



# Mayor and City Council Study Session Report

## Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)

October 6, 2009

Presented by:

City Clerk Department



# Introduction

How did we get here?

What is IRV?

San Francisco IRV Model

Pros and Cons of IRV

Concluding Comments



## How did we get here?

- Fiscal Constraints
  - Era of continuing budget reductions
  - Downturn in national and local economy
- Structural cost reductions
  - Viable
  - Capacity to execute
  - Public support



## What is IRV?

- System of voting wherein voters rank candidates in order of preference, **1<sup>st</sup> choice, 2<sup>nd</sup> choice and 3<sup>rd</sup> choice;**
- Candidate with majority (50%, plus one vote) of 1<sup>st</sup> choice votes, upon first tally of votes, wins;
- If no majority winner upon first tally of votes, lowest ranked candidates are eliminated, and their 2<sup>nd</sup> choice votes are transferred to candidates with higher total votes; and
- Process of elimination continues until a majority winner is determined.



# San Francisco IRV Model

- Applies to Mayor, Sheriff, District Attorney, City Attorney, Treasurer, Assessor-Recorder, Public Defender, & Board of Supervisors;
- Candidate with majority of 1<sup>st</sup> choice votes is declared the winner;
- If no candidate receives a majority of 1<sup>st</sup> choice votes, candidate with fewest 1<sup>st</sup> choices is eliminated and each vote cast for that candidate is transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> choice ranked candidate on that voter's ballot;
- If after transfer of votes, any candidate with a majority of continuing ballots is declared to be elected;



# San Francisco IRV Model

- **Process of transferring votes is repeated until a candidate receives a majority of votes from continuing ballots;**
- **Allows simultaneous elimination of lowest ranked candidates who receive fewer total votes than next highest candidate;**
- **Ties resolved in accordance with State law; and**
- **Mandates voter education.**

# San Francisco IRV Ballot

This stub should be removed BEFORE the ballot is placed into the voting device or inserted into envelope.

**DEMONSTRATION BALLOT / BALOTA DE MUESTRA / 模擬選票**  
 CONSOLIDATED GENERAL ELECTION / ELECCIONES GENERALES CONSOLIDADAS / 聯合普選  
 CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO / CIUDAD Y CONDADO DE SAN FRANCISCO / 三藩市市縣  
 NOVEMBER 2, 2004 / 2 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2004 / 2004年11月2日

## DEMONSTRATION BALLOT / BALOTA DE MUESTRA / 模擬選票

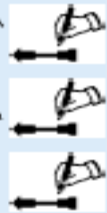
CONSOLIDATED GENERAL ELECTION / ELECCIONES GENERALES CONSOLIDADAS / 聯合普選  
 CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO / CIUDAD Y CONDADO DE SAN FRANCISCO / 三藩市市縣  
 NOVEMBER 2, 2004 / 2 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2004 / 2004年11月2日

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 8, SENATE DISTRICT 8, ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 12, SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT 00, BART DISTRICT 9

**INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS:** Mark your first choice in the first column by completing the arrow pointing to your choice, as shown in the picture. To indicate a second choice, select a different candidate in the second column. To indicate a third choice, select a different candidate in the third column. To vote for a qualified write-in candidate, write the person's name on the blank line provided and complete the arrow.

**INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS ELECTORES:** Para marcar su primera opción en la primera columna, complete la flecha que apunta hacia su selección, tal como se indica en la imagen. Para indicar un a segunda opción, seleccione un candidato distinto en la segunda columna. Para indicar una tercera opción, seleccione un candidato distinto en la tercera columna. Para votar por un candidato calificado no listado, escriba el nombre de la persona en el espacio en blanco provisto, y complete la flecha.

**選民指南：**在第一列中標記你的第一個選擇，將指向你的選擇的箭頭畫線連接起來，如圖所示。標記第二個選擇時，在第二列中選擇一位不同的候選人。標記第三個選擇時，在第三列中選擇一位不同的候選人。投票合格寫入候選人時，在提供的空位上填寫此人的姓名，並將箭頭畫線連接起來。

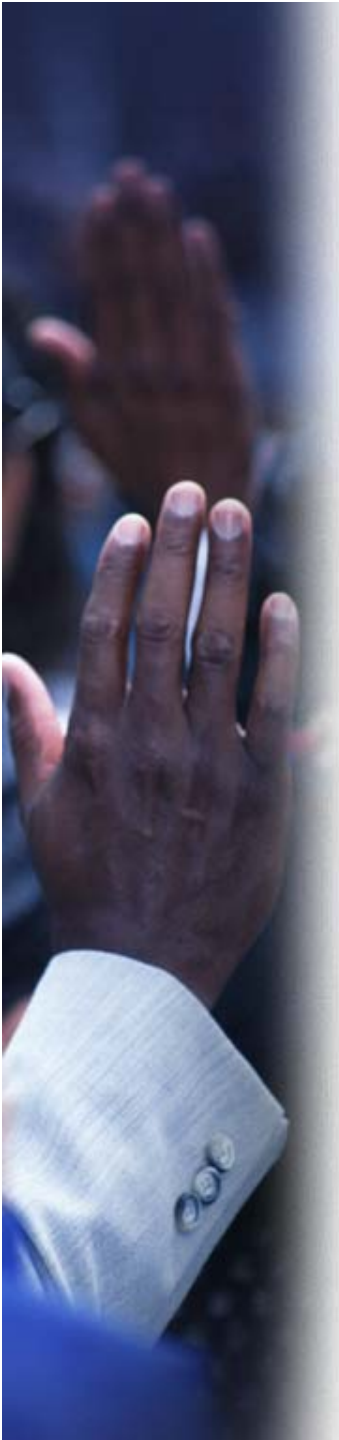


### MEMBER, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS / MIEMBRO, CONSEJO DE SUPERVISORES / 市參議員 DISTRICT 00 - DISTRITO 00 - 第00選區

