

# Major Election Systems

and their Relevance to the

# State of Arizona

Fall 2002

By

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Election Reform Committee

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**The LWVMP Mission Statement**

**The mission of the LWV is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.**

The LWVMP Election Reform Committee would like to thank the following organizations for their help and contributions. This report has borrowed heavily from these sources.

- Center for Voting and Democracy (CVD). Thanks for their reports, websites, articles and field representative, Dan Johnson-Weinberger
- LWV of Washington Education Fund, report entitled “An Evaluation of Major Election Methods and Selected State Election Laws” Fall 2000
- LWV of Santa Monica. Report entitled “A Study of Voting Systems Applicable to Santa Monica’s Non-Partisan, At-large, Multi-Seat, Multi-Candidate Governing Bodies. January 2001
- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA) and its related *Handbook of Electoral Systems Design* (1995, Stockholm)
- Illinois Assembly on Political Representation and Alternative electoral systems. Executive Summary , published by Institute of Government and Public Affairs, Spring 2001

***Democracy is NOT a Spectator Sport***

Additional copies of this report may be ordered from: LWVMP Education Fund, 49 E. Thomas Rd., Suite 102, Phoenix AZ 85012 E-Mail [lwvmp1@lwvaz.org](mailto:lwvmp1@lwvaz.org) Cost \$5.

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Goal of  
**Election System Reform -  
To provide the MOST ‘representative’ Democracy**

## Scope

*“A study of voting systems for electing representative bodies at all levels of government, as well as examination of Arizona’s method of apportionment of presidential electors.”*

## Focus

Focus is on systems having applicability for reforms to Arizona’s election systems, and specifically to Maricopa County.

## Introduction:

With the ushering in of Clean Elections in Arizona, more candidates will be able to run for office than ever before, particularly in primary elections. This means that the electorate may have their total votes divided among many more candidates; the chance of any of these candidates winning a majority of support will be lessened with each opponent in the race. Using current plurality systems, and having more viable third party candidates, a majority will be harder to obtain.

All of the cities located in Maricopa County require a majority, not a plurality, to win in their city council elections. This often requires an additional ‘runoff election’ with additional costs. Thus, a majority is possible for each. If a majority is not won for any particular open seats, a runoff election is necessary. In the 2002 election year, seven (7) Maricopa cities, including Scottsdale, Tempe, Chandler and Mesa had to run one of these ‘delayed runoffs.’ (See appendix B.)

**These situations in Arizona point out one of the two major issues addressed in this report – Plurality rule vs. Majority rule. The second issue is Representation. Specifically we will address Proportional Representation vs. Single Member Districts**

Ours is a representative democracy - a few are elected to make decisions for many. Voters feel well represented when their representatives vote as they would like. Conversely, voters who more closely identify with the losing candidate in their district may not feel represented at all under current “winner-take-all” systems. While geographical location used to bind people together in their views, such is no longer the case. Thus, amenable acceptance of ‘winner-take-all” systems begs the question:

*Would you rather have a representative from your neighborhood who shares none of your views, or*

*Would you rather be represented by someone outside of your neighborhood, but who supports your views?*

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Voters who feel their votes are “wasted”<sup>1</sup> (never electing a candidate) become so disaffected that they may cease to vote. We lose voters and citizens participating in their system. The LWV is concerned with the health of our democracy, with broad and meaningful participation in our political process and with ensuring the voting rights of all citizens.

## Arizona Concerns

What about the citizens of Arizona - are they well represented? After the 2002 Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission’s work was complete, only four (4) of the 30 districts are competitive.<sup>2</sup> In 26 out of 30 districts there is little chance of representation for a large percentage of other citizens. In 87% of our districts, an average of 43.2% of voters will not have a representative who represents their views in their legislative bodies.

In districts within Maricopa County the results are similar, although noticeably containing the lion’s share of the state’s competitive areas. The state has 4 competitive districts, 3 of which are in Maricopa County. The county includes elections within 18 districts, 10 are Republican-dominated, 5 are dominated by Democrats and only 3 are competitive (with the edge to Republicans). To examine this further, the districts listed above, but within the boundaries of the LWV – Metropolitan Phoenix area contain 5 districts of Republican dominance, 3 of Democrats dominance and 1 competitive (with an Republican edge). These figures are the result of the Independent Redistricting Commission.

Nationwide, our systems for electing representatives are seldom questioned, while many other world democracies are abandoning “winner-take-all” for alternative systems. Recently, in the face of voter apathy, government dissatisfaction and the imbroglio of the 2000 presidential election results, alternative election systems have become topics of discussion and analysis both state and nationwide. We feel that it is important to consider alternative systems as they might apply to Arizona and Maricopa County.

Not everyone will agree on the most desirable system. No one can deny, however, that the choice of an electoral system has considerable consequences for the way that citizens’ votes are translated into representation.

NOTE: in this report, the terms “voting system” and “election system” refer to the method of casting and counting the votes in an election. It may also encompass the cultural and sociological issues that impinge on and shape election competition. The terms DO NOT refer to the “mechanics” of voting machinery, admittance to polls or voter registration.

***“representative assembly...should be in miniature an exact portrait of the people at large. It should think, feel, reason, and act like them.”***

***John Adams  
(Essay: Thoughts on Government 1776)***

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<sup>1</sup> The “wasted vote” in reference to election systems is a term not intended to be subjective or judgmental, but simply as a term to describe “votes that do not elect.” The term applies to surplus votes as well as discarded votes. E.g. in a one seat race:

- Candidate A wins with 53% of the vote (a majority of 50% + 1 vote was necessary). The remaining, surplus 2% of votes were wasted.
- Candidate B receives 47% of the vote – 47% were “wasted.”

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A (State Legislative Maps)

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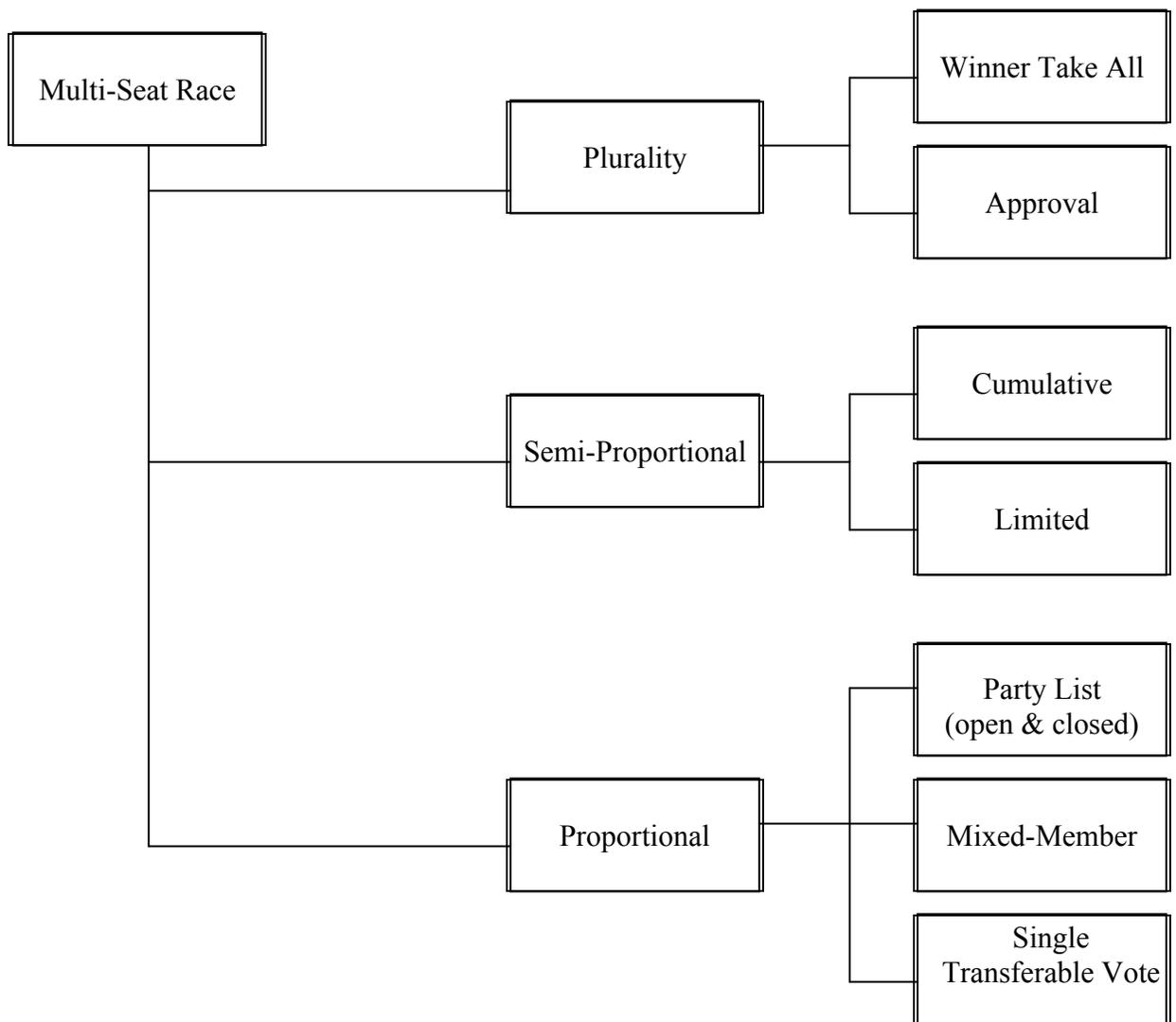
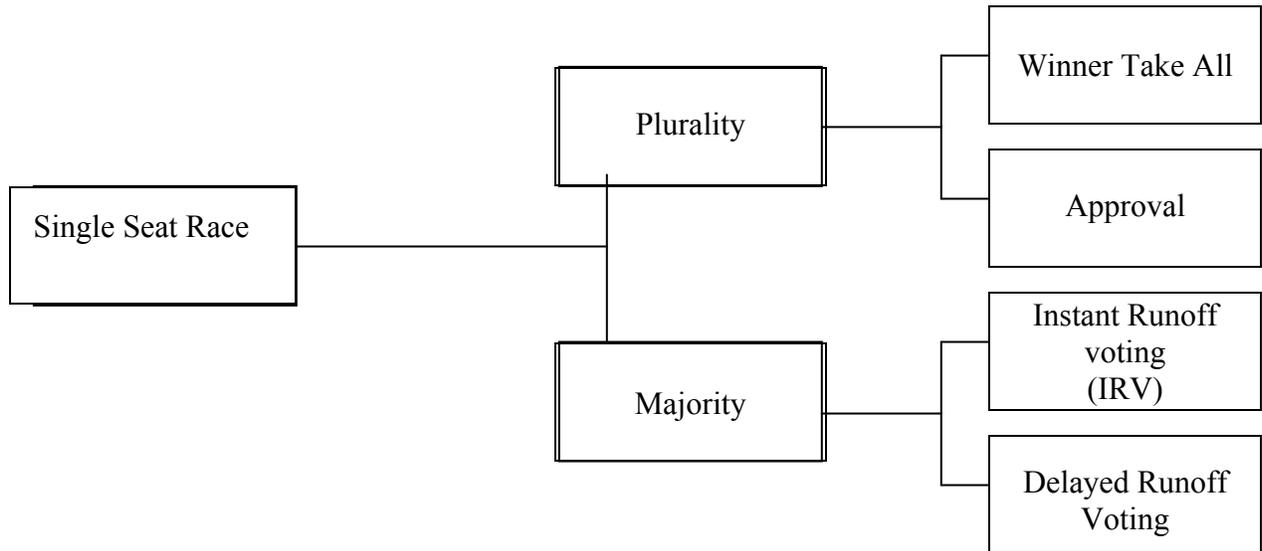
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# Organization Chart of Traditional & Alternative Election Systems

Voting System Methods for electing Representative Bodies addressed in Report



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*“As good government is an empire of laws, how shall your laws be made?  
In a large society, inhabiting an extensive country,  
it is impossible that the whole should assemble to make laws.  
The first necessary step, then, is to depute power from the many  
to a few of the most wise and good.*

***But by what rules shall you choose your representatives?”***

John Adams

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# PLURALITY VOTING

## *Winner Take All / First Past The Post*

### Description And Discussion

Plurality or 'Single Member Plurality' voting is currently the most commonly used legislative election system in the United States. It is one of the oldest methods for choosing leaders. Plurality systems are also known as *First Past the Post* and *Winner-Take-All*. It is used to elect one person per open seat, either in a single seat district or in an at-large election. In either case, voters have only as many votes as there are open seats. The candidate with the most votes (a plurality) wins, ***whether or not that candidate receives a majority of the total votes.***

Some believe that this system is the simplest to understand and administer. Others think that it only seems like the simplest because of its familiarity to the American voter. It is the most traditional American system.

### History

This system of choosing leaders goes back to Greek and Roman times, and came to the United States with the British colonists. The United States, Canada, India and a host of ex-colonies, territories and dominions inherited this system from Britain.

The U.S. Constitution discusses issues concerning the right to vote, and establishes the Electoral College, but it leaves the method of voting even for federal office up to the states. In general, the states have embraced the plurality method. According to Pippa Norris in her study "Choosing Electoral Systems," only 83 out of 150 countries were found to still use this 'First Past the Post' system. Most, but not all, of those countries have come under the influence of Great Britain at some time. Many of these nations are eliminating, modifying, or critically examining this system.

### Pro

Two of the most often cited advantages of this system are its simplicity and its low administrative costs. It is also seen as a system that promotes close ties between legislator and constituency, in that the districts are relatively small and constituents know whom to contact in time of need. It promotes a two-party system, because third-party candidates rarely win -- sometimes considered a con, sometimes a pro point.

