



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Councilmembers Create Instant Runoff Voting Task Force

Councilmember Huizar calls for task force to study costs, feasibility and other issues surrounding IRV – Rosendahl seconds motion

LOS ANGELES (Oct. 30, 2008) – In a bid to bring Instant Runoff Voting to the City of Los Angeles and save taxpayers millions of dollars, Los Angeles City Councilmembers José Huizar and Bill Rosendahl moved Wednesday to support the creation of a task force to address procedural issues around IRV.

In a 10-2 vote, the City Council approved the task force after a spirited discussion in Chambers where several perspectives were raised and no clear consensus could be reached on IRV. Councilmember Huizar asked the Clerk's office to report back by the end of December on their findings.

"Instant Runoff Voting will save the City millions of dollars and help fight voter apathy and low turnout," Huizar said. "But, it's extremely important that we proceed responsibly on this issue and make sure any concerns are addressed. I'm confident that we will do just that with the creation of this task force."

IRV would eliminate the need for runoff elections by having voters rank the candidates of their choice. If no candidate garners more than 50 percent of the vote, the ranking system would be used until one candidate receives more than 50 percent.

"I continue to believe that our voters deserve the option to reform our election process," said Councilmember Bill Rosendahl. "I look forward to working with the task force and getting answers to the questions needed so the council can place this matter before the electorate."

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The working group will be led by the City Clerk and include the Mayor, CAO, County-Registrar Recorder, LAUSD, Los Angeles Community College District, the City Attorney and election specialists from local universities.

If a runoff emerges from one of three citywide races on the March ballot, the end-of-year deadline will allow the City Council the option to place a measure on the May 2009 runoff ballot in order to switch the City's election system to IRV.

The City of San Francisco has had much success and saved a substantial amount of money since implementing IRV in 2005.

The Los Angeles City Clerk will have the results of their RFP in December, which will include costs for adding IRV, including a public education campaign so that voters understand the new system.

The Council gave the task force until July 1, 2009, to report back with a set of recommendations on issues around changes to the City's Campaign Finance system and formulas for sharing costs for the new software between the City and other agencies, including LACCD, the County and LAUSD.

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