

# What Is Ballot Rotation?

- Ballot Rotation is the practice of rotating candidates so that each candidate gets a chance to be listed in different orders for a given election.
- For example, Candidate A might be listed 1st on 1/3 of the ballots, while Candidate B is listed 1<sup>st</sup> on 1/3 of the ballots, and Candidate C is listed 1<sup>st</sup> on 1/3 of the ballots.

# Why Have Ballot Rotation?

- Ballot rotation has been found to be more fair than allowing one candidate to be listed 1<sup>st</sup> on all ballots, as it promotes the election of a candidate based on merit and not chance.
- In 1975 the Supreme Court found that the absence of rotation caused a 5% bias among undecided voters, and thus listing incumbents first or listing in alphabetical order was not fair.

# Why Have Ballot Rotation?

- According to a Stanford University study, being listed first on a ballot increases the chance of winning from 5.1% to 24.9%.
- Due to court rulings and scientific literature about positional bias without ballot rotation, many jurisdictions currently rotate ballots, such as the county-supervisor elections for Supervisor, District Attorney, and Secretary of State.
- Residents in Long Beach deserve the same quality of election administration in municipal elections that they currently receive for county-administered elections.

# The Cost for Ballot Rotation

- The City Clerk has estimated that the cost to rotate ballots would have ranged from \$680 to \$9,520 per election for the elections from 2006 to 2010.
- If conducted for April 2012, this cost would be absorbed as part of the overall one-time costs for the election, estimated to be \$1.2 million.
- The cost for ballot rotation is minimal in terms of the overall cost of election administration.

# Ballot Rotation in Long Beach

- The City Clerk Department has studied ballot rotation and is prepared to implement it starting in April 2012 if that is the Council's policy direction.
- Long Beach has led the way in election administration for 50 years, and is the only city in California that conducts elections with its own election system.
- The time has come to make our election process more fair for all, and implement ballot rotation.