Unless a particular jurisdiction requires a runoff to obtain a majority, a runoff election is only needed in the event of a 'tie.'

Some argue that a vote for a losing candidate does not necessarily mean the voter has lost access or influence, for several reasons. **First**, most elected officials will listen to the views of citizens, especially those from their district. **Secondly**, the winning candidate does not know who voted for her, as the ballot is secret. Only when the voter has contributed money or actively campaigned for a candidate does her support become known. **Thirdly**, a strong showing by a losing candidate and her supporters can have a significant influence on subsequent legislative activity. **Fourthly**, many candidates who appear initially to hold clearly defined political positions and philosophies often discover, when they take office, that inclusiveness, compromise and conciliation are necessary to succeed in politics.

### Con

Critics believe the major failing of a plurality system is that it over-represents those who vote for the winner and under-represents those who vote for the loser. To better visualize this concept, imagine a three-person race in which the voting is close.

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Candidate A - 35% of the vote [winner]

Candidate B - 33% of the vote

Candidate C - 32% of the vote

In this scenario, a small percentage of the voters elected the winner. While no candidate received votes close to a majority, a minority of voters named the winner because their candidate received more votes than the others. We have all learned “whoever gets the most votes wins” which is true in this election system. But we have also learned ‘the majority rules’ and that is NOT true in this system.

Such distortions in the relationship between votes cast and seats won frequently take place in this system. The President of the United States has been elected by a minority of the POPULAR vote in 11 of the last 23 elections.<sup>3</sup>

Many believe it is better to have representation by someone who shares your views but may not live in your neighborhood, than simply by someone who is in your ‘neighborhood’ (district), but does not share or support any of your views or concerns. Under this system, many of us are never really represented at all because ‘our’ candidate is not electable in our district. In addition, some elections are very close, with voters on the losing side representing as many as 49.9% of the votes cast. If the losing voters are considered to have no representation, do we have democracy for winners only? Some British scholars, critics of the Single Member Plurality system, have labeled this aspect of the system as “only half a democracy.” This is the reason for referring to votes that do not elect a candidate as “wasted”. When minor party supporters feel that they have no realistic hope of electing a candidate, many may lose their incentive to vote. Even major party supporters may feel disenfranchised if they live in one of Arizona’s 26 (out of 30) “one party districts” where one party *generally* rules and the others have virtually no chance of winning. The point should be made that these districts are no more competitive than they were before independent re-districting.

Ethnic, racial minorities and women are usually underrepresented in Single Member Plurality systems. In 1992, U.S. women comprised 6% of the Senate and 10.8% of the House. The year before, in non-single member plurality countries women fared much better.<sup>4</sup> Among western democracies, the United States has one of the poorest track records for electing women to public office. It is possible that there are other explanations, such as tradition and cultural factors, for this “under representation” – aside from the plurality system. In Arizona, at this writing, there is a significant percentage of women holding statewide offices and seats in the house of representatives (50% or greater). The state senate has a far less impressive showing of female legislators. Compared to plurality systems, proportional representation systems in general tend to have a better track record in electing women, although there are notable exceptions.

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<sup>3</sup>

- 1876 Rutherford B Hayes
- 1880 James Garfield
- 1884 Grover Cleveland
- 1888 Benjamin Harrison
- 1892 Grover Cleveland
- 1912 Woodrow Wilson
- 1948 Harry S. Truman
- 1968 Richard Nixon
- 1992 Bill Clinton
- 1996 Bill Clinton
- 2000 George W. Bush

<sup>4</sup> Chart on next page.

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Because of the exaggerated results plurality elections can cause, this election method can be very unresponsive to modest shifts in public opinion. Unresponsiveness further increases public disenchantment with government.

The representativeness of policy-making bodies is one of the main claims by which democratic governments establish legitimacy and authority for their policies. When large segments of the population are severely under-represented, it erodes a perception of legitimacy.

Critics are quick to note that ‘Winner Take All’ / plurality wastes all the votes cast for the losing candidate(s) and denies representation to third parties. It also encourages gerrymandering, which in turn leads to a decline in competitive districts, often to the extent that there is only a single candidate from which to choose. In the 2000 elections, out of the 450 Congressional seats only 11% were competitive. 89% of these seats were won by a comfortable margin of 5% or more and 63 of the seats were uncontested by the other major party.

## Where Used

Plurality voting has a strong hold in the United States, India, and Canada, all of whom inherited the system from the British. Great Britain still maintains some of its elections under plurality rule.

## Supporters say

- Plurality voting provides a clear-cut choice for voters; they understand the ‘you get one vote’ concept.
- It excludes candidates from extremist parties from winning.
- It supports broad-based parties.
- It produces board-based governments.
- It provides for a stronger, more responsive government.
- It favors stability and decisiveness.
- It creates a link between the representative and the constituent.
- There are no costs for “new system” implementation.

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| Country       | Election System                  | % of Women Elected to Legislature/Parliament 1991 |
|---------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Sweden        | PR/List                          | 41%   |
| Norway        | PR/List                          | 39  |
| Finland       | PR/List                          | 39  |
| Denmark       | PR/List                          | 33  |
| Netherlands   | PR/List                          | 31  |
| Austria       | PR/List                          | 27  |
| Germany       | PR/Mixed-Member District         | 26  |
| Great Britain | Single-Member District           | 17  |
| Spain         | PR/List                          | 16  |
| United States | Single Member District Plurality | 11  |
| France        | Single Member District Plurality | 10  |

From 1991 figures in Proportional Representation: The Case for a Better Election System, by Douglas Amy, 1997.

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**Opponents say:**

- Plurality is NOT majority rule.
- It excludes minority parties from participation and representation.
- It creates “wasted” votes.
- It is not responsive to public opinion.
- It over-represents those that vote for the winner and under-represents, or excludes, those that do not.
- It may result in a winning candidate getting only a small minority of the vote. (Some candidates win due to the “spoiler effect” and have less overall support than the second-place candidate.)
- It increases strategic voting for the lesser of two evils versus ‘sincere voting’ for one’s favorite.
- It augments disenchantment with government.
- It is prone to the manipulations of gerrymandering (promoting ‘one-party districts,’ discouraging competitive districts).

**SAMPLE BALLOT**  
**Plurality**

**Directions:** Mark a cross (x) in the square to the right of your preferred candidate. You may only vote for one candidate.

This contest will have one (1) elected winner. Whoever gets the most votes wins.

|                                  |                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Wolfgang Mozart, Classical Party | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Miles Davis, Jazz Party          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bruce Springsteen, Rock Party    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dolly Parton, Country Party      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Glenn Miller, Big Band Party     | <input type="checkbox"/> |



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# ***APPROVAL VOTING***

## **Approval / Single Seat or Multi-Seat Plurality**

### **Description and Discussion**

Approval Voting is basically a ‘yea’ or ‘nay’ vote, in which you either ‘approve’ or ‘disapprove’ of each candidate in a multi-seat race, or in single seat races. Citizens can vote for, or approve of, as many candidates as they wish. Thus, if there are five candidates, running for three open seats, voters are not restricted to voting for or “approving” just three candidates. The voter may vote for as many candidates as she wants. However, only one vote can be cast for any ‘approved’ candidate. Votes cannot be cumulated nor can several votes be cast for one candidate. The winner(s) is simply the candidate(s) approved by the largest number of voters, and presumably most acceptable to the most voters. Whoever gets the most votes wins.

### **History**

Approval voting is a relative newcomer to voting systems, conceived independently by at least five different sets of people in the late 1970s. The name Approval Voting was coined by Robert J. Weber, Professor of Decision Sciences at Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University.

### **Where Used:**

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is elected via Approval Voting. In 1990 the system was used in Oregon during a statewide advisory referendum on school financing. The National Academy of Sciences, and many colleges and universities use it from the departmental level to the school-wide level. Several different scientific and engineering societies use Approval Voting as well.

### **Confusion with Judicial “Yea or Nay” Voting**

Approval voting should not be confused with a ‘yea or nay’ vote of merit selection and tenure programs used in Arizona for Supreme Court justices, appellate court judges and superior court judges.<sup>5</sup> This system is not exclusive to Arizona, and although each state may handle it a bit differently, the process of voting to retain judges is similar.<sup>6</sup> In this ‘merit selection and tenure’ program, judges are appointed for terms of specific length; at the end of their terms they may file their intent to be retained and then stand for a retention election. In the general election, the voters vote on the question "Should this judge be retained in office?" It is a Yes or No vote on each judge. Majority rules.<sup>7</sup>

At first blush, this may be interpreted as Approval voting, however there are two distinct differences:

- 1) the judges are unopposed
- 2) it is a majority vote, not plurality vote, as each judge must receive a 50% plus one approval rate to be retained. The ‘ayes’ must be more than 50%.

This yea or nay vote is less of an election and more of an affirmation. In candidate terms, the judge ‘loses’ if she gets less than a majority and is not retained. She ‘wins’ if she gets a majority approval rate.

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<sup>5</sup> The “Merit selection and tenure” system is mandated in state courts, and in the courts of counties that have populations of more than 250,000 (Maricopa and Pima). Counties with less population have the option to adopt the system. To date none have.

<sup>6</sup> In Arizona, the Judicial Performance Review (JPR) Commission studies the collective data from distributed surveys on each judge (known only by an assigned number) and makes a recommendation to the voters as to whether it feels the judge meets its criteria for retention.

Information supplied by Skeet Blakeslee, a JPR commission member

<sup>7</sup> From Article 6 Sec. 38 B. and C. of the Arizona State Constitution.

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## **Hypothetical Example for Use in Arizona**

Approval voting is not now used to elect any governmental body in Arizona, but could be readily adapted to a variety of offices. Political parties, for instance, might use approval voting in their party primaries to determine which of their candidates will run in the general election.

In the 2002 primaries there were many instances in which more than two intra-party rivals were seeking an office, thanks in part to clean elections. These included the governor, secretary of state, attorney general, state school superintendent, corporation commission, five state senate races, and all but five state representative races. Approval voting would enable a party to be certain they're running their strongest candidate in a closely contested race.

### **Supporters say:**

- Approval Voting gives the voter more flexible options than traditional types of 'First Past the Post' (FPTP) Plurality.
- Approval Voting helps elect more strongly supported candidates than FPTP.
- It reduces negative campaigning (candidate does not want to alienate a voter, and risk losing a second-place preference by attacking the voter's first choice).
- It may increase voter turnout.
- It selects candidates with more widespread support among voters.
- It gives minority candidates a better chance to garner support.
- Approval Voting is easy to administer and explain.
- It can be used for both multi-seat or single-seat races.

### **Opponents say:**

- Approval Voting does not allow ranking of candidates that other voting systems offer.
  - Approval Voting could encourage a proliferation of candidates.
  - It does not necessarily allow the majority to rule.
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# SAMPLE BALLOT

## Approval Voting

**Directions:** If you approve of a candidate, mark the APPROVE box next to their name. If you do not approve of a candidate, mark the DO NOT APPROVE box.

The candidate with the greatest number of approval votes will win the election; a majority of approvals is not necessary. Whoever gets the most votes wins.

This contest will have one (1) elected winner.

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Wolfgang Mozart<br>Classical | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve<br><input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Approve |
| Miles Davis<br>Jazz          | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve<br><input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Approve |
| Bruce Springsteen<br>Rock    | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve<br><input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Approve |
| Dolly Parton<br>Country      | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve<br><input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Approve |
| Glenn Miller<br>Big Band     | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve<br><input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Approve |

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Or can be formatted with 'Approve' vote only  
SAMPLE BALLOT 2 for **Approval Voting**

**Directions:** If you approve of a candidate, mark the APPROVE box next to their name. A blank box next to any candidate will be counted as a 'DO NOT APPROVE' vote.

The candidate with the greatest number of approval votes will win the election; a majority of approvals is not necessary. Whoever gets the most votes wins. This contest will have one (1) elected winner.

|                            |                                  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Wolfgang Mozart, Classical | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve |
| Miles Davis, Jazz          | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve |
| Bruce Springsteen, Rock    | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve |
| Dolly Parton, Country      | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve |
| Glenn Miller, Big Band     | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve |

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## **Alternative Election System - Majority for Single Seats**

A single member *majority* system is designed to ensure that the winning candidate is the one preferred by the majority of voters *OVERALL*. The winner must gain 50% plus 1 vote in a majority instead of “whoever gets the most votes wins” as the latter (plurality) may represent as little as 25, 30 or 35% of winning votes. Many cities in Arizona, and all those in Maricopa County require majority support for winning candidates, and this is achieved through a “delayed runoff” election for the top two vote getters. Since delayed runoffs are commonplace in America and ballots are no different from typically used ballots, there is no reason to detail delayed runoffs as a separate category. Arizona statewide offices, as well as the state Senate and House of Representatives are elected by a plurality, and do not require a majority vote.

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# INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING (IRV)

## Description and Discussion

Instant Runoff Voting is an alternative way of obtaining majority support for a candidate without holding an additional election. The voters are asked to rank their preferences (1, 2, 3...). A computer scans and tabulates the ballots. If no candidate has a majority on the first count, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated and the votes for her are transferred to the voters' second choices. This counting proceeds by sequentially eliminating candidates with the least number of votes and redistributing them to that voter's next choice. The process is repeated until one candidate has a winning MAJORITY.

Instant Runoff Voting is an alternative Voting System, but strictly speaking, is not **proportional**, because it is used for single seat races, such as governor, mayor, sheriff, or president. It is *not* a type of proportional representation because you cannot divide one seat. But it is a majority system wherein a winner must receive 50% plus one (1). Instant Runoff Voting creates a clear winner in just one election. (See figure A - IRV Ballot Counting Flowchart.)

