

'Instant Runoff Voting' coming to Oakland!!

Most Oakland elections are not decided in the popular November election but in June, when the electorate is less diverse and voter turnout nearly 40% lower. When no candidate wins a June majority, a separate runoff must be held, and Oakland voters must endure 5 additional months of one-on-one campaigns – often mud-slinging campaigns. **There is a better way.**

The time is right for Instant Runoff Voting in Oakland.

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) combines the June Primary and November Runoff into a single November election. **Higher turnout, lower cost, and majority winners: all in one.**

San Francisco successfully uses IRV, and Berkeley is well on its way to implementation. In 2002 the Oakland Elections Task Force recommended IRV for all Oakland offices. Alameda County will be ready to provide IRV in November 2007.

How Instant Runoff Voting works.

On the ballot, voters mark their 1st choice, 2nd choice and 3rd choice candidates, and so on. Voters can rank as many or as few as they want.

Any candidate winning a majority of 1st choices wins the election. If no candidate wins, the 'instant runoff' begins.

In each instant runoff round, the last-place candidate is eliminated, and every voter's ballot is counted as a single vote towards the voter's highest candidate still remaining.

Instant Benefits.

- **Saves money.** Oakland saves up to \$200,000 for every runoff avoided.
- **Shortens campaign season.** Less voter fatigue.
- **Friendlier campaigns.** No mud-slinging runoffs.
- **Increases turnout.** November turnout is more diverse and nearly 60% higher on average.
- **Majority winners.** Recent *special* elections were won with less than 35% of the vote.
- **Voters want it.** Exit polls show voters prefer IRV to runoffs and understand it by wide margins. Oakland voters passed a measure backing IRV, and IRV won in Berkeley by 72%.

Some Specifics.

In June 2006 the Alameda County Board of Supervisors voted to have IRV election equipment ready for Oakland, Berkeley, and other cities by November 2007. Now Oaklanders will vote this November on a charter amendment that could bring IRV as early as 2007.

IRV can recoup the one-time cost of voter education in just two election cycles.

In addition, the charter language spells out increased disclosure and auditing procedures to ensure an accurate and transparent count.

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Learn more at www.OaklandIRV.org. Contact: info@OaklandIRV.org or (510) 595-7402.