

Improving Elections

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Neal McBurnett, 2022-10-13

Overview

Fix voting methods to achieve:

- Proportional Representation: no wasted votes
- No spoilers in single-winner contests
- Expressive ballots and results reporting
- LWV US position on Electoral Systems
- LWV Colorado position on Better Voting Methods

Improve election integrity via better audits

See [LWV Colorado position on Election Security](#)

Proportional representation

Current system throws votes for losing candidates away, sometimes more than half of all votes

In PR systems, votes remain active, nearly always eventually supporting a candidate the voter prefers

Incentives for campaigns and voters to increase turnout and reduce negative campaigning.

Not literally impossible, like single-winner methods

Common around the world

US has barely upgraded its democracy since Alpha version from 1700's

See [LWV Boulder County Voting Methods page](#)

Is Approval Voting viable?

Absolutely!

So simple: just let voters vote for as many as they like

Adopted by strong majority in St Louis and Fargo ND

Working very well to address spoilers issue

Works with existing voting systems

- No extra charges
- No delays in presenting results

Ranking methods: IRV, STV, bogus options

Better results than choose-one plurality

Doesn't (can't) guarantee "majority winner"

Complicated, can be slow and costly to implement

Can eliminate consensus winning candidate too early:

- Would demonstrably beat all other candidates head-to-head
- Alaska (2022)
 - RCV Fools Palin Voters into Electing a Progressive Democrat
- Burlington VT (2009 => repealed, now back)

What about Star voting?

Another excellent method, more complicated, somewhat better than Approval

See [STAR Voting Presentation by Sass to Forward Party of Colorado](#)

What improvements does Colorado's risk-limiting audit need?

Best audit in the country

Produces audit data for ALL contests

Needs more transparency:

- Publish cast-vote records before random selection

Needs better contest selection:

- Currently at discretion of SoS
- Typically picking just 2 contests
- Should guarantee risk limit for all contests
 - or at least all those that wouldn't take more work

Voting machine options

San Francisco acquiring open source voting system

VotingWorks building, testing open source systems for voting and auditing

No lock-in: choose your support vendor

More cost-effective for jurisdictions

More transparent - avoid black boxes

Security comes from audits, not voting system

Is hand counting paper really practical?

Voter Registration accuracy, audits

ERIC: Electronic Registration Information Center

About 31 states sharing data, avoiding duplications, tracking death records etc.

Colorado was a pioneer in ERIC

Good results

Questions?

Presentation, with links online at

http://bcn.boulder.co.us/~neal/elections/freedom_forum_nealmcb/