VOTE YOUR FIRST SECOND AND THIRD CHOICES / VOTE POR SU PRIMERA, SEGUNDA Y TERCERA ELECCION / 投票的第一、第二和第三選擇

<b>1</b>	<b>FIRST CHOICE PRIMERA SELECCIÓN 第一選擇</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>SECOND CHOICE SEGUNDA SELECCIÓN 第二選擇</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>THIRD CHOICE TERCERA SELECCIÓN 第三選擇</b>
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Vote for One Vote por Uno 第一選擇	Vote for One - Must be different than your first choice Vote por Uno - Debe ser diferente de su primera selección 第一選擇 / 必須與第一個選擇不同	Vote for One - Must be different than your first and second choices Vote por Uno - Debe ser diferente de su primera y segunda selección 第一選擇 / 必須與第一個選擇和第二個選擇不同
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT 愛麗諾·羅斯福 Incumbent Titular 現任者	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT 愛麗諾·羅斯福 Incumbent Titular 現任者	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT 愛麗諾·羅斯福 Incumbent Titular 現任者
CESAR CHAVEZ 切薩·查維茲 Labor Organizer Organizador Laboral 勞工組織者	CESAR CHAVEZ 切薩·查維茲 Labor Organizer Organizador Laboral 勞工組織者	CESAR CHAVEZ 切薩·查維茲 Labor Organizer Organizador Laboral 勞工組織者
WALTER LUM 沃爾特·林 Publisher Editor 出版商	WALTER LUM 沃爾特·林 Publisher Editor 出版商	WALTER LUM 沃爾特·林 Publisher Editor 出版商
JOHN HANCOCK 約翰·漢考克 Physician Medico 醫生	JOHN HANCOCK 約翰·漢考克 Physician Medico 醫生	JOHN HANCOCK 約翰·漢考克 Physician Medico 醫生
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 小馬丁·路德·金 Minister Pastor 牧師	MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 小馬丁·路德·金 Minister Pastor 牧師	MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 小馬丁·路德·金 Minister Pastor 牧師
ANNA MAE PIC TOU AGUASH 安娜·瑪·皮托·阿古亞 Indigenous Rights Organizer Organizadora para Derechos Indígenas 土著權益組織者	ANNA MAE PIC TOU AGUASH 安娜·瑪·皮托·阿古亞 Indigenous Rights Organizer Organizadora para Derechos Indígenas 土著權益組織者	ANNA MAE PIC TOU AGUASH 安娜·瑪·皮托·阿古亞 Indigenous Rights Organizer Organizadora para Derechos Indígenas 土著權益組織者
WRITE-IN / NO LISTADO / 寫入	WRITE-IN / NO LISTADO / 寫入	WRITE-IN / NO LISTADO / 寫入



# Actual SF IRV Results

## ROUND 1

Candidate	Votes	%
Mar	11,649	40.51
Lee	9,753	33.92
Wang	4,218	14.67
Larkin	998	3.47
Jungreis	614	2.14
Belloni	537	1.87
Gakuba	363	1.26
Flamik	325	1.13
D Silva	257	0.89
Write-In	42	--
Over Votes	242	
Under Votes	2,696	
Exhausted	--	
Continuing	28,756	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,694</b>	

## ROUND 2

Transfer	Votes	%
1,503	13,152	50.67
3,052	12,805	49.33
(4,218)	--	--
(998)	--	--
(614)	--	--
(537)	--	--
(363)	--	--
(325)	--	--
(257)	--	--
(42)	--	--
18	260	
	2,696	
2,781	2,781	
	25,957	100.00%
	<b>31,694</b>	





# Pro and Con of IRV

Pro	Con
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Saves at least \$3.7 million in taxpayer dollars by eliminating June runoff;</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires complex voting systems not readily available and costly voter education;</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gives voters more choice;</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does not create governing majorities;</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Majority of voters, including minority voters, understand and prefer IRV over two-round elections.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discriminates against classes of voters by adding complexity to elections.</li></ul>



# Concluding Comments

Minnesota Supreme Court

“Reducing costs and inconvenience to votes, candidates and taxpayers by holding one election, increasing voter turnout, encouraging less divisive campaigns . . . are all legitimate interests for the City to foster... to what degree IRV may advance one or more of those interest remains to be seen. But it is plausible that IRV will advance one or more of those interests.”

William Poundstone

“Should we adopt any such system (of elections), politics is going to be different. Neither theory nor experiment can predict the future evolution of party politics under a voting method. That can be a scary prospect. Democracy is such an important thing that we are properly risk-averse. We don’t want to make a change unless we are sure it’s a positive improvement with no downside whatsoever. It is tough to get that kind of assurance.”



**Thank You!**