**Plurality systems often result in a winner who has the *most* votes, but not necessarily 50% of the votes or the candidate with the most overall support. Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) elects a candidate with an overall majority of support.**

IRV achieves in one step what is sometimes a two-stage process, especially in areas that *require* a majority result. In many elections, the two top winners, each with less than a majority of the votes after the general election, then face each other in a runoff election at a later date. Instant Runoff Voting simulates a series of runoff elections all in one. [For a similar system in multi-seat races, see 'Single Transferable Voting.']

## The Cost Factor

Having to run a second election to determine the winner in a close race can be an unexpected and exceptional cost.<sup>8</sup> But Instant Runoff Voting is exactly that, an instant runoff where you "instantly" determine the first and second choices of the voters, so a 'delayed runoff' is not needed. Because tax dollars are already spread thin, IRV makes the expense of a second election needless.

## Pro

Advocates of IRV believe that it has three notable advantages over First-Past-The-Post /plurality voting.

**First**, the winning candidate will have support of a majority of the voters, which increases her legitimacy. It allows the person with the MOST support *overall* to win.

**Second**, IRV lets you vote for your favorite candidate, knowing that your second or third choice will be noted if necessary. This eliminates the "spoiler effect" (ensuring that an independent or a third-party candidate will not play spoiler and throw the election to the major-party candidate, who in fact was not the

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<sup>8</sup> The **Arizona 1991** Gubernatorial runoff election cost AZ taxpayers \$2.65 million. In addition, an estimated \$2.2 million were spent in the 'runoff campaign' period for candidate and political party costs. This can be a significant financial burden for candidates. The two runoff candidates in the 2002 **Scottsdale** City Council election reported to this writing committee that the additional costs of the delayed runoff were a personal strain. It costs the taxpayers \$108,900 (according to city records). In the same year, the taxpayers of Tempe paid \$88,827 and Glendale \$77,214. (For costs to 4 other Maricopa cities, see Appendix B). In early 2002, **San Francisco**, CA approved the Instant Runoff Voting system. This, after the 2001 runoff election for the City Attorney, saw a voter turnout of only 15%, and cost the San Francisco taxpayers \$2 million dollars.

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electorate's *overall* first choice). This also encourages multi-party/ multi-candidate participation as well as diversity.

**Third**, it will save taxpayers' dollars, as noted above.

It is felt that these three things will establish a more representative, responsible and fiscally-sensitive government, which will in turn **encourage voter turn out**.

## Con

The first thing most critics say of IRV is that the ballot is harder to mark than that for plurality voting, in which the voter just makes one 'X' or some equivalent one step process. [IRV offers voters the option of 'ranking' the candidates, but does not require it.] Any ballot that asks more of the voter, than the one step, can be problematic. Dovetailing with this is that IRV is more administratively complex. Critics of IRV also express doubts about the ability of voters to form second or third choices easily, especially for the lower profile elected offices.

Several candidates have expressed the concern that 'delayed runoff' elections allow candidates a "second chance" to either "re-invent" themselves or to square off more directly against their opponent.

A vital criticism that cannot be ignored is that IRV (or any of the other alternative voting methods) is not easily done with older 'out-of-date' voting equipment. The cost of upgrading these systems can be substantial, although the cost of any voting discrepancies (as in the Florida 2000 presidential election) can run the risk of costing more than the upgrade, as well as facing possible lawsuit costs.

Arizona has five counties (including Maricopa) that use optical-scan voting, and 10 that still use punch card systems. According to the Secretary of State's office, the 10 now utilizing punch card systems "will be going to optical scan by the 2004 elections if the counties involved can get funding in their budgets." There is no information as to whether they will find that funding or not.

## Where used

Instant runoff voting is used in many of the world's modern democracies and is being considered in numerous U.S. states.

In 1998, the Instant Runoff Vote was approved as a voting option for Santa Clara County, California and the following year as an option for City Council elections in Vancouver, Washington. In Louisiana it has been adopted for overseas ballots and in Utah it is now implemented by the Republican Party. (The League of Women Voters in both Washington state and various areas of California have studied IRV and reached positive consensus to support it.)

In early 2002, the voters in San Francisco ushered in IRV for all its city elections.

During early 2002, a total of 56 towns in Vermont voted on a NON-BINDING advisory question regarding majority rule and IRV elections.<sup>9</sup> This question passed in 53 of the 56 towns (95%) by huge margins. However, at this writing, the legislature has not taken action on the bill. Supporters there, including the LWV, plan to make the bill a campaign issue, and to push for adoption in the next session. [The bill (S.94) would cover ALL statewide elections from U.S. President down to Auditor of Accounts.] But to date, it is a victory of momentum and public awareness, but not of implementation. However, the Vermont Secretary of State, Deborah Markowitz, has developed IRV ballots for use in Vermont. In addition, she has prepared an on-line, short guide to IRV, which can be viewed at <http://Vermont-elections.org/elections1/IRV>.

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<sup>9</sup> The question read as follows...

"Shall the legislature be urged to change Vermont's voting law for statewide elections, which currently can result in no candidate receiving a majority and thus the selection of a governor by the legislature instead of the voters; and replace it with a system that allows voters to rank their choices so that, without the need for a separate runoff election, the candidate preferred by a majority of voters is elected?"

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In August 2002, as a result of an initiative, Alaskans voted on a statewide IRV system (Ballot Measure 1). It marked the first time that U.S. voters had a chance to implement an alternative voting system which would apply to all primary, regular and special elections for the election to the state legislature, for the offices of President and Vice-President and for members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. The initiative was defeated by 37% to 63%.

Interestingly, Arizona Senator John McCain supported the Alaskan ballot measure and made the following comments regarding IRV.<sup>10</sup>

- *I have worked to open up the political process for all Americans. [IRV is a] fairer voting method.*
- *[IRV would] create good government because it would help elect candidates with a majority of support from the voters.*
- *Elected leaders would be more likely to listen to all [citizens].*
- *IRV helps majority rule.*
- *It is a big tax savings.*

IRV is used most often in countries with parliamentary governments such as Ireland, New South Wales and Australia, where it is used in the Lower House. London has now elected a new mayor for the first time using a form of IRV, and provided a major upset by electing an Independent.

## **Hypothetical Example for Use in Arizona**

Instant runoff voting could be used in any race for office contested by more than two candidates. Many of Arizona's municipalities already conduct runoff elections and would save money if they could determine a winner within a single election. Candidates for those offices would avoid the cost of having to run a second runoff campaign.

Arizonans have learned that runoff elections for statewide office can be expensive. In 1988 voters passed a referendum requiring runoff elections for state executive offices. But when the ensuing runoff for governor in 1990 ran up a tab of \$2,650,000.<sup>11</sup> Voters had second thoughts, and in 1992 repealed the measure.

If instant runoff voting had been used instead, Arizonans could have retained a system that ensured **majority** support for statewide officeholders without incurring exorbitant costs.

With the advent of public financing, state offices contested by just the two major parties have become something of a rarity. Without a runoff provision in place for these offices, the outcome of many races might be determined by the participation of third party or independent candidates as so-called spoilers.

## **Supporters say**

- Instant Runoff Voting is more equitable in that it gives voters a chance to have a second or third choice candidate win, rather than just discarding their votes and having a candidate with a small percentage win.
- You are assured of having a candidate who is approved by 50% + of the voters - **OVERALL**.

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<sup>10</sup> Senator McCain's comments can be heard on-line at [www.fairvote.org](http://www.fairvote.org) the website of Center for Voting and Democracy.

<sup>11</sup> Cost of election supplied by the AZ Research Library. Figures taken from the Joint Legislature Budget Committee, Appropriations Report/ Actual for fiscal year 1991 (time of runoff).

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- It gives third parties a chance to vote their first choice, rather than “spoil” the chances of their second choice.
  - It saves money because it doesn’t require a second election for ties.
  - Instant Runoff Voting provides the option for municipalities or school boards to adopt the alternative voting system upon local approval.
  - It promotes more issue-oriented campaigns because candidates will try to be 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice, if not first.
  - It reduces the problem of voters splitting their votes between two very similar candidates.

### **Opponents say**

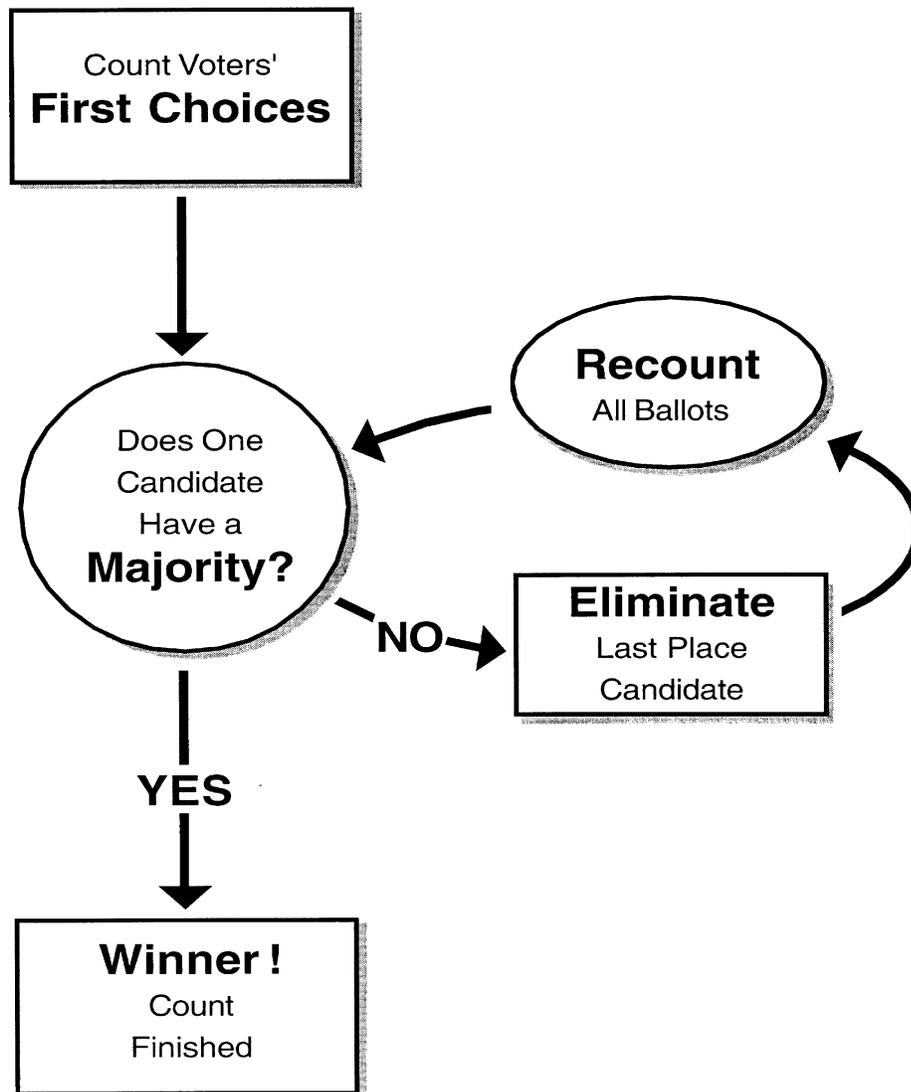
- It is only used in single seat elections. (See ‘Single Transferable Voting’ for multi-seat races.)
  - IRV does not allow the voter extended time to understand the candidates’ positions.
  - It would have to either be approved by the legislature or by voter initiative and with significant cooperation from the Secretary of State and County Recorders to put system in place.
  - It would have an initial cost to establish and would be too difficult to implement with out-dated voting equipment.
  - It is more complicated than Plurality Voting.
  - It could aid in electing candidates outside the two major parties (seen as destabilizing).
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Figure A **IRV Flowchart**

# Instant Runoff Voting

## Ballot Count Flow Chart



In each round, your ballot counts for your favorite candidate who is still in the race.

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# SAMPLE BALLOT

## Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)

**Directions:** Rank your favorite candidates.

Vote for your preferred candidate under the 1<sup>st</sup> choice column.

If you wish, you may also indicate one 2<sup>nd</sup> choice and one 3<sup>rd</sup> choice candidate under the corresponding columns. You can only vote for each candidate ONCE.

*Marking a second or third choice (in case your first choice is eliminated in a runoff) cannot help defeat your first choice candidate.*

This contest will have only one (1) elected winner.

Winning requires majority support (50% plus one).

|                              | <b>1<sup>st</sup><br/>Choice</b> | <b>2<sup>nd</sup><br/>Choice</b> | <b>3<sup>rd</sup><br/>Choice</b> |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Wolfgang Mozart<br>Classical | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| Miles Davis<br>Jazz          | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| Bruce Springsteen<br>Rock    | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| Dolly Parton<br>Country      | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| Glenn Miller,<br>Big Band    | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |



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“The right of voting for representation is the primary right  
by which other rights are protected.”

Thomas Paine

## Semi-Proportional and Proportional Systems

### Semi-Proportional Systems

Cumulative and Limited Voting are examples of semi-proportional systems, variants of multi-member plurality elections. Semi-proportional systems are designed to enable minor parties and minority candidates or views to win some representation. Often these systems succeed in ensuring some representation for the second largest party, but do not allow a full range of minority political groups to be elected. In the United States, Cumulative Voting is discussed more than Limited Voting, the other form of semi-proportional representation. They are considered semi-proportional because, while they are more **likely** to give a proportional outcome than ‘winner take all’ elections, they are not guaranteed to do so.

