

If we had a system of instant runoff voting in this country, then Ralph Nader would pose no threat to the election of John Kerry. He would not be facilitating the election of George Bush, the most right-wing president that we have had.

Howard Dean

Instant runoff voting will lead to good government because voters will elect leaders who have the support of a majority. Elected leaders will be more likely to listen to all and cities will be able to enjoy big tax savings and keep majority rule.

John McCain

Instant runoff voting offers a cost-effective way of insuring that the winning candidate is preferred by a majority of voters; it encourages voters to vote their wishes and not their fears.

Dennis Kucinich

An early effect [of instant runoff voting] has been to introduce a new civility among the candidates, something many San Franciscans have wholeheartedly embraced. Because the winner in each district might be determined by voters' second and third choices, candidates have quickly learned that it is best to be on friendly terms so as not to alienate their opponents' supporters.

New York Times

REP. JESSE JACKSON, JR.



Dear Friend,

Imagine a president elected with a *majority* of the vote.

Imagine a politics where every election had candidates you really supported. Imagine being able to rally around those candidates and to share their message with your friends and neighbors.

Imagine the word “spoiler” never again applying to American elections.

My friends, imagine all of America having San Francisco’s solution to the spoiler problem: instant runoff voting.

Breakthrough in San Francisco Has National Implications

I am writing today with an urgent request: please support FairVote-The Center for Voting and Democracy in its immediate efforts to ensure San Francisco has a smooth instant runoff voting (IRV) election this November and its ongoing advocacy for IRV in the Bay Area, California and the nation.

Led over the past decade by John Anderson, Steven Hill and Rob Richie, FairVote is at the forefront of the struggle in the United States for electoral justice. I have enjoyed working with them on a range of campaigns to open up our elections, protect the right to vote and provide fair representation.

In the Bay Area, FairVote’s signature reform is IRV, which San Francisco election officials term “ranked choice voting.” With IRV, voters rank the candidates they most like in order of choice: first, second and third.

Thanks to the persistent efforts of FairVote, San Francisco voted for IRV in 2002. Voters will use it for the first time this November. This power to ensure a majority winner is long overdue.

Imagine IRV in Florida in 2000

Why is IRV so important? Let’s start with Florida in 2000. If the nearly 100,000 Ralph Nader voters in Florida in 2000 had been able to rank a second choice candidate -- that is, a runoff choice -- Gore would have been the main recipient of that runoff support, resulting in his winning Florida and the presidency.

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With Mr. Nader once again in this year's race, I am concerned about another election where we progressives split our vote and the wrong candidate "wins" without earning a majority

A Positive Solution to the Spoiler Problem

Instant runoff voting would solve the spoiler problem, once and for all. With a first, second and third choice, we can have the opportunity to vote for our favorite candidate and still send the right person to the White House.

To keep up the momentum in the Bay Area so we can eventually go statewide with IRV, I need you to join with me now in supporting the Bay Area IRV project of FairVote.

FairVote's project team led by Steven Hill is working over-time on voter education about IRV in San Francisco. They are also working with local reformers around the Bay Area. More than 70% of voters in Berkeley voted in March to adopt IRV, and Santa Clara County amended its charter to make IRV an option.

I have no doubt that a successful IRV election this November in San Francisco will lead to rapid expansion in support for IRV.

FairVote is so important to the future of American democracy that I have joined its Board of Directors. There are many causes I support, but only so many hours in the day. I have chosen FairVote to support with my time and resources. I hope you will too.

Please join me in supporting FairVote's Bay Area IRV project with a tax-deductible contribution today. Together, let us fulfill democracy's promise.

Yours sincerely,



Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr.
Board Member, FairVote-The Center for Voting and Democracy

P.S. Along with a reply card and envelope for your donation, enclosed you will find an educational handout explaining "ranked choice voting." I hope you will review this explanation and make sure your friends know how to vote – a smooth election will boost American democracy.