

NB-50

Memorandum

To: Mayor and City Council

September 22, 2009

From: Robert Garcia, First District *RG*
Suja Lowenthal, Second District *S*
Gary DeLong, Third District *GD*
Val Lerch, Vice Mayor, Ninth District *Val*

Subject: Charter Amendment Committee Agenda Item: Instant Runoff Voting

REQUESTED ACTION:

Request the convening of the Charter Amendment Committee to discuss and consider Instant Run-off Voting (IRV) for the April 13, 2010 Citywide ballot.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to the New America Foundation, Instant runoff voting (IRV) is an electoral method that elects officeholders with a majority of the vote in a single election. IRV eliminates the need for a separate runoff election. Voters rank their favorite candidates in order of choice (1, 2, 3) on their ballot. If any candidate receives a majority of the first choice rankings, that candidate is elected. If not, the last place candidate is defeated, just as in a runoff election, and all ballots are counted again, but this time each ballot cast for the defeated candidate counts for the next-choice candidate listed on each of those ballots. This process of eliminating the last place candidate and recounting the ballots continues until one candidate receives a majority of the vote.

IRV combines the primary and runoff elections into one election, getting rid of the high costs of administering the second election. According to estimates from our City Clerk, Long Beach could reap a net one-time savings of approximately \$987,200 and a potential cost avoidance of \$3.72 million over 8 election cycles.

In addition, IRV discourages campaign mudslinging because candidates know they may need the second or third ranking from other candidates' supporters to win. Instead of mudslinging, candidates have an incentive to run civil, issues-based campaigns and find common ground. IRV also addresses the current issue of vote splitting because ranked ballots allow voters to rank their first, second and third choices and to participate in coalitions among like-minded candidates.

A partial list of cities and states using IRV include Aspen, San Francisco, Berkeley, Memphis, Minneapolis, Oakland, Springfield, Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina and Louisiana.



City of Long Beach Memorandum
Working Together to Serve

REQUEST TO ADD AGENDA ITEM


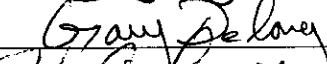

Date: September 17, 2009
To: Larry Herrera, City Clerk
From: Councilmember Suja Lowenthal
Subject: Request to Add Agenda Item to Council Agenda of **September 22, 2009**

Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.03.070 [B], the City Councilmembers signing below request that the attached agenda item (due in the City Clerk Department by Friday, 12:00 Noon) be placed on the City Council agenda under New Business via the supplemental agenda.

The agenda title/recommendation for this item reads as follows:

Charter Amendment Committee Agenda Item: Instant Runoff Voting

Request the convening of the Charter Amendment Committee to discuss and consider Instant Run-off Voting (IRV) for the April 13, 2010 Citywide ballot.

Council District	Authorizing Councilmember	Signed by
2	Suja Lowenthal	
3	Gary DeLong	
9	Val Lerch	

Attachment: Instant Runoff Voting Motion

CC: Office of the Mayor