## CUMULATIVE VOTING

### Description and Discussion

Cumulative Voting is a semi-proportional system used in multi-member districts or at-large elections. Candidates run in multi-member districts and voters have as many votes as there are seats. Voters cast their votes for individual candidates and the winners are the ones with the most votes. The major difference between common plurality systems and CV is that voters can “cumulate” or combine their votes, instead of just having to cast one vote for one candidate. In other words, voters can distribute their votes among candidates in any way they prefer, which is unique to Cumulative Voting. Voters are generally given as many votes as there are seats. In a five-seat district they may choose to cast one vote for each of the 5 candidates, or all five votes for one, or any combination thereof.<sup>12</sup> Any candidate garnering  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the votes gains a seat.

The cumulative vote is designed to make it difficult for one party to win all the seats in an election district, and therefore reduces the power of the dominant party. ***To be successful in electing a particular candidate, strategic planning is required by the candidates and voters.*** For example, if a minority group has enough support to win two seats, but casts most of its votes for the same favored candidate, they may win only one seat. Another possible scenario could be that although they only have enough support to elect one candidate, they may not elect any if they split their votes among several rivals. Thus, if they don’t vote strategically, voters can end up either under- or over-represented. One of the main purposes of this system is to elect minority candidates in a situation where that may not be possible with plurality voting.

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<sup>12</sup> For example, in an election with five (5) open seats, the voter may divide her five votes as she pleases, giving all to one candidate or giving 2.5 to two, or 3 to one candidate and two to another or any other way she wishes, depending on the number of candidates she chooses to support. Some CV elections do not allow fractional votes, but only whole number votes, in this case, a vote of 2.5 would not be allowed. Whole number elections would demand 3 votes to one candidate and 2 to the other candidate, who is assumed to be your lesser choice.

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## History

Cumulative voting has some history in the United States. The State of Illinois used cumulative voting for 110 years to elect its House of Representatives. In a move to economize, voters passed a measure in 1980 that reduced the size of the legislature and at the same time formed single member districts. A campaign is currently underway to restore the old system. In recent years it has been seen as a solution to racially gerrymandered districts that are now finding disfavor in the courts.

## Pro

Proponents of Cumulative Voting see it as an especially effective way to ensure minor party representation. Many also believe that it can increase the chances for racial and ethnic minorities to win representation and thus see it as the best alternative to race- and ethnic-conscious districting. CV also discourages all forms of gerrymandering.

## Con

A large number of candidates, especially in the primary election, can overwhelm citizens' ability to make rational choices. Critics of cumulative voting argue that, in areas where CV has been used, party control over candidate selection can be greater than meets the eye. They also contend that the actual act of voting is too complicated for many voters.

## Where Used

Today Cumulative Voting is used in at least 17 cities, counties or school districts. In 1987 a group in Alamogordo, New Mexico went to court citing violation of the Voting Rights Act, asking for cumulative voting instead of plurality.<sup>13</sup> Texas currently leads the nation with the use of CV in 52 school districts, cities, county commissions or hospital districts.<sup>14</sup> Other cities in Alabama have also used CV with apparently successful results in getting minorities elected. It currently is not used in any country outside the United States.

## Hypothetical Example for Use in Arizona

Arizona currently utilizes 30 two-member districts to elect its 60 state representatives, and also elects a single state senator from these same districts. The entire legislature serves for two-year terms. In the 2001-2002 legislature, only six of these districts were shared between a Democrat and Republican representative; the remaining 24 were single-party districts. The system gives a powerful edge to the dominant party in a district, and isolates many voters into all Democrat, mostly urban, or all Republican, mostly rural or suburban districts.

Cumulative voting could not really be applied to these house districts as currently drawn, but would prove an interesting adaptation if the districts were hypothetically parried into 20 three-member districts (or 15 four-member districts). Under this setup a voter would cast three (or in the latter example four) votes, equal to the number of seats to be filled, just as they now cast two in our current system. The difference with cumulative voting is that a voter may cast all of her/his votes for a single candidate, or spread them among the candidates.

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<sup>13</sup> The intent was to provide minorities an opportunity to be elected by eliminating single seat districting, and allowing minority voters to cumulate their votes for minority candidates.

<sup>14</sup> A recent example of CV being the result of court orders or settlements of civil rights suits came in Amarillo, Texas. The Amarillo Independent School District, despite a sizable minority population, had not elected an Hispanic since 1984, and had never elected a Black to its board. Using cumulative voting for the first time in May 2000, to settle a pending lawsuit, two of the four board positions were filled by racial minorities, one Black, one Hispanic. The election also dramatically increased voter participation from 3.4% in 1998 to 12.7%, supporting the contention that increasing voter choices stimulates more voter participation.

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The likely effect of this cumulative vote would be to produce a legislature less weighted toward the largest party. Voters in this system would also be more likely to live in a district where at least one of the house members represented their views. A four-member district cumulative system would probably be able to elect at least some third party or independent representatives in some locales.

### **Supporters say**

- Cumulative Voting is a semi-proportional system that meets most court ordered requirements where a current voting system has been ruled in violation of the Voting Rights Act.
- It has been successful in electing minority candidates.
- It is a fairly simple system.
- It is usable in an at-large election.
- It will give more diverse representation than plurality.
- It will give voters more flexibility in selecting candidates.

### **Opponents say**

- It allows for block voting, which can be viewed as “stacking the deck.”
  - It may be viewed as unfair by some voters, in that ‘strategic’ voting can be seen as manipulative.
  - It tends toward divisiveness among candidates.
  - It wastes more votes than other proportional systems.
  - It’s like affirmative action for voting.
  - It is prone to a skewed outcome when groups run the wrong number of candidates.
  - It is not free from possible distortions of the spoiler effect.
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# SAMPLE BALLOT

## Cumulative

**Directions:** You have three (3) votes to use in this contest, and can use them in whatever way you wish, by placing an cross (x) under appropriate columns.

You may use your three votes on three separate candidates, use all three for one candidate, or give one candidate two votes and another one vote.

This contest will have three (3) elected winners.

|                              | <b>1<sup>st</sup><br/>Vote</b> | <b>2<sup>nd</sup><br/>Vote</b> | <b>3<sup>rd</sup><br/>Vote</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Wolfgang Mozart<br>Classical | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       |
| Miles Davis<br>Jazz          | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       |
| Bruce Springsteen<br>Rock    | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       |
| Dolly Parton<br>Country      | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       |
| Glenn Miller,<br>Big Band    | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>       |

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# LIMITED VOTING

## Description and Discussion

Limited Voting is another semi-proportional system that uses multi-member districts or at-large districts. In this system the voter is “limited” as to the number of votes she may cast –allowed fewer than the number of seats being contested. For example, in a race where there are five open seats, the voter may be allotted only three votes.)<sup>15</sup> Unlike its semi-proportional relative, Cumulative Voting, voters may not cast more than one vote per candidate. Ballots are counted in the same way as plurality voting – whoever gets the most votes wins.

The system is designed to keep the dominant party or group from capturing all the seats in an at-large election. Another variant of this system used in partisan elections is to limit the number of candidates running, i.e. a party must run fewer candidates than there are open seats. In either case the outcome is the same: the system makes it impossible for the largest party or interest group to elect all the representatives.

The greater the difference between the number of votes allotted and the number of seats, the greater the opportunities for more diverse representation.

## History

In the United States, this system grew out of the Civil War, when it was feared that one party would dominate the elections. It was used in Spain and Portugal in the 19th and early 20th centuries and in parts of the United Kingdom in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Pro

As in cumulative voting, Limited Voting’s strongest attribute is that it is easy to explain. Local governments tend to feel less threatened by the system since it usually reinforces the two party system.

## Con

Limited Voting would have a weakening effect on slate politics, as one voter could not simply cast votes for a full slate of candidates. This might encourage voting across a diverse spectrum of candidates.

Limited Voting is only semi-proportional in that it is not immune to distorted results when votes are split among close rivals. Like Cumulative Voting, it requires the same kind of strategic voting and strategic managing of the number of candidates running to ensure a proportional outcome.

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<sup>15</sup> As an actual example: in the Pennsylvania election of three (3) county commissioners, two (2) votes are allowed. In the election of the seven (7) members of the Philadelphia City Council, voters are allowed five (5) votes.

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## Where Used

In Connecticut, all local governments elected at large use Limited Voting. It's also used in Washington DC, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Alabama, Georgia, New York, and North Carolina <sup>16</sup>

## Hypothetical Example for Use in Arizona

Many of Maricopa County's cities use nonpartisan at-large elections, including Gilbert, Chandler, Scottsdale, Paradise Valley, and Tempe. Phoenix, Glendale, Mesa, and Peoria use districts. All but Phoenix elect six council members to staggered, 4-year terms. Phoenix elects eight.

As an example, if Chandler wanted to use limited voting for its city council races, it could simply instruct its voters to cast one vote for city council instead of three for the three seats open. The three candidates who receive the most votes win, just as happens now. But the system would better enable a minority grouping to gain a seat. In this particular example, any candidate who can garner more than 25% of the votes can be elected to office.

## Supporters say

- Limited Voting is a simple, easily understood system, and close to Plurality in method.
- Cost to implement would be small, as it is counted basically in the same way as Plurality.
- It offers minorities a better chance to get elected.
- It offers more proportionality than plurality.
- It can be used in multi-member/at-large elections.
- It has enjoyed very broad use in United States.

## Opponents say

- LV encourages bullet voting, which can be perceived as unfair and manipulative.
- It is an imperfect system for securing minority representation and doesn't guarantee that each group or party will be fully represented in proportion to its voting strength.
- Voters may be dissatisfied in being "limited" in their votes compared to the number of open seats.

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<sup>16</sup> The Federal Court ordered Limited Voting in *McGhee v. Granville County*, (the county in North Carolina proposed a Single Member District solution). However, in *Thomburg v. Gingles*, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the district courts and ordered the acceptance of Single Member Districts and held that the County's proposed remedy, which "provided the maximum remedy possible by redistricting" was a legally adequate remedy.

A similar decision was reached by the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit's decision in *McNeil v Springfield*, Illinois, which held that minority plaintiffs have no claim unless they are sufficiently numerous and compact to constitute the majority of the electorate in a single-member district. More lately, according to one League study, courts have steered away from Single Member Districts and been more in favor of Cumulative or Limited Voting.

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# SAMPLE BALLOT

## Limited

**Directions:** You have two (2) votes. Mark a cross (x) in the square to the right of your one OR two preferred candidate(s). **You may NOT give two votes to one candidate.**

Though this contest will have three elected winners, **you many only vote for two candidates.**

This contest will have three (3) elected winners. Vote for two (2).

|                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Wolfgang Mozart, Classical | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Miles Davis, Jazz          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bruce Springsteen, Rock    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dolly Parton, Country      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Glenn Miller, Big Band     | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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# Basis of Proportional Representation (PR)

Proportional Representation (PR) is a democratic system in which groups of voters with similar interests gain representation in “proportion” to their voting strength.

The rationale underpinning all proportional voting systems is to give all people a voice in their government based on their proportion of the voting population. It translates the share of votes from a group with similar interests and views into a corresponding proportion of seats in a House of Representatives, Council or Board. This group may (but need not necessarily) be represented as a ‘party.’ Any group winning 30% of the votes would win approximately 30% of the seats.

There are several methods of conducting these elections. We will describe the three major ones: Party List, Mixed Member and Single Transferable Vote. All apply to multi-member elected bodies rather than single member (single seat) offices. The greater the number of seats, the more accurately the election outcome will mirror the political makeup of the community.

PR systems generally tend to be friendlier than other systems to minority parties. They also waste fewer votes and afford better representation of racial, ethnic, and gender minorities. The districts tend to be more competitive, and representation of diverse interests in the legislature is relatively good. PR systems also reduce gerrymandering and encourage greater discussion of issues in campaigns.

Among advanced western democracies, proportional representation (PR) has become the predominant system. In Western Europe, for example, 21 of the 28 countries use PR. These include Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

The social, economic and political context for the adoption of PR is critical for understanding its electoral outcomes in American cities. The idea of proportional representation is rooted in late eighteenth century debates about democracy. In both the United States and France, revolution was in the air, and ideas about voting and representation emerged from resistance to reigning oligarchies. Popular demands for participation in governance stimulated fears that majority tyranny would replace the tyranny of the minority. French political theorists and mathematicians such as Mirabeau, Condorcet, and Saint Just<sup>17</sup> supported voting systems to combat tyranny. Saint Just understood that suffrage was the key to democracy, and that different methods of casting votes would have different consequences. They developed a variety of electoral systems that would produce majority rule but would also ensure minority representation.

*[I]t is a weak point in the theory of representative government  
as now organized and administered,  
that a large portion of the voting people are permanently disenfranchised.”*  
James Garfield (1881)

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<sup>17</sup> Barber, Kathleen L. “The True Experience of PR in American Cities” (Also author of “A Right to Representation: Proportional Election Systems for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”)

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# PARTY-LIST VOTING

## Description and Discussion

As a ‘fully’ proportional representation system, Party List Voting differs from the previously discussed ‘semi’ proportional systems. In Party-List voting, legislators are elected in large, multi-member districts. Each political party develops a slate of candidates equal to the number of seats the party expects to fill. [In countries where this is currently used, independent candidates can also run, and they are listed separately on the ballot as if they were their own party.] On the ballot, voters indicate their preference for a particular party and the parties then receive seats in proportion to their share of the vote. So, if a political party (or group) wins 30 percent of the vote, it should receive 30 percent of the seats. In a five-member district, if the Democrats win 40 percent of the vote, they would win two of five seats.

There are two types: “Closed List” and “Open List.” They determine whether or not the voter may change the order of the candidates on the party-developed list. The Open-List simply means the voter is ‘open’ to choosing their favorite candidate on the slate, and thus perhaps not the first choice of the party members. This option is ‘closed’ to voters in a Closed-List system. That is, winning candidates are selected in the exact order that the parties put them on the list. [In some countries, the voters help determine the order of the ‘closed list’ during primary elections.] The Closed-List system maximizes party control that results in strong candidate adherence to party platforms and positions.

