

***New York Times, March 23, 2010***

**Thomas Friedman on Instant Runoff Voting**

One reason independent, third-party, centrist candidates can't get elected is because if, in a three-person race, a Democrat votes for an independent, and the independent loses, the Democrat fears his vote will have actually helped the Republican win, or vice versa. Alternative voting allows you to rank the independent candidate your No. 1 choice, and the Democrat or Republican No. 2. Therefore, if the independent does not win, your vote is immediately transferred to your second choice, say, the Democrat. Therefore, you have no fear that in voting for an independent you might help elect your real nightmare... Nothing has held back the growth of independent, centrist candidates more, said Diamond, "than the fear that if you vote for one of them you will be wasting your vote."

***Juneau Empire, Nov. 1, 2010***

**Howard Dean on Instant Runoff Voting**

Having more competition forces candidates to clean up negative campaigning and stick to the issues. Knowing they may need support from supporters of other candidates to win, candidates have to tone down personal attacks. Reaching out to more voters also helps them govern better when they win.

The fundamental issue is majority rule. Without a majority standard, you can't hold power accountable. It's a blight on democracy when an incumbent can be returned to office even though 60 percent of voters reject that candidate as their last choice. That's why both Sen. John McCain and President Barack Obama have actively backed ranked choice voting. No party has a lock on majority rule, and both major parties can stand up for it. With ranked choice voting, we can uphold majority rule, make campaigns less negative and foster less partisan elections. Let's make democracy work for all of us.

**FairVote's Alec Slatky, *Press-Register, July 2010***

The contentious Republican runoff for governor between has some Alabama political leaders thinking about reforms to the election process...one potential reform could resolve many problems with the status quo — instant runoff voting.

**Katrina vanden Heuvel, *Nation, Dec. 3, 2010***

**"A Voting Reform Finds Its Moment"**

At a moment when so many people know in their gut that our voting system is in trouble and needs reform, the Oakland example shows what can happen when people try a different approach. "The Oakland election was a remarkable one, not because of who won but the way she won and the way she campaigned," said Rob Richie, executive director of FairVote. "And how the system seemed to promote that better, more grassroots style of campaigning. Money is a lot less effective when it needs to be used to wipe out everyone, rather than just targeting a single opponent with attacks. In almost every executive race with instant runoff voting the candidate with the most money didn't win."

With historically high levels of voters supporting candidates outside of the two major parties, or registering independent or with a third party affiliation, Richie says it's paramount that we "figure out ways to give people more choices."

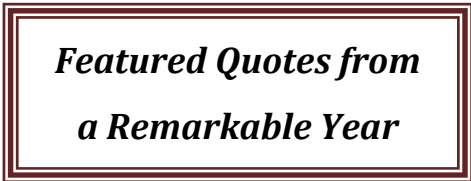
Increasingly more places are turning to Ranked Choice Voting [IRV] as a way to minimize the impact of big money in a post-Citizens United era, level the playing field and give voters more

choices. Maine's largest city, Portland, adopted RCV for its mayoral elections starting in 2011, and its controversial race for governor was won with less than 50 percent for the sixth time in the past seven elections - a non-majority outcome seen this year in more than a dozen races for the US Senate and governorships."

***USA Today, "Oscar's Instant Runoff", March 5***

What makes sense for Tinseltown also makes sense for promoting majority rule in state and local elections with crowded fields. At least six cities, including Minneapolis and San Francisco, already using forms of instant runoff voting...We don't know whether Avatar's Na'vi have adopted such an enlightened method for choosing leaders on the moon Pandora. And we think 10 nominees for best picture is about five too many. But in picking a clever way to separate the winner from the also-rans, the Academy might have struck a blow for election reform. That's precious.

*(Over)*



### ***Newsweek on Instant Runoff Voting, Oct. 24***

The logic of general elections is simple: winner takes all. This, of course, can encourage nasty campaigning and at the end of a race with more than two candidates, the victor often wins with only a plurality (not a majority) of support. Searching for a solution, a handful of cities have experimented with an alternative approach: instant run-off voting... On Nov. 2, this approach will be used for the first time in a statewide election. It's a small race—North Carolina court of appeals judge—but proponents hope it will encourage the more than 20 states that have mulled the system since 2000. The biggest hurdle has been electronic voting machines, which mostly lack compatible tabulating software. But where instant runoffs have been tested, they've softened the tone of campaigns. Second place, it turns out, does count for something.

### **“Redistricting need not be political blood sport”**

***Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, July 10, 2010***

FairVote's Krist Novoselic & Rob Richie

It's time to look past partisanship and toward proven solutions for giving voters the power in every election to determine their own representation no matter who has drawn the lines. Several American cities use systems of "shared representation." For example, if there are five seats on a city council, 20% of voters can come together to elect one of the five seats....At the state level, we could have a fewer number of larger districts, each with three or four legislators who collectively speak for the majority and minority of constituents. There are longstanding, constitutionally protected ways of holding these alternative voting elections. Illinois had just such a system from 1870 to 1980. With cumulative voting with three legislators per district, nearly every voter in the state had both Democrats and Republicans representing them. As the two major parties had constituents in every corner of the state, representatives had more incentive to work across party lines, and independents and third parties had more ability to hold the major parties accountable.

### ***Reason Magazine on Instant Runoff, June 7, 2010***

A better alternative to the open primary would be a switch to an instant-runoff voting (IRV) system.... In contrast to the top-two approach, this would increase

voter choice and participation because voters could choose from all parties with qualified candidates without worrying about the wasted vote or spoiler effect. In a tight race under the current system, for example, one might be more ideologically aligned with the Green Party but not vote for her candidate of choice out of fear that such votes could take away from her second-choice candidate ..... Others may not vote their conscience simply because they do not think their preferred third-party candidate can win (which helps ensure that this is a self-fulfilling prophecy). In an IRV system, however, the voter may rest assured that even if his first choice does not win, his vote still counts.

### ***New York Times on Cumulative Voting, June 17***

This village in Westchester County has elected a Hispanic member to its board of trustees for the first time... The electoral system itself made news, letting voters use six votes however they chose, including casting all six for one candidate. One Republican who won, Joseph D. Kenner, was the first black candidate elected to the board. “I think the results are clear — that the new system worked,” Mayor Dennis G. Pilla, a Democrat, said on Wednesday....

The election of Mr. Marino, one of two Latino candidates on the ballot, could lead to the wider use of cumulative voting as a remedy in voting rights lawsuits, said FairVote's executive director, Rob Richie. “In the next round of redistricting, I think you'll see a lot more places where some remedy may be needed and challenges brought, and communities say, ‘If I have to change, I'd like this,’ ” said Mr. Richie, who was here this week for the election.

### ***The Nation, December 14, 2010***

### **John Nichols on FairVote and the Right to Vote**

“As Fair Vote's Rob Richie notes, the United States still lacks some of the most basic standards and practices when it comes to voting and elections. “Upholding fair voter access and protecting voting rights should not be a partisan issue,” he explains. ...Fair Vote says: "Universal voter registration would modernize voter registration in the US so the government shares responsibility for registration with its citizens to ensure full and accurate voter rolls."... To follow all the campaigns for fair elections, visit the FairVote.org website.