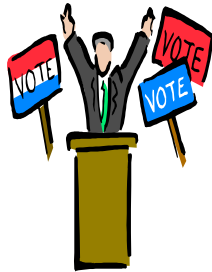


Summary

Before the implementation of versions of the one-vote system in North Carolina, racial and political representation was not well-balanced, with African Americans and the second largest party going virtually unrepresented in most communities. Usually introduced as the result of a voting rights lawsuit, the one-vote system has increased representation of African-Americans.

As one example, there were no racial minorities on the School Board in Sampson County prior to adoption of the one-vote system. Now there are two women and two African American. This has led to a more effective school board, where all voices are heard.



One Vote System Provides:

- * Fair representation of racial diversity
- * Representation of political diversity
- * More female representation
- * Cheaper costs, as no need to draw new districts every ten years

Most jurisdictions that currently use the one-vote system use it because their voting laws were not administered properly under the Voting Rights Act. The one-vote system was a sensible solution because it allowed those in the minority to have a better chance at electing candidates of their choice.

The Center for Voting and Democracy

The Center is dedicated to fair elections where every vote counts and all voters are represented. As a catalyst for reform, we conduct research, analysis, education and advocacy to build understanding of and support for more democratic voting systems. We promote full representation as an alternative to winner-take-all elections and instant runoff voting as an alternative to plurality elections and traditional runoff elections..

We Provide the Following:

- Voter education & community workshops
- Comprehensive website & library
- Legal assistance in voting rights cases
- Assistance in drafting legislation
- Analysis of alternative voting plans
- Amicus Curiae briefs

A History of Effective Service

The Center for Voting and Democracy (CVD) has a history of successful service to racial and ethnic minorities seeking fair representation. We worked closely with minority communities in Amarillo (TX) in preparation for cumulative voting elections in 2000 and 2002. We helped AALDEF defend choice voting in New York City before the Department of Justice in 1999 and made numerous presentations to community groups, charter commissions and national organizations.



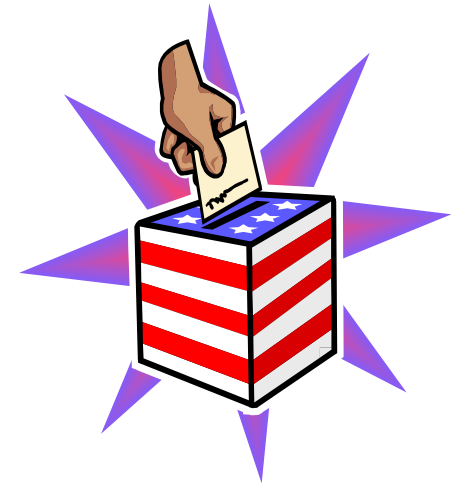
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The One Vote System

North Carolina's Model

for Communities



Prepared by
**The Center For Voting
and Democracy**



The One-Vote System

One of the most common full representation systems used in the United States, the one-vote system provides one vote to each voter no matter how many seats are being elected. The one-vote system gives those in the minority a better opportunity to elect candidates of choice, yet still ensures that voters in the majority have the power to win a majority of seats.

Versions of the one-vote system (called "limited voting" when voters have more than one vote) are mandated for local elections in Connecticut and Pennsylvania. It has been used to resolve voting rights cases in at least thirty localities in North Carolina and Alabama.

The one-vote system is simple. Candidates run at-large or in a multi-seat district. Each voter casts one vote, and winners are the candidates with the most votes. The more seats elected, the greater the chances for fair representation of those in the minority. When voters have additional votes, it requires support from more voters to win a seat.

Advantages to the one-vote system:

- ◆ Easy to use on all voting machines
- ◆ Simple for voters to understand
- ◆ Creates great access to representation for minority communities
- ◆ A long history in the United States
- ◆ Less expensive for candidates to run.

While these are important advantages, the one-vote system has some disadvantages. Strategic decisions often must be made by candidates and voters to avoid splitting votes, coalition-building can be hard with voters casting just one vote and the victory threshold can rise relatively high when voters have more than one vote. Choice voting, another full representation system used in American elections, addresses these potential problems very effectively.

Counties with One-Vote System



Actual Results

In 1993 Perquimans County (NC) adopted the one-vote system to elect its county commission and school board. Both boards have six at-large seats, with three seats elected every two years. Voters vote for one candidate in each election.

The system is working. After the 1998 and 2000 elections, the county commission had two African American members and two female members. Racial minorities now hold 1/3 of the seats in

the County while making up 28% of the county's population.

In 1992, Sampson County (NC) adopted the one-vote system to elect its school board. The board has 6 members with staggered terms. Three seats are open every year and the voters are only able to vote for one candidate in each election. Currently, two women and two African Americans have been elected under the one-vote system.



Perquimans County Demographics

Sample	Population	% of Population	% of Commissioners	% of School Board
Female	5942	52.3%	33.3%	50%
Male	5426	47.7%	66.7%	50%
White	8051	70.8%	66.7%	66.7%
Black	3182	28%	33.3%	33.3%
Other	135	1.2%	—	—



Sampson County Demographics

Sample	Population	% of Population	% of School Board
Female	30,360	50.5%	33.3%
Male	28,801	49.5%	66.7%
White	35,955	59.8%	66.7%
Black	18,018	29.9%	33.3%
Other	6,188	10.3%	—