

Instant Runoff Voting

Let's make our elections more accurate, fair and legitimate.

Let's bring Instant Runoff Voting to California!



California IRV Coalition

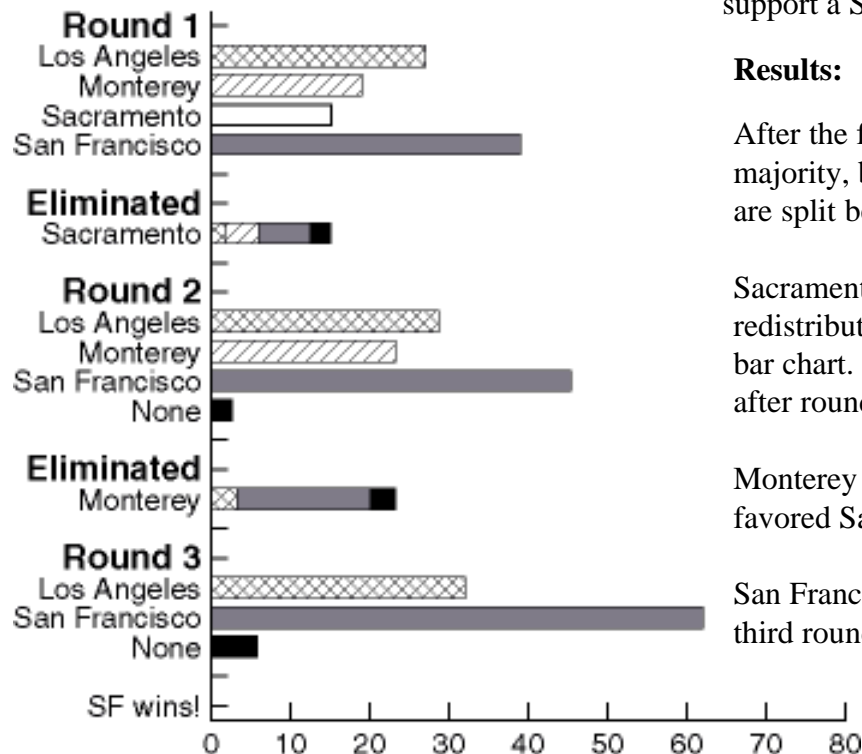
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What is Instant Runoff Voting?

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) is a simple voting method used to select a single winner from a list of two or more candidates. By collecting more meaningful information from voters, it gives them a greater power of choice and measures their will more accurately. Invented in the United States, this method has been used in Australia and Ireland for many decades.

How does it work?

IRV allows voters to rank the candidates they find acceptable. To determine the winner, voters' highest choices are counted. Votes for the last-place candidate are reallocated to the next choices on their respective ballots, and this process is repeated until someone has a majority.



Sample Election

This is a ballot used to select a location for an IRV activists' meeting.

IRV Meeting Location Poll

Instructions:

- Choose the meeting places you support in order of preference.

[]	San Francisco
[2]	Monterey
[1]	Los Angeles
[3]	Sacramento

This voter prefers to meet in Los Angeles, could meet in Monterey or Sacramento, and does not support a San Francisco meeting.

Results:

After the first round, no candidate has a majority, because Northern California votes are split between nearby locations.

Sacramento is eliminated, and votes are redistributed according to the patterns in the bar chart. However, there is still no majority after round 2.

Monterey is eliminated. Its voters strongly favored San Francisco as their second choice.

San Francisco wins with a majority in the third round.

IRV beats plurality elections because:

- IRV ensures majority rule.**

- IRV eliminates the "spoiler" problem.**

"Spoiler" candidates or "split votes" would no longer threaten major candidates. The Nader-vs.-Gore and Perot-vs.-Bush dilemmas would not have existed with IRV.

- IRV promotes positive campaigns.**

With more candidates, and a need to get 2nd- and 3rd-choice votes, attack ads will not pay off.

- IRV boosts voter turnout.**

Experience has shown that turnout increases when voters have more choices.

- IRV makes votes count.**

IRV increases the likelihood that one's vote will be decisive.

But...

- Does IRV require expensive equipment?**

No. Many counties already have IRV-compatible equipment. Paper IRV ballots are commonly used overseas.

- Is IRV too confusing for voters?**

Where IRV has been adopted, it has endured for decades, so voters are comfortable with it. IRV is one of the simplest voting methods in use.

- Does IRV upset the existing power structure?**

No, because it still relies on single-winner majority votes. IRV simply measures voters' will more accurately.

IRV beats two-round runoff or primary elections because:

- IRV saves money.**

Election officials and taxpayers don't have to foot the bill for a second election.

- IRV saves time.**

Voters do not lose work or family time voting a second election.

- IRV is decisive.**

Voters are not let down by an inconclusive first election.

- IRV makes campaigning easier.**

With IRV, candidates don't have to raise money for two races.

- IRV is more accurate.**

IRV eliminates one candidate at a time, minimizing "spoiler" effects. Voter turnout is high in the decisive election, unlike two-round runoffs.

What's happening in California?

The California Instant Runoff Voting Coalition (Cal IRV) is a volunteer group working to bring IRV to California on the state and county level. IRV has been endorsed by the Sierra Club, the Libertarian Party of California, and many other groups, some of which use IRV in their internal elections. IRV has been approved for use in Santa Clara County and for certain elections in San Leandro and Oakland. The state legislature is considering ways to implement IRV and to upgrade the state's voting equipment.

See the back for more info about Cal IRV!

What is Cal IRV?

Cal IRV is a nonpartisan grassroots organization working with political parties, public interest groups, legislators, and election officials to implement IRV in all of California's statewide single-member elections, and facilitate its use in local jurisdictions.

Specific goals:

- Use IRV in statewide special elections
- Give voters in cities and counties the right to implement IRV
- Help and encourage counties to upgrade to more IRV-friendly voting equipment
- Mobilize support for statewide IRV over the next few years

How can I help?

We are a volunteer group, and we need help on all aspects of this project: education, coalition building, fund raising, and legislative research. Please see our web site or email us.

Web: www.calirv.org - Email: info@calirv.org



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Coalition

Working to fulfill democracy's promise

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