

January 24, 2007

To: Governor Jennifer Granholm,
Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land,
Michigan State Senators,
Michigan State Representatives

Dear Elected Officials,

Every two years, voters go to the polls to participate in our democratic process. In our plurality system the candidate that gets the most votes wins. However, since we frequently have more than two candidates in a given race, the highest-vote recipient may win with less than 50% of the votes cast. Independent and minor party candidates are often seen as "spoilers" in such cases.

Instant Runoff Voting (or IRV) is a system that allows voters to rank their choices, eliminates the "spoiler" issue, and ensures that the winner of the race has some support from at least 50% of the voters.

With IRV, when there are more than two candidates the voter is allowed to vote for their first choice, second choice, third choice, and so on, ranking their preferences.

In counting an IRV election, ballots initially are counted based on the first-choice votes. If no candidate receives over 50% of the first-choice votes, the candidate with the lowest first-choice total is eliminated and that candidate's votes are then distributed to those voters' second choice. The instant runoff process then continues to eliminate the next lowest candidate, and transfer the votes to the voters' next choice, until one candidate emerges with a majority of the votes.

Instant Runoff Voting is used in Ireland to elect its President, London to elect the Mayor, Australia to elect the House of Representatives, San Francisco for major city offices, and the Utah Republicans use IRV to nominate congressional nominees at state convention. Many other organizations also use IRV. Recently many cities have been passing local ballot initiatives in support of IRV, including our own Ferndale Michigan.

We are enclosing a pamphlet produced by The Center for Voting and Democracy that explains IRV in more detail. This and more information is available at their website www.fairvote.org.

We're confident that you'll see the wide-ranging benefits to democracy of using IRV. We ask you to support Instant Runoff Voting and to consider supporting legislation to advance Instant Runoff Voting here in Michigan.

Sincerely,

Ken Mathenia, irvproject organizer
232 High St.
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

Endorsers:

Organizations:

Ann Arbor Fair Vote Coalition
Ferndale for Instant Runoff Voting
Green Party of Michigan
IRV Michigan Ballot Initiative Committee

Individuals:

Matthew Abel, Detroit, MI
Linnea Anderson-Kuszmarski, Warren, MI
D. L. Baker, Hillsdale, MI
Steven Bean, Ann Arbor, MI
Scotty Boman, Detroit, MI (continued on reverse side)

Individual Endorsers continued:

Eric Borregard, Washtenaw County, MI
Amber Carey, Flint, MI
Candace Caveny, Lapeer, MI
Lloyd Clark, Frankenmuth, MI
Desmond Collins, Lapeer, MI
Karen Conner, Ann Arbor, MI
Howard Ditkoff, Oak Park, MI
Gary Donn, Mason, MI
Dale Glabach, Southfield, MI
Amanda Grimm, Livonia, MI
Thomas Haley, Mt. Morris, MI
Craig Harvey, Ann Arbor, MI
Sylvia Inwood, Detroit, MI
Kathryn Bruner James, Ferndale, MI
Gaia Kile, Ann Arbor, MI
Richard Kuszmar, Warren, MI
Eric Lormand, Ann Arbor, MI
Stephanie Loveless, Fendale, MI
Jan Mathenia, Grand Blanc, MI
Ken Mathenia, Grand Blanc, MI
Lynn Meadows, Chelsea, MI
Harley Mikkelson, Caro, MI
Merry, Mikkelson, Caro, MI
Kristen Miner, Flint, MI
Robert Miner, Flint, MI
Jim Montgomery, Ann Arbor, MI
Art Myatt, Oakland County, MI
Linda Manning Myatt, Oakland County, MI
Cecelia Ober, Ann Arbor, MI
Louis Novak, Detroit, MI
Donald C Pelz, Ann Arbor, MI
Daniel Pope, Flushing, MI
Vince Prygoski, Gaines, MI
Peggy Rabhi, Ann Arbor, MI
Yousef Rabhi, Ann Arbor, MI
Richa, Kent County, MI
Jonathan Shaver, Flint, MI
Karen Shelly, Southfield, MI
Aaron Stuttman, Lansing, MI
Shirley Zempel, Ann Arbor, MI

Additional endorsers may sign on by visiting www.irvproject.org , and the list of endorsers will be updated on a regular basis.

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