

May 2, 2008

Gautam Dutta, Esq.
Deputy Director, Political Reform Program
New America Foundation
3435 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2724
Los Angeles, CA 90010

Re: Instant Runoff Voting

Dear Mr. Dutta:

I strongly support a critical electoral reform that will save Los Angeles millions of dollars and boost voter participation: Instant Runoff Voting (IRV).

Currently, our City uses an expensive, two-round election system. If no one receives a majority in the general election, the top two finishers advance to a separate runoff election. Last May, an abysmal 6 percent of registered voters took part in a runoff election (for the Los Angeles Community College District). That election alone cost our taxpayers \$5 million – which could have been used for affordable housing, transportation, and other pressing needs.

IRV will consolidate the general and runoff elections into one single, consolidated election. In this manner, IRV will help our City make headway with two major challenges: fiscal hardship and low voter turnout. By eliminating a separate runoff election, IRV will save our City \$8 to \$9 million per election year. Furthermore, by reducing the number of elections, IRV will both empower voters and reduce voter fatigue.

To date, a wide variety of jurisdictions have adopted IRV, including San Francisco, Oakland, Minneapolis, and Santa Fe. After San Francisco adopted IRV, San Francisco voters preferred IRV over the previous two-round system by a margin of 3 to 1.

Let us strengthen our democracy – and set an example for the entire nation. I urge the City Council and Mayor Villaraigosa to take all necessary steps to adopt and implement IRV.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Hurd". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.