

QUESTIONNAIRE on LWVME Concurrence on IRV Position

Prior to voting whether to concur with those sister State Leagues who have adopted a position on the issue of using Instant Runoff Voting as an alternative voting method, please consider the following questions and share your thoughts with us, if you wish:

1. Majority Winner:

a. Is the fact that someone may be elected with less than 50% of the vote important enough to offer an alternative election system?

b. If the lack of majority happens too frequently, will this reduce the legitimacy of Maine's elected officials?

c. How important are voting paradoxes that are found in all voting systems?

2. "Sincere Voting" vs. Strategic Voting:

a. How important is it for an election system to encourage citizens to vote for their true favorite rather than for someone who has a better chance of winning?

b. Is an "insincere" or strategic vote "gaming the system" or making a compromise?

c. Might an "insincere" or strategic vote for a candidate reduce the ability of the winner to interpret the will of the people?

3. **"Wasted" votes:** Does it matter that a vote for a third party candidate under the Plurality system might be considered "wasted" because polls indicate it cannot lead to the election of the voter's preferred candidate?

4. Intensity vs. Breadth of Support:

a. Should a voting system balance intensity of support with breadth of support?

b. What kind of impact does the type of support have on the winner's ability to govern?

5. Civility:

a. How important is it for an election system to encourage civility among campaigns and discourage mud-slinging?

b. Does an Instant Runoff System do more to encourage civility among campaigns than a plurality system?

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6. **Preferences:** Are there benefits to allowing voters to express their preferences by ranking multiple candidates?

7. **Legality of Alternative Systems:** Are the benefits of an alternative method sufficient to warrant a change in the Maine Constitution (if determined to be necessary) and/or Maine Statutes?

8. **Political Parties:**

a. Would an alternative voting system that encourages third parties upset the traditional two-party system?

b. In the Plurality system, how important is it that third party candidates can take votes from one major party candidate, perhaps enabling the candidate from the other major party to win?

9. **Voter Education & Cost:**

a. Is the fact that a voting systems requires a slightly more complex tabulation be a sufficient reason to reject it?

b. How important is it that the voters understand how votes are tabulated?

c. Would the additional costs of a new system be too much of a burden on Maine election districts in terms of educating voters and election officials?

d. Do you feel you have enough understanding now to participate in an Instant Runoff Election? If not, what would be needed for you to achieve that understanding?

10. **Change:**

a. Who benefits from changing to an alternative system?

b. Who is disadvantaged?

c. Is it possible to reduce the impact of the unintended consequences which almost always follow any institutional change?

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BALLOT on IRV Concurrence

With respect to each statement, please indicate whether you agree or disagree, in whole or in part, using the back of the ballot form if you need additional space.

Do you:

- Support election systems for elected offices in single seat elections that require the winner to receive a majority of the votes, as long as the majority is achieved by Instant Runoff Voting/ Ranked Choice Voting, rather than a second, separate runoff election?

_____ Agree

_____ Disagree

_____ Agree in part/Disagree in part. Here are my thoughts:

- Support the continued use of the plurality voting system in elections where Instant Runoff Voting/ Ranked Choice Voting is not used?

_____ Agree

_____ Disagree

_____ Agree in part/Disagree in part. Here are my thoughts:

- Support the right of local governments and municipalities to choose Instant Runoff Voting/ Ranked Choice Voting for their own local elections in single seat elections?

_____ Agree

_____ Disagree

_____ Agree in part/Disagree in part. Here are my thoughts:

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