If the Open List is used, when ballots are counted, the most popular candidates will move up to the top of the party list, increasing the likelihood of their winning a seat — which still depends on the percent of the vote their party received. For example, if the Democrats win two of five seats, and Joe and Mary receive the most Democratic votes, Joe and Mary are elected.

## History

Party List systems have roots in Western European countries where they were established as a way to implement a proportional representation system. Since proportional representation operates on a simple principle that the number of seats a political party or group wins should be in proportion to the support it garnered among voters, smaller interest groups could garner some representation.

Some countries require a party to receive a minimum percentage of the vote in order to win any seats (generally between 1.5% - 10%), but other countries do not require any minimum. No minimum encourages the largest number of parties; higher minimums are intended to discourage radical or fringe parties.

## Pro

This system minimizes election costs, for both the candidates and the administrators and causes campaigns to focus more on policy issues and less on individual personalities. Parties usually construct their candidate lists to represent the broad electorate (including women and minority groups) in order to assure their slate has the widest possible appeal.

Voters are often willing to vote for a party ‘platform’ even if the party does not include their favorite candidate. The Party List system makes for strong and stable parties, as well as greater party distinctiveness from one another. Supporters feel that both open and closed lists have an advantage; Closed Lists encourage parties to select diverse candidates, while Open Lists give more power to voters. In response to critics who say it weakens

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the relationship between local legislators and constituency, supporters say it is better to have someone who represents your ideas but doesn't live in your area, than to have a neighborhood representative who does not represent your ideas at all.

## **Con**

On the other hand, the Party List method can encourage a multi-party system, which is unwelcome to those who support and favor the 'two-party system.' Some critics feel that with a multi-party (and multi-member district) system, which allows seats to go to smaller parties, these small parties can have too much power and get too many concessions. This is particularly true of parliamentary-style governments (without a separate executive branch). If the multi-member districts become too large, it weakens the relationship between legislators and their constituency. 'Open lists' also can become highly complicated and can intensify intra-party rivalries, since candidates often end up campaigning against other candidates of the same party. Unwieldy Party List systems can foster unstable legislative coalitions and manipulative gridlock.

## **Where used**

Many European countries such as Norway, France, Spain, Belgium, Denmark and Israel use the Party List as well as some African countries, most recently South Africa.

Most European democracies now use the open list form of party voting.

## **Hypothetical Example for Use in Arizona**

Party list systems, while popular abroad, have less adaptability here in the United States. A party list system could potentially be applied to the state senate. Such a system might retain house elections as is, but instead of a direct senate vote, merely ask voters electing house representatives to indicate party preference for the senate. This could be an interesting way to provide balance for an arguably redundant house-senate system that is currently weighted toward the dominant party, and would give smaller parties a proportional share of senate seats.

## **Supporters say**

- Party List Voting is the easiest of the Proportional Representation systems to explain (based on the idea that it is so common in European countries).
- It makes for stable party control and adherence to party platforms.
- It allows smaller parties to garner some representation.
- It reduces campaigning costs.
- It encourages a focus on issues.
- It is easy to administer.
- It encourages diversification within parties in order to enjoy the widest public appeal.

## **Opponents say**

- If there is no minimum percentage on how many votes a party must receive, there could be too many parties to deal with and a less stable government.
  - Party List gives parties too much control over the political process (especially 'Closed-List' type).
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- It encourages too strict of an adherence to the party platform.
- It encourages a multi-party system, which some critics view as unstable.
- It discourages independent candidates.
- Fringe or extreme parties can get too much control.
- It works better in multi-member districts, and as such would involve a good deal of effort to implement.
- It can encourage intra-party squabbles.
- It weakens the relationship between legislators and constituency.

## SAMPLE BALLOT

### Party-List (Closed)

**Directions:** Vote for one Party by marking a cross (x) in the square above the party's name. Please vote for ONLY ONE (1) party.

Each party's candidates are listed below in order of rank within the party. Each party will receive the percentage of legislative seats that corresponds to the percentage of the vote that they win. (1/8<sup>th</sup> of the vote is needed to win a seat)

There will be eight (8) elected winners in this contest.

|  |   |  |  |   |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/>                               | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| Classical<br>Party                                     | Jazz<br>Party   | Rock<br>Party  | Country<br>Party   | Big Band<br>Party   |
| Wolfgang Mozart<br>Ludwig van Beethoven<br>Franz Haydn | Miles Davis<br>Ella Fitzgerald<br>Charlie Parker<br>Nina Simone | Bruce Springsteen<br>Jimi Hendrix<br>Janis Joplin,<br>Jim Morrison<br>Jethro Tull<br>Richie Havens<br>Van Morrison | Dolly Parton<br>Garth Brooks<br>Reba McEntire<br>George Strait<br>Vince Gill | Glenn Miller<br>Artie Shaw<br>Duke Ellington<br>Benny Goodman<br>Tommy Dorsey<br>Cab Calloway |

**Examples:**

- 1) Big Band wins 50% of vote, Jazz wins 50%.

The results in the legislature: Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Miles Davis, Ella Fitzgerald, Charlie Parker and Nina Simone.

- 2) Big Bands wins 25% of vote, Jazz wins 25%, Classical 25%, Rock 12.5%, County 12.5%

The results in the legislature: Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw, Miles Davis, Ella Fitzgerald, Wolfgang Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, Bruce Springsteen, Dolly Parton.



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# SAMPLE BALLOT

## Party-List (Open)

**Directions:** Vote for ONE candidate by marking a cross (x) in the square left of the candidate's name. **This is an automatic vote for the party of that candidate as well.**

Vote for ONLY ONE (1) candidate.

Each party will receive the percentage of legislative seats that corresponds to the percentage of the vote that their party members win. ( $1/8^{\text{th}}$  of the vote is needed to win a seat) The candidate with the most votes in each party will be the first party candidate for inclusion in the legislature. Similarly, if that party wins more than one seat, ranking will proceed based on votes garnered.

There will be eight (8) elected winners in this contest. Vote for one (1).

|                          | <b>Classical</b><br>Party |                          | <b>Jazz</b><br>Party |                          | <b>Rock</b><br>Party |                          | <b>Country</b><br>Party |                          | <b>Big Band</b><br>Party |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wolfgang Mozart           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Miles Davis          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bruce Springsteen    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dolly Parton            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Glenn Miller             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ludwig van Beethoven      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ella Fitzgerald      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Jimi Hendrix         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Garth Brooks            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Artie Shaw               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Franz Haydn               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Charlie Parker       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Janis Joplin         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reba McEntire           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Duke Ellington           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Nina Simone          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Jim Morrison         | <input type="checkbox"/> | George Strait           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Benny Goodman            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Jethro Tull          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Vince Gill              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tommy Dorsey             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Richie Havens        | <input type="checkbox"/> |                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cab Calloway             |
|                          |                           |                          |                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Van Morrison         |                          |                         |                          |                          |

Example: Winners, each with an  $1/8^{\text{th}}$  of the vote: Wolfgang Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, Jimi Hendrix, Garth Brooks, George Strait, Duke Ellington, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman. The 8 seats are distributed as follows:

|           |         |      |        |         |         |
|-----------|---------|------|--------|---------|---------|
| Classical | 2 seats | Rock | 1 seat | Country | 2 seats |
| Big Bands | 3 seats | Jazz | 0 seat |         |         |



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# MIXED MEMBER SYSTEM

## Description and Discussion

The Mixed Member system is also a proportional representation system. It is an interesting modification on the straight party lists that most European nations use.<sup>18</sup> It is used to elect members to a large representative body in a relatively proportional manner while at the same time preserving the concept of a local representative. This hybrid ballot allows you to vote your favorite candidate to win your district, but it also lets you designate your party preference.

Say, for instance, that your elected body is 100 seats. A certain percentage, e.g. 60%, has been designated to be elected directly in single member districts; the remaining 40 seats will be filled from the party lists to make the final outcome proportional.

The 'MIXED' description comes from the two parts of the vote. The election for the candidate in your area is basically a single-member plurality vote. This is then 'mixed' or balanced by a party list election, which is then used to restore proportionality.<sup>19</sup>

## History

Generally attributed to Germany.

## Pro

The Mixed Member system uses qualities from both the single member plurality simplicity and the proportional representation benefits from the Party List system. This allows parties too small to win in district-based elections, to win their share of the seats. This is particularly important to groups who have a large, but geographically dispersed population. (See other PROs similar to those listed under Party List and Plurality systems.)

## Con

Critics say that while the ballot may be easy enough to understand, the tabulation of votes is not. Because of this, it may have the appearance of manipulation by parties. Using plurality voting for the candidate-elected

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<sup>18</sup> Also called the Additional Member System, or the German System. It is sometimes described as a combination of the Single Member Plurality and Party List.

<sup>19</sup> In this example there are 100 seats open for a fictional legislature. (We used 100 to make the number of votes and percentages the same, and easier to understand calculations.) 50 seats will be elected from single member districts (local candidates), the other 50 seats will be from the Party List.

| Party Name   | Elected by District | Elected from Party List | % of Total Vote for Party |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Republican   | 35                  | 10                      | 45                        |
| Democrat     | 15                  | 20                      | 35                        |
| Libertarian  | 0                   | 10                      | 10                        |
| Greens       | 0                   | 5                       | 5                         |
| Reform Party | 0                   | 5                       | 5                         |
|              | 50 seats            | 50 seats                | 100 seats                 |

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seats can still leave some feeling unrepresented in their own locales. (See other CONs similar to those listed under Party List and Plurality systems.)

### **Where Used**

Germany uses this mixed-member system. New Zealand adopted this system in 1996. It is also used in Bolivia, Mexico, Venezuela, Hungary, Italy and in Japan. The Italian system is not very proportional since only 25% of the seats come from a party list. The most recent adopters of this system were Scotland and Wales.

### **Hypothetical Example for Use in Arizona**

Arizona could use a mixed member proportional system in conjunction with the 30 legislative districts it currently has. Each district already has two house seats. If the first seat was elected by whomever gets the most votes in a district, the second seat could be reserved to obtain overall statewide party proportionality.

Voters would choose 30 legislators directly, and then indicate their party preference. Thus if Libertarians won no local district seats, but obtained 5% of the party preference vote, three house seats would be awarded to Libertarian candidates. If Democrats won only 20 district seats, but comprised 40% of the party tally, they would be awarded four more seats for a total of 40%.

### **Supporters say**

- Mixed Member combines advantages of two different systems; offering local and party representation.
- It maintains a relationship between local legislator and constituency.
- It promotes representation to populations large in size, but geographically dispersed.
- It maintains strong parties and encourages adherence to party platforms.
- It allows smaller parties to garner some representation.
- It reduces campaigning costs.
- It encourages a focus on issues.
- It encourages party diversification to enjoy widest public appeal.

### **Opponents say**

- While the ballot is easy, explanation and calculations of Mixed Member vote allocation is not.
  - It is difficult to administer.
  - If there is no minimum percentage on how many votes a party must receive, there could be too many parties to deal with and a less stable government might result.
  - Smaller parties can get too much control.
  - It can encourage intra-party squabbles, although less problematic than Party List Systems.
  - It relies too heavily on plurality election of local candidates.
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# SAMPLE BALLOT

## Mixed Member

**Directions:** You have two (2) votes. Vote once by marking a cross (x) in the square next to the preferred candidates name; vote a second time for the preferred party.

Candidate vote - is to elect a local district representative.

Party vote - is to elect party representatives for the larger representative body.

This contest will have one (1) winner for each district and a predetermined percentage of at-large party seats (ex. 50% or 25%).

### Vote for one (1) District Candidate

|                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Wolfgang Mozart, Classical | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Miles Davis, Jazz          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bruce Springsteen, Rock    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dolly Parton, Country      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Glenn Miller, Big Band     | <input type="checkbox"/> |

AND

### Vote for one (1) Party

|           |                          |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| Classical | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Jazz      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rock      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Country   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Big Band  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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“The fact that a man is to vote forces him to think”

John Jay Chapman

*It forces a Woman also.*

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# SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE (STV) <sup>20</sup>

## Description and Discussion

The Single Transferable Voting (STV) System is also known as Preference voting, or Choice Voting and is credited as being one of the purest types of Proportional Representation. The steps for completing the STV ballot are identical to the ones for Instant Runoff Voting (IRV). You pick your first, second and following choices, if desired. As with IRV, the votes are transferable, hence the name Single Transferable Vote. While the ballot looks similar to the voter, the tabulation of votes is slightly different. STV is not used for single member districts (like IRV), but instead designed for multi-seat races, such as city councils, legislature, school boards, or any election for more than one seat.

STV is a Proportional system, which attempts to elect a legislative body that reflects the general voting population. The greater the number of seats open, the more diverse the elected body.

First developed in the 1800s, today Single Transferable Voting is not a single system but rather a variety of closely related systems. The basic design is that the voter marks the ballot with her preferences in numerical order (number 1 as first choice, 2 as second and so on). It is easy to vote, but a bit more difficult to describe the counting process.

## The Counting Process

Historically STV elections have been the most arduous to administer. Computer programs have reduced the time necessary for counting the ballots from days to minutes. The exact number of votes necessary for a candidate to win a seat (the threshold) will depend on how many people vote and how many candidates are to be elected. The more seats that are open, the smaller a percentage of votes each candidate will need to win.<sup>21</sup>

The counting process takes place in several steps. Any candidate whose votes reach or exceed the threshold is elected. As with IRV tabulation, the system relies on sequential elimination of the least successful candidates and the recasting of those votes toward those voters' next preference. Votes in excess of the threshold for winning candidates are also recast to ensure proportionality.<sup>22</sup>

There are several different ways the vote transfer can occur.<sup>23</sup>

## History

The Single Transferable Vote is a system of preference voting first developed by Thomas Hare in 19<sup>th</sup> century England. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a wave of interest in proportional representation

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<sup>20</sup> Also, known as Choice or Preference voting.

