

Angel Torres from the Green Party joins me on my show on March 17 from 4-5PM. We'll be discussing the Green Party's platform, to include Instant Runoff Voting, during the show. Would you be available at 4:15 to call into the show and give LWV perspective on IRV?

## The Sam Kelley Show - Your Opinion Matters

**The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes in the election system principle of greater vote representation. The LWVAZ maintains that election system reform that provides a stronger voice for the greatest number of voters should have a positive effect on voter participation. Therefore, the LWVAZ:**

- **Supports changing the present election systems so that they more accurately represent the wishes of voters: Adopting the Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) system for single seat races; adopting proportional representation for multi-seat races, specifically Ranked Choice Voting.**

Ranked choice voting (RCV) makes democracy more fair and functional. It works in a variety of contexts. It is a simple change that can have a big impact.

- **With ranked choice voting, voters can rank as many candidates as they want in order of choice. Candidates do best when they attract a strong core of first-choice support while also reaching out for second and even third choices.**
- **When used as an "instant runoff" to elect a single candidate like a mayor or a governor, RCV helps elect a candidate that better reflects the support of a majority of voters.**
- **When used as a form of fair representation voting to elect more than one candidate like a city council, state legislature or even Congress, RCV helps to more fairly represent the full spectrum of voters.**

## Saves Money When Replacing Primaries or Runoffs

Many local offices are elected in two rounds of elections; either a primary winnowing the field to two followed by a general election, or a general election followed by a runoff if no candidate has a majority. In either case, the election that takes place outside of the context of the general Election Day often suffers from very weak and unrepresentative turnout, while raising issues of vote splitting in the first round and the possibility of disenfranchising overseas and military voters.

Ranked choice voting can accomplish the benefits of a primary/runoff election structure with only one election, avoiding these issues while saving the jurisdiction the costs of running two elections.

That's why ranked choice voting is often called "instant runoff voting" when used to elect mayors, governors, and other single-winner offices.

## Promotes Majority Support

Too often, candidates can and do win election to offices like Mayor and Governor despite being opposed by most voters. With ranked choice voting, if no candidate has more than half the vote in first-choices, candidates finishing last are eliminated round-by-round in an instant runoff until two candidates are left. The winning candidate will be the one with majority support when matched against the other. In a multi-winner election, ranked choice voting promotes majority rule because the majority of voters will always be able to elect a majority of seats, without fear that an entrenched minority has used gerrymandered districts to ensure they stay in office.

## Provides More Choice for Voters

Democracy is strongest when more voices are heard. Too often, to avoid "vote splitting" in which candidates can and do win with very little support (see "Promotes Majority Support" above), efforts are taken to limit the number of candidates who compete. This limits voters' choices. In some places, that means [a low turnout primary election](#) eliminates most of the candidates; in others it means restrictive ballot access laws keep out challengers; and in others it means that candidates are shamed into staying out the race. Ranked choice voting allows more than two candidates to compete without fear of splitting the vote.

## Minimizes Strategic Voting

Voters should be able to vote for candidates they support, not just against candidates they oppose most. Yet in elections without ranked choice voting, voters may feel that they need to vote for the “lesser of two evils,” because their favorite candidate is less likely to win. With ranked choice voting, you can honestly rank candidates in order of choice without having to worry about how others will vote and who is more or less likely to win.

- Oakland, San Francisco, San Leandro, Berkeley in CA; Telluride, Basalt in CO; Minneapolis and St. Paul; Portland MA, Statewide Initiative in 2016;

## For overseas voters in runoffs

- Arkansas: Adopted in 2005 and first used 2006
- Alabama: By agreement with a federal court, used in special election for U.S. House, 2013
- Louisiana: Adopted and used since the 1990s
- South Carolina: Adopted and first used in 2006
- Springfield, Illinois: Adopted in 2007 and first used in 2011