

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0048
(916) 319-2048
FAX (916) 319-2148

DISTRICT OFFICE
ADMINISTRATIVE WEST
700 STATE DRIVE
LOS ANGELES, CA 90037
(213) 744-2111
FAX (213) 744-2122

Assembly California Legislature



MIKE DAVIS
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FORTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS,
TOURISM, AND INTERNET MEDIA
HUMAN SERVICES
RULES
UTILITIES AND COMMERCE
SELECT COMMITTEES
RAIL TRANSPORTATION, CHAIR
PRESERVATION OF CALIFORNIA'S
ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

DATE: March 5, 2009
TO: Legislative Colleagues
FROM: Assemblymember Mike Davis
SUBJECT: **Co-Author Request AB 1121: Elections Ranked Voting**

I am writing to ask for your support and co-authorship of AB 1121, which will allow 10 general law cities and counties to use ranked voting systems, specifically instant runoff voting (IRV) and choice voting, to elect local officials. This bill would specify the ranked voting method as it applies to both a single-candidate election and a multiple-candidate election.

Despite growing public interest in using ranked voting systems such as IRV, most local jurisdictions are not able to use ranked voting systems under current law. Today only charter counties or charter cities can use ranked voting, but over three-fourths of cities and counties are general law jurisdictions and do not have these options. By providing a limited authorization for 10 cities or counties to use ranked voting, California can gain the experience with these systems necessary to better evaluate whether greater permissive legislation is warranted.

IRV ensures that the winner of a single-winner election has the support of the majority of voters in a single election. By eliminating the need for a costly runoff election it saves local governments a lot of money – at least \$1.6 million per election in San Francisco alone. In Los Angeles, a set of runoff elections for local offices cost over \$5 million, but voter turnout was a mere 6%. In cases such as these, voters would have been better served by electing those offices in a single election at much less cost. While we think this legislation is sound policy at any time, it is especially timely given the challenging fiscal climate we are in now where local governments are struggling to balance their budgets in the face of declining revenues.

IRV also eliminates vote-splitting and spoiler effects, both of which undermine the public's confidence in the political process.

I hope you will join me and co-author this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

YES, please add me as a co-author of AB 1121.

Legislator's Name (Please Print)

Legislator's Signature

Please return to Edmundo Cuevas in Room 2160 or fax to (916) 319-2148 as soon as possible.

