

Notes For Remarks By

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Candidate For Mayor
City of Toronto

"Take Back Your Vote --
Take Back City Hall"

Cambridge Club

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you for coming today.

This past weekend was one of the "sacred" times in the calendar for Italian Canadians.

It's the weekend we can the tomatoes from our gardens and put them up to use through the winter.

My parents in Scarborough were busy canning their tomatoes and my mom said to me, "Rocco, your father and I owe you an apology."

I said, "What do you mean, you have nothing to apologize for."

And my mom replied, "We realize we have brought you up incorrectly.

We told you that the key to success was to work hard at school and get a good education.

To work at a career where you left an organization better than you found it.

We told you to value other people's money.

We taught you not to be involved in scandals.

We told you not to get arrested or behave badly in public and to always tell the truth."

I said, "You're right, you did say that. So what's the problem?"

And she said, "It seems that we were wrong.

Because the way to be a frontrunner in this election is to do all of those things we taught you not to do."

My point to you today is this.

In two months Torontonians will decide who will be their new Mayor.

And, for the first time in over 100 years we, the City Hall outsiders, you and me, the voters of this city can choose a

Mayor who is not from the failed political culture that has ruled City Hall.

We have a choice this election.

We can let history repeat itself by electing the same type of politician...likely producing the same frustrating results for taxpayers. And that would be a mistake.

Or, we can have the courage to change history.

In this election we can elect a Mayor who is the son of Italian immigrants...a Mayor who has led successful companies...who has led a national charity to new heights.

Someone who grew up without money...but learned the value of a hard-earned dollar.

Someone who took to heart the values taught to him by his parents...hard work, honesty, integrity, and trust.

We can elect a Mayor who put these values into practice and through generous scholarships, obtained his university degrees.

We can elect a Mayor who has his personal and professional priorities straight.

We can elect someone who, like you...is not a career politician, but who wants things to change. Who wants this insanity at City Hall to end.

And that person is me, Rocco Rossi.

Voters are angry and frustrated with City Hall because they feel powerless.

We don't need another polarizing and divisive Mayor. We need a consensus builder, a decision-maker, someone who has a record of keeping promises and getting the job done.

Under the current system, voters cast their ballot and hope for the best.

It's a four year blank cheque. And all too often voters are disappointed.

Four years of no accountability, no feedback and no control is too long.

Fewer people vote, leading to lower turnover on council.

Public service becomes a career and not a calling, with career politicians more interested in their perks, pensions and power than public service.

I believe the contract that exists between voters and politicians cannot depend on trust alone. It must come with rights as well.

We have rights as citizens.

We have rights as consumers.

Why can't we have rights as voters too?

Today I am pleased to introduce my three R's of Voter Reform.

These three R's are **Respect...Results...And Recall.**

Every Toronto voter has the right to be treated respectfully by their mayor and councillor.

Every Toronto voter has the right to results.

They have the right to measure performance against promise, and results against expectations.

And finally, when voters give me the honour of becoming their Mayor, they will have the right to recall.

The sad fact is that it's easier to return a broken blender in this town than it is to recall a rogue politician.

And that's not right.

Voter recall has been a staple in the United States for decades. It is also now in place in British Columbia.

I am committing today that on Day 1 as your Mayor I will inform the Premier of the mandate given to me by Torontonians and of my intent to implement recall legislation.

Community hearings to determine the best model of recall will begin within 3 months. And, within six months of taking office as your Mayor, City Council will forward a Resolution to Queen's Park demanding that voter recall become law.

How we do it -- what it looks like -- and how it works will all be developed by the citizens of Toronto in town halls and panels across the city.

So let's start talking about it -- right now -- and for the rest of the campaign. Voter recall is a tool to channel our disappointment into action -- because action is what is needed at City Hall.

One of the issues we'll have to decide is finding the right threshold number for recall. Again, the citizens will decide.

They will balance making it too low - which may paralyse government, vs. too high - thus protecting politicians.

We will find a classic Toronto compromise -- right down the middle.

My friends, Toronto is a great city, but we need to take back control of City Hall. We need to stop making the same mistakes. We need to end the insanity.

With voter recall, Torontonians will hold the keys to City Hall every day of the year - not just one day every four years.

Voter recall will make our politicians more accountable and responsive.

It will channel voter anger and cynicism into positive action.

And it will strengthen our democracy, not weaken it.

In the coming days, career politicians, City Hall insiders and campaign spinners will say voter recall can never work.

I say it can.

They will say that you can't run the City if you don't have direct council experience.

I say you can.

They will say we can't change the disturbing history that keeps electing councillors as Mayor.

I say we can.

I say the party's over. It's time to Take Back City Hall.

And Taking Back City Hall starts with the right to Take Back Your Vote.

Thank you.