<sup>21</sup> For example, candidates running in a four-seat district will need a little less than 1/4 of the vote to win a seat. Candidates in a nine-seat district will need a little less than 1/9 of the vote to win.

<sup>22</sup> Votes labeled as excess or 'surplus' are the votes *beyond* what the winner needed to win. While these are considered 'wasted' votes, this latter term more often refers to votes wasted on a candidate with no chance of winning a seat.

<sup>23</sup> System 1. Top to bottom: votes from candidates who are declared elected are redistributed to the remaining candidates according to their second choice.

- a) "surplus" votes (i.e. over and above quota) are transferred, or
- b) all of winners' votes are distributed proportionally, over and above what was needed.

System 2. Bottom up: In this case the candidate with the fewest number of votes is declared a loser, and her votes are redistributed up. This continues until all seats are filled.

System 3. Alternating: first recount goes from the winning candidate's surplus, next from the losing candidate's wasted votes.

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in the U.S., and nearly two dozen cities from New York to Sacramento adopted STV for many years. STV elections were used in 22 cities in the United States. Most of these reverted to Single Member Plurality systems since the 1940s, for several reasons. In a curious case of omission and neglect their history was lost for decades. The reasons for the defeat of STV would be viewed as dubious today. Only in Cambridge, Massachusetts have council elections by PR survived.

In the segregated America of the 1940s, minority representation in cities using STV was increasing to the point where a black mayor was about to be elected in Cincinnati, and racial prejudice was key to the systems defeat there. Meanwhile, in New York City, STV helped elect two Communist Party members to city government and the red baiting of the McCarthy era led to its demise there. In both cases there was strong opposition from the Democrat and Republican parties who under STV lost power, particularly in the nomination process.

Previously, several of the cities had adopted STV along with the City Manager form of government in the 1920s-1930s. When these cities later changed to a Mayor-Council form of government, STV was dropped without much thought.

## **Pro**

Of the various forms of Proportional Representation, Single Transferable Voting (STV) is considered the purest. STV is one of the most sophisticated electoral systems in use today. It can be used for partisan or non-partisan elections. It ensures that the elected body is as diverse as the electorate. It most closely mirrors the wishes of the total population, and thus preserves majority rule. As “districts” do not influence the outcome, it is free from the taint of gerrymandering, allowing voters to choose their own philosophically-based “districts.” Since the focus is on the candidate rather than a party, Independent candidacies are treated with an even hand. STV frees voters to vote for their favorite choice, eliminates the spoiler effect, encourages multi-party/multi-candidate participation, as well as voter participation.

## **Con**

Critics say STV and its counting systems are too difficult to explain to the common voter, that this will discourage their interest. It is also said that the ballots are generally longer and potentially more daunting for the voter to use. After the Florida problems in the 2000 presidential election, this writing committee has been told repeatedly, “If they can’t make one mark on a butterfly ballot correctly, how are they going to rank candidates?”

Even, if we discount the argument that the electorate is unable to adapt to such a system -- many other countries in the world have done so -- there are still problems. The system is hard to implement without computerized election machinery. Because of this it would be very difficult to administer. In addition, political parties tend to dislike it due to loss of power.

## **Where Used**

The STV type of voting has been used successfully in Cambridge, Massachusetts for 60 years and is still used there today. Historically it has been used in nearly two dozen cities, including: New York City from 1936-1949 (their school boards still use it), Cincinnati (1926-1957), Boulder (1917-1949), Cleveland (1925-1933), and Toledo (1935-1951).

Elsewhere in the world, the Republic of Ireland has used the single transferable vote since 1922 (over 80 years). Northern Ireland used the system for local elections beginning in 1973. In 1998 the British government required Northern Ireland to use STV for its Regional Parliament as part of its new constitution. Britain now elects its representatives to the European Union using STV and while the British Isles are home to the First Past the Post system (single member plurality), discontent seems to be mounting and some predict support for STV will

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become more widespread there. Canadian parliament members are beginning to talk about STV. The system is also used currently in Malta and the upper house in Australia.

## **Hypothetical Example for Use in Arizona**

The Single Transferable Vote (STV) could be utilized for many partisan and non-partisan offices in the state. For instance, our Corporation Commission was recently expanded from three to five persons, on staggered 4-year terms. Every other year an alternating two or three will be up for election. In the 2002 cycle, eight candidates competed for 3 seats.

In a STV scheme, we could eliminate a primary and place all eight contenders on a ballot asking voters to choose and rank their top three or four. The least popular candidates would be eliminated one by one, and any votes for the eliminees would be recast according to the ranking expressed by the voter.

The same system could be applied to local races such as the county board of supervisors, school boards or city councils.

## **Supporters say**

- Single Transferable Voting assures that nearly all voters elect someone they choose to represent them - if not their first choice, then at least their second or third.
- It ensures that all parties and other groups have an opportunity to receive their fair share of seats - minorities as well as majorities.
- It allows a geographically dispersed minority to elect a candidate.
- It produces a governing body that represents all segments of the electorate.
- It is more representative and democratic than the results of single-member districts and traditional at-large systems.
- STV enhances the opportunity of all candidates to be elected, especially women and minorities.
- It frees candidates to develop sincere platforms based on the ideals of their natural constituency.
- It assures majority rule, but provides for minority representation.
- It has the potential to provide a higher voter turnout.
- It results in fewer “wasted” votes.

## **Opponents say**

- It is complicated, time-consuming and potentially costly to administer and count.
  - It promotes instability by allowing minor parties and candidates to win seats.
  - It is difficult to explain to voters, who may be suspicious and suspect manipulation by a system they do not understand.
  - It is highly impractical to consider for any area without computerized voting machinery.
  - It takes power away from political parties, particularly the most dominant one.
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# SAMPLE BALLOT

## Single Transferable Voting (STV) (aka Choice aka Preferred)

**Directions:** You may rank as many (or as few) candidates as you wish in order of preference (up to four choices). Mark a cross (x) in the square to the left of the preferred candidate in the corresponding Choice column. You may **VOTE ONLY ONCE FOR EACH CANDIDATE**.

Marking a second or further choice cannot help defeat your first choice candidate.

This contest will have two (2) elected winners. You can vote for up to four (4) candidates.

|                                     | <b>1<sup>st</sup><br/>Choice</b> | <b>2<sup>nd</sup><br/>Choice</b> | <b>3<sup>rd</sup><br/>Choice</b> | <b>4<sup>th</sup><br/>Choice</b> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Wolfgang Mozart</b><br>Classical | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| <b>Miles Davis</b><br>Jazz          | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| <b>Bruce Springsteen</b><br>Rock    | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| <b>Dolly Parton</b><br>Country      | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| <b>Glenn Miller</b><br>Big Band     | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/>         |

Presidential Election Results  
In Arizona  
from past three elections

| 1992         |                  |                |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| Name         | Votes            | (%)<br>Percent |
| Clinton      | 543,050          | 36.5           |
| Bush         | 572,086          | <b>38.5</b>    |
| Marrou       | 6,759            | 0.5            |
| Fulani       | 923              | 0.1            |
| Perot        | 353,741          | 23.8           |
| Hagelin      | 2,267            | 0.2            |
| Gritz        | 8,141            | 0.5            |
| LaRouche     | 8                | 0.0            |
|              |                  |                |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1,486,975</b> |                |

| 1996     |                  |                |
|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Name     | Votes            | (%)<br>Percent |
| Dole     | 622,073          | 44.3           |
| Clinton  | 653,288          | <b>46.5</b>    |
| Browne   | 14,358           | 1.0            |
| Perot    | 112,072          | 8.0            |
| Nader    | 2,062            | 0.1            |
| Hagelin  | 153              | 0.0            |
| Collins  | 36               | 0.0            |
| Winn     | 5                | 0.0            |
| Killeen  | 11               | 0.0            |
| Phillips | 347              | 0.0            |
|          | <b>1,404,405</b> |                |

| 2000     |                  |                |
|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Name     | Votes            | (%)<br>Percent |
| Gore     | 685,341          | 44.7           |
| Bush     | 781,652          | <b>51.0</b>    |
| Nader    | 45,645           | 3.0            |
| Smith    | 5,775            | 0.4            |
| Hagelin  | 1,120            | 0.1            |
| Buchanan | 12,373           | 0.8            |
| Phillips | 110              | 0.0            |
|          |                  |                |
|          | <b>1,532,016</b> |                |

Election of  
**President of the United States**

Electoral College Votes & Popular Votes in Arizona

Does the Majority rule in Arizona when voting for the president?

Not always.

In Arizona, the Electoral College (EC) designated representative voters (known as 'electors') cast ALL their votes in the EC for the candidate who gets the most 1<sup>st</sup> place votes. This is true in *most*, but not all, states. The electors cast all the votes for this candidate whether or not he/she wins a majority of the popular vote in the state.

This means the majority does not always rule in Arizona.

Surprisingly, in the 2000 presidential election, while a great number of states had very close competitions, Arizona had a majority winner. George W. Bush earned 51% of the vote (a narrow but technical majority). As noted on the side chart, Gore received 44.7% in Arizona. So, in 2000, our state electors cast votes for the candidate who earned a majority in Arizona, thus the majority ruled.

The majority did NOT rule in the two previous presidential elections when the 3<sup>rd</sup> party candidate had a stronger influence in Arizona. In 1996, Clinton earned only 46.5% of the vote, not a majority. But he won ALL the EC votes from Arizona.

Likewise, in 1992 all EC votes were cast for George Bush, Sr., although he had garnered support of only 38.5% of voting Arizonans. Bush won the electors with a plurality count, meaning he got the most 1<sup>st</sup> place votes. But over 60% of voters had favored one of the other candidates.

Nationally, as 3rd party candidates grow stronger and while we are still using the current system, more and more often the president will be elected with less (perhaps much less) than a majority. Also under our current Electoral College system, as third parties gain a greater competitive rank, they will influence the assignment of our state electors more frequently, and be accused of 'spoiling' the election, simply by participating.

The first question we may ask is 'why use the Electoral College?' Nationally, the League of Women Voters has also asked this question, and has had a position for 30 years to support abolishing the EC. The League supports the idea of 'one person – one vote' otherwise known as **direct** election.

However, there is another less obvious question to ask, especially if the EC is NOT abolished:

*Is it important to have majority rule (even if only within each state) when electing the president of the United States?*

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“As long as I count the votes, what are you going to do about it?”

Boss Tweed

Notoriously corrupt politician from late 1800s

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# THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

## Electoral College History

- Adopted as compromise at Constitutional Convention in 1787.
- Provides disproportional influence to small states.
  - 2 electoral votes for each senator in addition to 1 for each congressman (proportional to population).
- Removes president from direct election to prevent “tyranny of the mob.”

## Electoral College (EC) is a “Winner-take-All” system

- Winner of popular vote in each state receives all of that state’s electoral votes.
- Only exceptions are Maine and Nebraska.
  - Electoral votes awarded to winner of each congressional district with 2 “Senatorial” electoral votes going to statewide vote winner.
- Winner of nationwide popular vote may lose electoral vote and election,
  - has occurred 4 times.

## Reasons for Change

- President is only non-directly elected office in the United States.
- Voter influence is non-proportional (-- voters in small states have more effect).
- Only voters in 50 states and District of Columbia can vote for president.
  - Millions of citizens in territories, commonwealths, and possessions are disenfranchised.
- Modern voting methods / communications now allow for timely nationwide collection of popular vote.
- Distrust of “mob” is no longer a valid reason for indirect election.

## Options

1. Maintain current Electoral College System.
2. Direct election.
  - Winner of nationwide popular vote is elected.
3. State-by-state electoral vote proportional division by Congressional districts (Maine/Nebraska model).
  - 2 electoral votes to statewide popular vote winner, one to each congressional district winner.
4. State-by-state proportional division of all electoral votes based on statewide popular vote.
5. State-by-state Majority requirement.
  - Winner-take-all state elections but with required majority vote for winner, e.g. using Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), or approval/majority.
6. State-by-state alternative combination.
  - Use of IRV to narrow the field to two candidates. and proportional division of electors to the two winners based on the percentage of voters support, based on vote transference.

## Exploration of Options

### 1. **Maintain Current Electoral College System**

- Advantages:
    - No changes required.
    - Has been used for all presidential elections since 1788.
  - Disadvantages:
    - Can result in election of nationwide popular vote loser (has happened 4 times since 1788).
    - Gives disproportional influence to voters in small states.
    - Disenfranchises citizens outside of 50 states and District of Columbia.
    - Population-based distribution of electoral votes is only accurate at time of each census (every 10 years).
    - Electors not required to vote for their pledged candidate.
    - Preserves two party system and locks out everyone else.
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## 2. Direct Election

- Advantages:
  - One person, one vote.
  - No waiting until Electoral College meets in December to validate election.
  - Eliminate expenses of Electoral College system.
  - Enfranchise citizens outside of 50 states and D.C.
  - Would avoid the possibility of the election ever being decided by House of Representatives as a result of no candidate receiving a majority of electors.
- Disadvantages:
  - Requires constitutional amendment.
  - Reduces influence of small states.

## 3. Proportional Election based on Congressional Districts

- Advantages:
  - Closer alignment of electoral and popular vote.
  - Requires no constitutional amendment.
- Disadvantages:
  - Can still elect “minority” president.
  - See all other disadvantages of current system.
  - Without a majority win of electors, election could be decided by House of Representatives (unless constitutional amendment).

