatives by creating new supports for MPs to encourage [community democratic engagement](#) through permanent constituency offices.

Your idea here:

**This election,
put democracy
on the agenda!**