



**City of Long Beach  
Elections Oversight Committee  
Instant Runoff Voting  
2010 Northern California Results**

**November 30, 2010**



## **What is Instant Runoff Voting(IRV)/ Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)**

**IRV/RCV allows voters to rank the candidates in their order of preference, 1-2-3, instead of just picking one candidate.**

**All first rankings are counted, and if a candidate wins a majority, the election is over.**

**But if no candidate wins a majority, each voter's second and third rankings are used to determine the winner.**



## **Current Status of IRV in California**

**Cities using IRV: San Francisco,  
Oakland, Berkeley, San Leandro**

**Voting System: To-date, the SOS has  
only "certified" one system (Sequoia  
Voting Systems)**



# Pros & Cons of Instant Runoff Voting

## PROS

- Eliminates potential for run-off elections
- May reduce costs (taxpayer dollars)
- One campaign
- Election is conducted when more voters historically show up



## So what happened in San Francisco? Instant Runoff Voting

- Field of 6 Council candidates, 2<sup>nd</sup> place 1<sup>st</sup> round candidate (40%) won on 2<sup>nd</sup> pass (51.0%). 1<sup>st</sup> place winner (41%) lost on 2<sup>nd</sup> pass (49%)
- Field of 14 Council candidates, 1<sup>st</sup> round winner (31%) won on 12<sup>th</sup> pass (54%)
- Field of 21 Council candidates, 3<sup>rd</sup> place 1<sup>st</sup> round candidate (12%) won on 20<sup>th</sup> pass (55%). 1<sup>st</sup> round winner (12%) lost in the 18<sup>th</sup> round. 2<sup>nd</sup> place 1<sup>st</sup> round candidate (11.81%) came in 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 20<sup>th</sup> pass (47%)



## So what happened in Berkeley? Instant Runoff Voting

- Field of 4 Council candidates 1<sup>st</sup> round winner won on 1<sup>st</sup> pass (65.53)%
- Field of 3 Council candidates, 1<sup>st</sup> round winner (49.67%) won on 2<sup>nd</sup> pass (50.06)
- Field of 3 Council candidates, 1<sup>st</sup> round winner one on 1<sup>st</sup> pass (50.49%)



## So what happened in Oakland? Instant Runoff Voting

- Field of 10 Mayoral candidates, 2<sup>nd</sup> place 1<sup>st</sup> round candidate (24.5%) won on 10<sup>th</sup> pass (51%). 1<sup>st</sup> round winner (33.8%) lost on 10<sup>th</sup> pass (49%).
- Field of 7 Council candidates, 1<sup>st</sup> round winner (42%) won on 6<sup>th</sup> pass (53%)
- Field of 3 Council candidates, 1<sup>st</sup> round winner (54%) won on 1<sup>st</sup> pass



## So what happened in San Leandro? Instant Runoff Voting

- Field of 6 Mayoral candidates, 2<sup>nd</sup> place 1st round candidate (35.5%) won on 6<sup>th</sup> pass (50.57%). 1<sup>st</sup> round winner (33.7%) lost on 6<sup>th</sup> pass (49.43%)
- All other Council contest did not have more than two candidates





# So what is being reported? Instant Runoff Voting

## Pro

- **Candidates with broad support win**
- **Rocks the establishment**
- **Play by the rules**
- **Candidates find common ground**
- **Uses more information from voters to elect a representative**
- **Makes elections less negative, shortens campaigns, saves money, and creates focus on issues**

## Con

- **Denounced as confusing**
- **Anybody but Perata affect**
- **Exhausted ballots are wasted votes**
- **Avoids robust debate of issues**
- **Multi candidate contests require communicating to everyone**
- **Not true, case pending before U.S. Court of Appeal on**



## Conclusion

**There is no doubt that will there be increased scrutiny of the Northern California IRV elections, and continued debate on the merits of IRV. This is especially so in light of an appeal on San Francisco's IRV system which is now pending before the U.S. Court of Appeal, (9<sup>th</sup> Circuit).**