## 4. Proportional Election based on Statewide Popular Vote

- Advantages:
  - Still closer alignment of popular and electoral vote.
  - Does not require constitutional amendment.
- Disadvantages:
  - Still can elect “minority” president.
  - Requires method to allocate fractional electoral vote in each state.
  - See all other disadvantages of current system.
  - Without a majority win of electors, election could be decided by House of Representatives

## 5. State-by-state Majority requirement

- Advantages:
  - Closer alignment of electoral and popular vote.
  - Promotes majority rule - as winner of popular vote will win electors for state.
  - Requires no constitutional amendment.
  - Only administrative change needed is software (for counties using optical scan, touch screen).
- Disadvantages:
  - Gives disproportional influence to smaller states as EC is maintained.
  - Does not eliminate expense or delayed election validation of EC.
  - Overcoming voter resistance to change.
  - If ‘Approval’ is used (instead of IRV) majority requirement might necessitate a runoff.

## 6. State-by-state alternative combination (IRV and Proportional)

- Advantages:
    - Closer alignment of EC results and popular vote.
    - Requires no constitutional amendment.
    - Supporters say less likely to result in House of Representatives election decision (as majority of electors would be won due to likely elimination of any third candidate dividing electoral votes).
  - Disadvantages:
    - Gives disproportional influence to smaller states as EC is maintained.
    - Does not eliminate expense or delayed election validation of EC.
    - Overcoming voter resistance to change and system counting complexity.
    - Two-step process could produce increased risk of more fraud / error (or impression of such).
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## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Statistical Indicators for Maricopa County, Census 2000 and 2001

Every election system needs to be judged by how well it represents all the people. Diverse characteristics of the electorate are found in most communities, between communities, and certainly at the county and state levels.

The U.S. Department of Justice oversees redistricting in Arizona, both legislative and congressional, because these divisions have failed in the past to provide representation for ethnic populations. See race statistics below.

Important indicators for Maricopa County communities show population ranging from less than 2,000 to over 1.3 million. El Mirage has a median age of 24.6 while Youngtown has a median age of 65.3. Paradise Valley shows almost all of its housing to be owner-occupied, while Tempe has one-half of its housing owner-occupied.

Employment compared for people with and without disabilities differs throughout the county. Five communities show employment of disabled persons at over 70%. Sixteen communities show employment of those without disabilities at over 70%, with Gilbert showing 81.3%. In contrast, the Gila River Indian Community has an employment rate of only 44.4%

The Maricopa Association of Governments July 1, 201 update of the 2000 Census statistics shows substantial growth in Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, Mesa, etc. and "other" unincorporated areas of Maricopa County. In comparison, Guadalupe has almost no growth in population and housing.

**The importance of these statistical indicators is that they suggest very real differences in the needs of the diverse constituencies. Which election system will best represent all of these constituent needs?**

#### 2000 Census, Race in Arizona and Phoenix

|   | <u>Arizona</u> | <u>Phoenix</u> |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Total Minorities*                                 | 1,257,005      | 584,201        |
| Percentage Minority*                              | 24.5%          | 44.2%          |
| # Hispanic or Latino                              | 1,295,617      | 449,972        |
| # White alone, not Hisp./Lat.                     | 3,873,611      | 736,844        |
| # Black or African-Am. alone                      | 158,873        | 63,756         |
| # Am. Indian + Alaska Native                      | 255,879        | 21,472         |
| # Asian alone, not Hisp./Lat.                     | 92,236         | 25,453         |
| # Nat. Hawaiian + Pacific Islanders               | 6,733          | 1,353          |
| # Some other race alone,<br>not Hispanic/Latino   | 596,774        | 1,488          |
| # Persons 2 or more races,<br>not Hispanic/Latino | 146,526        | 20,707         |
| Total Population                                  | 5,130,632      | 1,321,045      |

\* Arizona number and percentage calculated from 2000 Census, Arizona, Race

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**Information on the following table is compiled from the sources listed below:**

- U.S. Bureau of the Census Year 2000 Census,
  - Maricopa Association of Governments Residential Completion database,
  - July 1, 2001 Municipality Population and Housing Unit Update.
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## Demographic Indicators for Arizona and Maricopa County 2000 - 2001

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Census Population              | 5. % employed pop. 21-64 yrs with disability       |
| 2. Median Age                     | 6. % employed, pop. 21-64 years without disability |
| 3. Owner-Occupied Housing Units   | 7. 7/1/01 Population.                              |
| 4. Renter- Occupied Housing Units | 8. 7/1/01 Housing Units Updates                    |

| Jurisdiction       | Pop.Total        | Med. Age  | O-Occ HU       | R-Occ HU       | %emp/dis    | %empw/o     | 7/1/01Pop        | 7/1/01 HU        |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| Arizona            | 5,130,632        | 34.2      | 1,293,556      | 607,771        | 56.9        | 74.2        |                  |                  |
| Maricopa County:   |                  |           |                |                |             |             |                  |                  |
| Avondale           | 35,883           | 29        | 8,256          | 2,384          | 63.6        | 74.2        | 40,445           | 12,877           |
| Buckeye            | 6,537            | 30        | 1,439          | 719            | 50.5        | 71.6        | 10,650           | 2,490            |
| Carefree           | 2,927            | 55.2      | 1,225          | 164            | 56.2        | 68          | 3,095            | 1,872            |
| Cave Creek         | 3,728            | 44.7      | 1,290          | 281            | 69.8        | 77.2        | 3,900            | 1,834            |
| Chandler           | 176,581          | 31.2      | 45,909         | 16,468         | 68.2        | 81          | 186,875          | 70,463           |
| El Mirage          | 7,609            | 24.6      | 1,513          | 608            | 74.2        | 71.9        | 11,915           | 4,951            |
| Fountain Hills     | 20,235           | 46.4      | 7,243          | 1,410          | 68          | 73.4        | 21,190           | 10,966           |
| Gila Bend          | 1,980            | 29.3      | 384            | 275            | 37          | 67.5        | 2,000            | 773              |
| Gila River         | 2,699            | 22.8      | 1,728          | 958            | 42.7        | 44.4        | 2,700            | 685              |
| Gilbert            | 109,697          | 30.1      | 30,067         | 5,338          | 72.3        | 81.3        | 122,360          | 41,282           |
| Glendale           | 218,812          | 30.8      | 49,087         | 26,613         | 61          | 77.5        | 224,970          | 81,939           |
| Goodyear           | 18,911           | 36.5      | 5,236          | 943            | 60.3        | 72.7        | 22,820           | 8,372            |
| Guadalupe          | 5,228            | 25.2      | 759            | 351            | 62.1        | 64.7        | 5,230            | 1,184            |
| Litchfield Park    | 3,810            | 44.7      | 1,313          | 195            | 65.6        | 72.4        | 3,845            | 1,649            |
| Mesa               | 396,375          | 32        | 97,308         | 49,335         | 63.3        | 78.2        | 414,075          | 183,626          |
| Paradise Valley    | 13,664           | 46.3      | 4,885          | 149            | 60          | 65.2        | 13,915           | 5,600            |
| Peoria*            | 108,363          | 35.6      |                |                | 66.9        | 79.8        | 117,200          | 46,090           |
| Phoenix            | 1,321,045        | 30.7      | 282,670        | 183,164        | 58          | 75.5        | 1,344,775        | 505,005          |
| Queen Creek*       | 4,197            | 30.9      | 1,120          | 98             | 70.5        | 75.3        | 4,820            | 1,412            |
| Salt River         | 6,405            | 28.3      | 1,575          | 384            | 55.7        | 54.2        | 6,490            | 2,559            |
| Scottsdale         | 202,705          | 41        | 63,137         | 27,532         | 66.7        | 77.1        | 209,960          | 108,763          |
| Surprise           | 30,848           | 46.1      | 11,022         | 1,462          | 56.7        | 59.4        | 38,400           | 20,257           |
| Tempe              | 158,625          | 28.8      | 32,444         | 31,158         | 67.3        | 80.1        | 159,435          | 67,406           |
| Tolleson           | 4,974            | 29.4      | 940            | 492            | 72.1        | 73.3        | 5,040            | 1,505            |
| Wickenburg         | 5,082            | 48.4      | 1,519          | 822            | 63.9        | 74.9        | 5,265            | 2,734            |
| Youngtown          | 3,010            | 65.3      | 1,015          | 626            | 44.4        | 68          | 3,155            | 1,873            |
| Unin-New River     | 10,740           |           |                |                | 70.7        | 78.7        | 10,835           | 4,554            |
| Unin-Rio Verde     | 1,419            |           |                |                | 42.6        | 15.7        | 1,465            | 1,205            |
| Unin-Sun City      | 38,309           |           |                |                | 38.1        | 49.8        | 38,540           | 27,903           |
| Unin-Sun City West | 26,344           |           |                |                | 26          | 24.7        | 26,405           | 17,401           |
| Unin-Sun Lakes     | 11,936           |           |                |                | 42.8        | 40.9        | 12,440           | 8,072            |
| Unin-Other         | 113,471          |           |                |                |             |             | 117,915          | 51,663           |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>3,072,149</b> | <b>33</b> | <b>764,547</b> | <b>368,339</b> | <b>60.7</b> | <b>76.4</b> | <b>3,192,125</b> | <b>1,298,965</b> |

**Notes:** Totals may not add due to rounding; Maricopa County portion only; Unin = unincorporated.

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## COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

This exploration of various election systems is not intended as an endorsement of any one of them. Rather, the intent of this report is to acquaint readers with possible alternatives to the systems now in use. Most Arizona voters do not realize that these alternatives exist, and that in many instances they have already played an important role in shaping this nation's political history.

The 2000 presidential election served as an abrupt lesson to many voters that the rules by which our votes are cast and counted can determine the outcome. The nation's founders designed the Electoral College with certain goals in mind: preserving the right of states to determine for themselves how Electors would be named, and protecting the interests of less populous states from being overwhelmed by the interests of the most populous. Even its harshest critics cannot deny that it worked well to do both of these things at its inception.

The point is not whether the Electoral College should be kept or scrapped, but that electoral systems can be **designed or modified** to achieve important political goals in an evolving nation. The country has grown and changed dramatically in the last 22 decades, and election systems can and should be modified to adapt to emerging needs.

Arizona's political landscape is changing too, and Arizonans have shown themselves to be open to finding solutions that will shape its future. In the last decade alone four citizen-sponsored ballot measures have been adopted: term limits, public financing of campaigns, open primaries, and independent redistricting.

Voters seem increasingly disenchanted with our political system as a whole. They cite a lack of enthusiasm for the candidates, non-competitive districts that make the outcome a foregone conclusion, a system dominated by two major parties increasingly out of touch with their constituents, and polarized negative campaigns that avoid substantive discussion of real issues. The sense of betrayal these voters feel too often translates into a failure to vote at all.

The challenge then is to design an electoral system that tackles these problems. Many of the systems described in this report are designed to enable greater candidate participation, to avoid the more common pitfalls of drawing district lines, to give better representation to minority views, and to create incentives for positive, issues-oriented campaigning. Can they help to solve some of the flaws in our current system? Can they help to engage more people shaping their government? Perhaps it's time to see.

*If there is a form of government, then, whose principle and foundation is virtue,  
will not every sober man acknowledge it better calculated  
to promote the general happiness than any other form?*

John Adams

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## Comparison of Systems via Criteria

The committee has used the following criteria for comparing the eight systems of this study as well as to comment on the options of the Electoral College in Arizona.

### Criteria for Evaluating Election Methods

#### 'Yardsticks' for Drawing Conclusions

1. Increase voter participation
  2. Raise the level of political campaigns / focus on issues
  3. Promote openness and responsiveness between candidates & constituents
  4. Discourage negative campaigning
  5. Promote stable and effective government
  6. Easy to use, administer and understand
  7. Encourage minority (racial, gender, economic) participation
  8. Provide for a broad number of candidates for voters to choose from
  9. Produce fair and accurate community representation
  10. Maximize effective votes / minimize wasted votes
  11. Encourage sincere voting as opposed to strategic voting
  12. Minimize cost of changing systems to city/county
  13. Reduce election costs
  14. Encourage majority rule, ensure majority support for winner
  15. Discourage fraud and political manipulation
  16. Promote voter accessibility to the voting process
  17. Reduce campaign costs to candidates
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## Appendix A

| District                                    | State Legislative Map – DOJ 4 Adjusted |      |                              |
|---|--|------|------------------------------|
|   | %Dem                                   | %Rep | Competitiveness of Districts |
| 1   | 44.6                                   | 55.4 | Republican                   |
| 2   | 64.0                                   | 36.0 | Democratic                   |
| 3   | 46.2                                   | 53.8 | Republican                   |
| 4   | 42.4                                   | 57.6 | Republican                   |
| 5   | 52.5                                   | 47.5 | Competitive/Democratic       |
| 6   | 44.5                                   | 55.5 | Republican                   |
| 7   | 42.5                                   | 57.5 | Republican                   |
| 8   | 42.8                                   | 57.2 | Republican                   |
| 9   | 44.3                                   | 55.7 | Republican                   |
| 10  | 48.2                                   | 51.8 | Competitive/Republican       |
| 11  | 44.3                                   | 55.7 | Republican                   |
| 12  | 48.1                                   | 51.9 | Competitive/Republican       |
| 13  | 55.8                                   | 44.2 | Democratic                   |
| 14  | 56.5                                   | 43.5 | Democratic                   |
| 15  | 53.7                                   | 46.3 | Democratic                   |
| 16  | 66.0                                   | 34.0 | Democratic                   |
| 17  | 49.3                                   | 50.7 | Competitive/Republican       |
| 18  | 43.6                                   | 56.4 | Republican                   |
| 19  | 43.4                                   | 56.6 | Republican                   |
| 20  | 44.2                                   | 55.8 | Republican                   |
| 21  | 44.0                                   | 56.0 | Republican                   |
| 22  | 42.4                                   | 57.6 | Republican                   |
| 23  | 57.9                                   | 42.1 | Democratic                   |
| 24  | 53.6                                   | 46.4 | Democratic                   |
| 25  | 56.1                                   | 43.9 | Democratic                   |
| 26  | 46.2                                   | 53.8 | Republican                   |
| 27  | 60.6                                   | 39.4 | Democratic                   |
| 28  | 54.5                                   | 45.5 | Democratic                   |
| 29  | 59.2                                   | 40.8 | Democratic                   |
| 30  | 44.9                                   | 55.1 | Republican                   |
| <b>Arizona Profile of Registered Voters</b> |  |      | 15 Republican                |
| Republicans 42.14%                          | Democrats 36.17%                       |      | 3 Competitive/Republican     |
| Libertarians 0.64%                          | Other 21.06%                           |      | 1 Competitive/Democratic     |
|   |  |      | 11 Democratic                |

## Appendix B

### **Cost of Runoff Elections, MAY 2002 (Cities of Maricopa County) \***

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Chandler, City of          | \$62,809.68      |
| Fountain Hills, Town of    | 12,917.08        |
| Glendale, City of          | 77,213.84        |
| Mesa, City of (District 5) | 16,478.63        |
| Queen Creek, Town of       | 2,476.35         |
| Scottsdale, City of        | 108,589.91       |
| Tempe, City of             | <u>88,826.98</u> |
| Total in Maricopa County   | \$ 369,312.47    |

\* These figures do not include any outside printing (pamphlets, etc.) that the jurisdiction may have had to produce.

