



Senate Committee on Government Operations

4 February 2015

Election of Statewide Officials – Constitutional Amendment

In accordance with the LWV's position of promoting political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government, the LWVVT supports legislation that assures that the candidate preferred by a majority of voters wins the election.

To that end, the LWVVT supports instant runoff voting (IRV) for all statewide elections.

Reasons for IRV

- Assures election by a majority of the voters

- Efficient – saves time and money

 - No long wait to meet requirements for military

 - Results are known right away

 - Saves cost of a special election

- Avoids the drop in voter participation seen in traditional runoffs

- Voters are free to choose their preferred candidate, without fear of “spoiler” effect

The League's two primary concerns are the election by a majority of the voters, and the dropoff in voter turnout. In 2007, East Montpelier had a runoff election for Selectboard. Seven hundred people voted in the first election, and *fewer than 200* in the separate runoff. Let us reinforce democracy not only by assuring that the candidate with the majority of the votes wins, but also by maximizing voter participation. IRV does both.

Catherine Rader

League of Women Voters of Vermont