

Larry Herrera, City Clerk
City of Long Beach, 333 W. Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90802
Work. 562-570-6489

September 30, 2009

Dear Mr. Herrera,

There are two serious mistakes in the representations of my report "Realities Mar Instant Runoff Voting: 18 Flaws and 4 Benefits" contained in the City of Long Beach Instant Runoff Study Session Report which completely alters my analysis.

Please immediately distribute this letter to all recipients of your report, rather than put this letter in the supplemental agenda so this can be immediately rectified. Thank you.

The following two incorrect statements are:

1. "IRV does not guarantee that the first-choice of a majority of voters will win;"

The truth is that IRV and plurality voting both guarantee that the first-choice of a majority (50%+1 of voters) will win and that neither the IRV or the plurality method guarantees that a majority favored candidate will be elected when there is not a first-choice majority candidate. On the other hand, top-two runoff elections virtually always find majority winners of those who vote that day. However IRV often does *not* elect a candidate that a majority voted for that day. IRV tends to eliminate majority favorite centrist candidates and elect candidates favored by voters on the extreme right or the left, whichever side has more supporters due to its elimination algorithm that allows the voters of the least popular candidates to determine who loses in early elimination rounds.

2. "IRV will allow a majority candidate to win even if that candidate is the last choice of all voters;"

A majority candidate cannot be the last choice of all voters. The truth is that IRV will sometimes allow a candidate to win even if that candidate is the last choice of all voters in a head-to-head comparison of all candidates. So can plurality voting, but unlike IRV, plurality voting is less costly, treats all voters' ballots equally and provides to voters the right to know that the effect of their vote on a candidate's chance of winning will be positive.

A lot of people do not realize that in IRV a voter's first rank choice can always hurt the same voter's 2nd rank choice candidate's chances to win and that a voter's 1st rank choice can also hurt that same voter's 1st choice candidate's chances to win. There are many simpler, fairer, more economical alternative voting methods available that do not have IRV's flaws if one does not want to use the top-two runoff system.

Sincerely,



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