

3

Activity 3: Different Levels of Government

Should The City of Toronto Become a Canadian Province?

Anticipation Activity - Quick Write x 2: Brainstorming the Pros & Cons of Toronto becoming a Canadian Province

1. Take 1 minute to write down as many reasons you can think of in favour of the City Of Toronto becoming its own province. Share key ideas with the class.
2. Take 1 minute to write down as many reasons you can think of against the City Of Toronto becoming its own province. Share key ideas with the class

| Should Toronto Should Be Its Own Province? | |
|--|---------|
| In Favour | Against |
| | |

Conduct a pre and post “Take a Position Line” activity.

Take a Position Line

Should the City of Toronto Become a Canadian Province?

Indicate your position along the line below:



IN FAVOUR

AGAINST

My position is _____

because _____

Complete the organizer utilizing evidence from the readings that follow.

| Both Sides Now: “The Province of Toronto” Debate | | |
|---|--|---|
| Arguments in favour of the City of Toronto becoming a Province. | | Arguments against the City of Toronto becoming a Province. |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Question: Should the City of Toronto Become a Canadian Province?</p> | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Decision</p> | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Reasons</p> | | |

The Case In Favour of Toronto Becoming a Province

Toronto, along with the rest of the province, would benefit from Toronto becoming its own province. Toronto has the resources to sustain itself without the assistance of the rest of the province. Toronto is Canada's largest city with a population of over 2.5 million in the metropolitan area. Its population is larger than six of Canada's provinces: Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island. The city has approximately 400,000 more people than Manitoba and Saskatchewan combined. Toronto also has 150,000 more people than the total population of the four Atlantic Provinces combined. In addition to Toronto's strength in population density, Toronto's citizens are distinctly different from the rest of the province. Its citizens are close to 50 per cent immigrants and 47 per cent consider themselves to be visible minorities. The Mayor of Toronto is directly elected by more voters than any other politician in Canada. The City of Toronto is the 6th largest government in Canada and has an annual budget of \$9.21 billion dollars. Torontonians send more of their generated revenue to Ottawa and Queen's Park than they receive back in federal and provincial grants and services. There is an \$11 billion dollar difference between the amount of money sent to the federal and provincial governments and the value of the services Toronto receives in return. As such, Toronto is not receiving its fair share of the income it generates. In addition, Queen Park tends to spend much of its energy on legislation for Toronto, often over-looking the rural areas of the province. Issues, such as the coyote problem which threatens the productivity of farmers in rural areas is an example of how people who live outside of Toronto may support Toronto becoming its own province. This group of citizens would have their interests better represented if Toronto seceded and left.

¹ The City of Toronto. (2010). Demographics. Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.toronto.ca/invest-in-toronto/demographics.htm>.

² City of Toronto. (n.d.). Toronto's Racial Diversity. Retrieved May 06, 2010, from http://www.toronto.ca/toronto_facts/diversity.htm

³ City of Toronto. (2010). 2010 Executive Committee Recommended Operating Budget. Toronto, Ontario. Retrieved May 05, 2010 from http://www.toronto.ca/budget2010/pdf/op2010_presentation_council_april15.pdf.

⁴ Miller, D. (2005, June 05). City of Toronto. Retrieved May 1, 2010, from Addressing the City of Toronto's flawed funding structure: http://www.toronto.ca/mayor_miller/speeches/jointogether_speech.htm

The Case Against Toronto Becoming a Province

Toronto would not benefit from becoming a province. This change would not save Toronto money. Since the city uses up a portion of the resources provided by the province - such as hospitals and provincial police services for example. It could also inherit a large portion of the province's debt when it left while also having to now pay for these services by itself. Many municipal services may not be easily and cheaply transferred into provincial services. For example, a new province of Toronto would have to incur start-up costs to properly convert the Toronto Police Service into a provincial infrastructure. In addition, a new Ministry of Health would have to be created in order to maintain the health care services Torontonians are accustomed to. This may also result in more costs as the transition will result in increased bureaucracy and the possible duplication of services. Furthermore, as Canadians, we stand up for the less fortunate to provide equity where possible. Toronto, as a new province, will still be required to contribute to transfer payments to other Canadian provinces. It is also important to stress that converting, or having a city secede and form a new province has never been done in the history of Canada. This would require an amendment to the Constitution of Canada. Many other provinces would not vote in favour of such an amendment as it may set a precedent where their cities would wish to do the same. Moreover, one would have to define exactly who and what is separating – is it only the City of Toronto, or is parts of the Greater Toronto Area? Where will the boundaries between Toronto and Ontario be? On the whole, the idea would create more disadvantages to the city, province and country than benefits. Perhaps a better solution would be to give the government of Toronto even greater powers. More powers in addition to those that have been given to the city through the City of Toronto Act, 2006 would allow the city to raise more revenue possibly levying income and sales taxes, or tolls on roads for example. Therefore, instead of seeking provincial status for Toronto, it would be better to further expand the city's powers and give it access to new revenue sources so it can better serve its citizens.

⁵ Bird, C. (2010, March 18). Torontoist vs. Torontoist in...The Province of Toronto. Retrieved May 3, 2010, from Torontoist: http://torontoist.com/2010/03/torontoist_vs_torontoist_new_format.php

⁶ Ibid