As such, figures supplied by cities themselves may be higher.

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## Appendix C

Below are positions reached by The Leagues of Women Voters of Washington, Vermont and California.

### LWV of Washington

- Supports adoption of election methods that produce proportional representation when electing representative government bodies such as councils, legislatures and Congress
- Supports the concept of a majority vote requirement for winners of single office such as mayor or governor, as long as it is achieved using a voting method such as the Instant Runoff Vote, rather than a second, separate runoff election.
- Supports state election laws allowing for more options for alternative election systems in governmental jurisdictions at both the state and local levels.
- Believes that consideration should be given, when evaluating election systems, to how well they promote “representative-ness,” [sic] citizen participation and accountability.

### LWV of Vermont

Consensus question: In accordance with the LWV’s position of promoting political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government, shall the LWVVT support legislation that assures that the candidate preferred by a majority of voters wins the election?

Specifically, shall the LWVVT support Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) for all single seat statewide elections?

A tally of votes indicated that members of the LWVVT wished to support Instant Runoff Voting and the consensus was approved by delegates to the May 1999 State League convention.

### LWV of California

Support election systems for executive offices, both at the state and local levels, that require the winner to receive a majority of the votes.

### LWVSM

The League of Women Voters of Santa Monica supports consideration of alternative voting systems for Santa Monica elections with a special emphasis on the Single Transferable Vote or Choice System.

Any system adopted should produce fair and accurate community representation reflecting the diversity (racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, etc.) of the community; increase voter participation and maximize effective votes and raise the level of political campaigns and increase the focus on issues, not personalities. The system should be easy for the voter to use and understand, both in terms of understanding how to vote and how their vote would be counted.

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## Appendix D

### MOCK ELECTION RESULTS

437 people throughout Arizona took part in a Mock election for the 2002 primary election for governor. Participants were asked to complete two ballots: one a typical Winner-Take-All plurality type, the second an Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) ballot on which they ranked their top 5 from 10 candidates. Each ballot included all opposed and unopposed candidates (write-ins allowed). The goal was not to predict a winner but to determine if the results would be different using a different system.

The final results of the two systems were quite similar - not demonstrating an exciting example of how IRV might work. However, it did show that IRV is not a destabilizing force when the voters have a strong preference. The sample was politically biased toward progressive groups.<sup>24</sup> Due to this bias, the secondary votes (lower-ranked) were less influential in changing candidate ranking, but instead supported the top vote-winner.

Between the plurality vote and the first (1<sup>st</sup>) round of counting in the IRV election, there was a change in the ranking of only 3 of the 10 candidates.

| Plurality<br>(Winner-take-All) | %<br>Won | 1 <sup>st</sup> Round of<br>IRV Ranking<br>(compared to Plurality) | %<br>Won | Final Ranking of<br>IRV count<br>(compared to Plurality) | %<br>Won<br>Note below* |
|--------------------------------|----------|--|----------|--|-------------------------|
| Napolitano                     | 32.0     | --   | 30.0     | --   | 61 or 66.8              |
| Salmon                         | 21.0     | --   | 21.2     | --   | 30 or 33.1              |
| Gutierrez                      | 16.0     | --   | 17.3     | --   |                         |
| Mahoney                        | 5.8      | Newcomb  | 6.5      | Mahoney  |                         |
| Osterloh                       | 5.1      | Mahoney  | 6.3      | Newcomb  |                         |
| Newcomb                        | 4.8      | Osterloh   | 5.4      | Bayless  |                         |
| Bayless                        | 4.6      | --   | 4.7      | Osterloh   |                         |
| Springer                       | 3.85     | --   | 3.7      | Fallon   |                         |
| Fallon                         | 3.4      | --   | 3.3      | Springer   |                         |
| Hess                           | 2.0      | --   | 1.4      | --   |                         |
| Write-ins                      | 1.2      | --   | 1.0      | --   |                         |

\* Percentages are not applicable for the last round in an IRV single seat election, except for the final two opponents, because all the other candidates have been eliminated in previous sequential rounds. In addition, the majority MAY be an adjusted number when some ballots are 'exhausted' (voter has no more choices for a candidate still in the race). [Adjusting the majority was not necessary in this case.] However, the two numbers listed as percentages for the top candidates represent the two different counting systems. The **lower** percentages (61% and 30%) demonstrate only 91% of the votes (91% of voters picked these candidates as one of their top 5 choices; approximately 9% of voters had 'exhausted' ballots). The **higher** percentage represents an adjusted majority, based on 100% of ballots left *active* in the last round of counting,

Likewise, the change in ranking between the plurality vote and the final round of the IRV vote shows little pivotal change. There is a 'switching' of places between the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> ranked candidates.

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<sup>24</sup> Participating in the mock election were Leagues of Women Voters throughout Arizona, Maricopa Community Colleges (with the help of professors Mary Stewart and Jonelle Moore, adjunct professor Bonnie Sanders, PhD, and professorial doctors Brian Dille, PhD and Alex Avila, PhD), AZ Democracy Group, AzAN, and participants at the Rolling Thunder Democracy Tour with Jim Hightower held in Tucson, AZ.

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However, there are some interesting points.

- Napolitano garnered 32% in the plurality vote, not a great mandate, especially for this biased progressive group. However when voters were allowed to rank favorites and include their top five (5), she received 61% of the support, a hefty majority.
- The count between Napolitano and Salmon seemed fairly close in the plurality election, especially considering the bias nature of the sample. His count was approximately 10% less than Napolitano's was. But when the secondary choices were counted (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>) the difference favored Napolitano by more than 31 percent.
- In this mock race, Gutierrez was an extremely strong 3<sup>rd</sup> candidate, but many of those choosing him as their 1<sup>st</sup> choice gave subsequent votes to Napolitano. This was not surprising as the candidates were from the same party. However, (as speculation) if the strong 3<sup>rd</sup> candidate had been one favoring Salmon or from the same party, the final vote could have been much different. Most likely the secondary votes in this mock election would have been transferred to Republicans and Salmon would have won with a majority somewhere around 55 percent.

The most obvious conclusion is that IRV is not destabilizing as many critics sometime fear. When you have a strongly favored candidate, a majority is rather easy to accomplish. In a less biased sample, such as a real election, the moderate (mid-ranked) candidates would probably play a greater role and could ultimately change rankings significantly. In this particular mock ballot trial the differences in the resulting plurality and IRV elections were rather unremarkable. So, we may ask *Why Bother?*

## Why Bother

Is it worth the change to our election system to incorporate IRV (ranking candidates) when sometimes the results would be identical to our current system? If voter preference is a factor, then the answer would be definitely yes. One question was included on the ballot and asked:

*Do you like the choice of voting for more than one candidate? Yes or No*

Almost 80% of the participants answered 'yes.'<sup>25</sup>

Aside from voter preference, are there other advantages? According to our participants and from the previous report section on IRV, there are *at least* four.

1. **Majority Rule.** No matter the outcome, the winner has at least a majority support and often much more overall-support demonstrated for her than with Winner-Take-All voting.
2. **Interest.** Participants mentioned that if they had the opportunity to rank some of their top candidates, they would learn more about all of them. This would lead to a more informed voter.

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<sup>25</sup> Over 70 participants either did not respond to the question, stated they were undecided or were inadvertently eliminated from this inquiry by ballots which cut off the question.

**Note about the 'No' votes:** Of the people who answered the question 'no,' some did not bother voting at all (on either ballot). Seven (7) of the nine (9) IRV ballots eliminated due to mistakes, \* were also from those who answered 'no' to the choice question. 12% of the 'no' participants voted with such extreme political swings as to suggest (while not prove) that the voter was unfamiliar with the candidates. This was seen in no more than 2-3% of all other ballots. [\* Mistakes included voting that did not follow the directions. If a person voted for the same candidate more than once, which is clearly stated as not allowed, the first of the votes **was** counted.]

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3. There is never the need, or **COST** of a runoff election, as it is done ‘instantly.’ [The initial start-up costs to counties already using optical scan equipment is software purchase.]
  4. **Voter participation.** Many people claimed that if they were able to vote for their sincere favorites, they would be more willing to vote regularly. It is fair to say most people would prefer not to cast a vote that seems destined to be a “wasted vote.” The ability to vote your true favorite and not a strategic vote may increase voter participation.

### **Conclusion**

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) would increase majority rule and eliminate the costly needs of runoff. It is fair to say, based on this sample, that voters prefer IRV, or the ability to ‘rank’ candidates and that IRV would also increase voter interest and voter participation.

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“I order you to hold a free election,  
but I forbid you to elect anyone but Richard, my clerk.”

Henry II

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## GLOSSARY FOR VOTING SYSTEMS REPORT

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Approval Voting</b>              | A system where by a voter may simply check as many of the candidates as she would approve of for the office. It is a plurality-type system because who ever gets the most votes wins.  |
| <b>At-Large</b>                     | Refers to a non-districted group of constituents all voting for same candidates (vote is not divided by districts).  |
| <b>Bullet/Block Voting</b>          | Ballots on which voters cast all of their available votes for one candidate. For example, in a multi-seat election, they cast all their votes for one candidate. It's a concentration of a voter's vote associated with cumulative and limited voting.   |
| <b>Citizens Clean Elections Act</b> | A campaign finance reform measure initiated by Arizona citizens and passed by voters in 1998. The Act creates a new campaign finance system that provides full public funding to qualified statewide and legislative candidates who agree to abide by strict spending and contribution limits. |
| <b>Cumulative Voting</b>            | The capacity to cast more than one vote for a favored candidate in a multi-seat election.  |
| <b>Droop Quota</b>                  | Used in Single Transferable Vote systems to determine how votes are awarded. The "droop" formula or quota being the total vote divided by the number of seats plus one, and then one is added to the quotient.   |
| <b>First Past The Post (FPTP)</b>   | The simplest form of plurality voting. The winning candidate(s) being the one(s) with the most, but not necessarily the majority, of votes.  |
| <b>Limited Vote</b>                 | A semi-proportional system used in multi-member seats wherein the voter has fewer votes than the number of seats.  |
| <b>Mixed Member</b>                 | A proportional system in which a voter votes once for her favorite district candidate, and once for her preferred party.   |
| <b>Party List (closed)</b>          | Proportional system in which the voter casts her vote for the 'list' her favorite party has provided. Seats are filled in proportion to the votes that each party wins.  |
| <b>Party List (open)</b>            | Similar to above, except that the voter casts vote for their favorite candidate within party list. Voters' choice will determine the makeup of the party list order.   |
| <b>Plurality</b>                    | Traditional system in America, in which whoever gets the most votes wins – even if she does not reach a majority. Also called FPTP.  |

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Proportional System</b>            | Any system that consciously attempts to reduce the disparity between a group's share of the total vote and its share of the winning seats. For example, if a group wins 40% of the vote, it should gain 40% of the seats.   |
| <b>Semi-Proportional Systems</b>      | Electoral systems that usually provide proportional results but are not certain to do so.   |
| <b>Single Member District</b>         | A district where only one candidate is elected to office.   |
| <b>Single Transferable Vote (STV)</b> | A preferential proportional representation system used in multimember districts. To gain election, a candidate must surpass a specified quota of first-preference votes. Voters' preferences are reallocated to other continuing candidates when an unsuccessful candidate is excluded, or if an elected candidate has a surplus. |
| <b>Wasted Votes</b>                   | Votes that do not ultimately count towards the election of a particular candidate or party, whether because they were cast for the loser or were excess votes for the winner.   |

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*"The power under the Constitution will always be **in the People**.  
It is entrusted for certain defined purposes, and for a certain limited period,  
to representatives **of their own choosing**;  
and whenever it is executed contrary to their interest, or not agreeable to their wishes,  
their Servants can, and undoubtedly will be, recalled."*

George Washington  
1787 letter, to Bushrod Washington,  
nephew and later,  
Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, 1798 - 1829

From "The Origins of the American Constitution" by M. Kammen  
(emphasis by writing committee)