



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF THE DISTRICT  
OF COLUMBIA

# Local Program Study 2013-2015

## Elections Process in the District of Columbia

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### *Introduction*

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#### Background on the Study

In January 2013, members of The League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia decided to study The Elections Process in the District of Columbia. Since then a small committee co-chaired by Abigail Nichols and Linda Beebe have formulated criteria for decision-making and developed questions for consensus. They have also researched and written several small background papers.

#### Questions for Discussion and Consensus

1. Would DC residents be better served by the current closed primary elections or a change to open primaries?
2. Should the District continue its current system of plurality winner-take-all or move to requiring a majority vote for election?
3. If the preference is for a majority vote, how should runoffs be conducted If there is no clear winner? Should the District employ a Ranked Choice Vote (Instant Runoff) or should the top two candidates be presented in a separate election?

#### Study Schedule

##### Past Events

- January 2014: Committee members attended the Fair Vote Conference. See report on page six of the March Newsletter. <http://lwvdc.org/files/dcvoter-march-web.pdf>
- May 2014: Forum on Elections Options at the Clarke School of Law, UDC. See report on the forum on page 1 of the July Newsletter. <http://lwvdc.org/files/dcvoter-july-web.pdf>
- September 2014: *DC Voter* article on study page 4: [http://lwvdc.org/files/dcvoter-2014\\_08-09\\_web.pdf](http://lwvdc.org/files/dcvoter-2014_08-09_web.pdf)

##### November 2014 Discussion Meetings

- Thursday, November 13, 2014 at 7 pm.  
American University Park area. Please contact Kathryn at [kcrdlb@gmail.com](mailto:kcrdlb@gmail.com) to *r.s.v.p.* and for directions.
- Saturday, November 15, 2014 at 10 am.  
LWVDC's Office, 1100 15th Street, NW. Please contact us at [lwvdc1920@gmail.com](mailto:lwvdc1920@gmail.com) to let us know you will be attending.
- Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at 10 am.  
16th Street Unit. Please contact Marie (202) 829-3721 to *r.s.v.p.* and for directions.

##### January 2015 Consensus Meetings

Consensus meetings will be held on Thursday, January 15th, Saturday, January 17th, and Wednesday, January 21st. Time, location, and contact information to be provided.

**Please bring your copy of this  
Study Guide to the Discussion  
Meeting of your choice.**



# *Election Processes Study*

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## *Background Paper: Low Voter Turnout in the District of Columbia*

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Low turnout is a concern across the country; however, voters in the District generally go to the polls in smaller numbers than do citizens in other jurisdictions. Although District voters are about average in turnouts for presidential elections, the numbers drop considerably for general elections.

Table 1: Voter Turnout for Last Three Presidential Elections

Date	District Turnout	District Registered Voters	Percent of District Voters Voting	U.S. Average Percent Turnout
11/6/2012	294,254	483,600	60.8%	61.8%
11/4/2008	266,871	426,761	62.5%	63.6%
11/2/2004	230,105	383,919	59.9%	59.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Populations Survey, November Select Years

Data from the DC Board of Elections and Ethics show the following turnouts for off-year general elections:

Table 2: Voter Turnout for District of Columbia General Elections of 2002, 2006, and 2010

Date	Turnout	Registered Voters	Percent of Voters Voting
11/2/2010	135,846	453,014	30.0%
11/7/2006	122,756	395,926	30.9%
11/5/2002	133,302	363,211	36.7%

Source: DC Board of Elections: [www.dcboee.org](http://www.dcboee.org)

In contrast, FairVote's analysis of elections across the United States in those years put the average turnout as follows:

Table 3: FairVote's Analysis of Voter Turnout across the United States

Year	Percent of Voters Voting
2010	42.8%
2006	42.4%
2002	38.4%

Source: <http://www.fairvote.org/research-and-analysis/congressional-elections/dubious-democracy/dubious-democracy-1982-2010/u-s-profile-2010/>

Voter turnout is generally lower for party primary elections.

Table 4: Voter Turnout in DC for Primary Elections

Date	Turnout	Registered Voters	Percent of Voters Voting
4/1/2014	99,394	369,039	26.9%
4/3/2012	64,361	378,877	17.0%
9/9/2008	45,932	331,474	13.9%
9/12/2006	109,781	321,087	34.2%

Source: DC Board of Elections: [www.dcoee.org](http://www.dcoee.org)

In the past few years, the District has needed several special elections to fill vacancies on the Council and Board of Education.

Table 5: Voter Turnout in DC for Special Elections

Date	Turnout	Registered Voters	Percent of Voters Voting
7/15/2014 <sup>1</sup>	1,715	54,008	3.2%
4/23/2013 <sup>2</sup>	57,238	505,698	11.3%
5/15/2012 <sup>3</sup>	10,428	61,316	17.0%
4/26/2011 <sup>4</sup>	46,967	455,842	10.3%

Source: DC Board of Elections: [www.dcoee.org](http://www.dcoee.org)

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Notes:

1. 7/15/2014— Special Election to fill Ward 8 seat on the Board of Education;
  2. 4/23/2013—Special Election to fill Phil Mendelsohn's seat on the Council after he was elected Chair in a special election to replace Kwame Brown 11/6/2012.
  3. 5/15/2012—Special Election to fill the Ward 5 vacancy following Harry Thomas, Jr.'s resignation
  4. 4/26/2011—Special Election to fill Kwame Brown's at-large position on the Council after he was elected Chair.
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## Some Factors Believed to Influence Voter Turnout

Voters	Voting System	Community
Higher educational attainment	Same-day registration	Diversity in party affiliation
Higher income	Early voting	Good media coverage
Political party membership	No barriers to registration	Competitive races
Trust in elections/government	Extended Poll Hours	Good voter education
Voting a family culture	Voting rights for ex-felons/youth	Progressive civic culture
Higher age		Laws protecting time to vote

## District Demographics

- Median Educational Attainment: Highest in U.S. with 48.5% holding a bachelor's degree and 28% an advanced degree in 2009. Census figures for 2013 show 51.2% of DC residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher.”.
- Median Income: \$68,246 in 2012 compared with national median of \$51,017
- Voter registration: in 2012 out of 632, 323, 501,535 were registered voters for a registration rate of 79%; varies for elections from 69% upward.
- Political affiliation: in 2014 registration statistics show 76% Democrats, 16% No Party, 6% Republican, 1% Statehood/Green Party with a sprinkling of Libertarian and Other.
- DC Population is growing rapidly with the preponderance of growth from people ages 20-34. In 2010, people under 35 accounted for 60% of the population.

## *Background Paper: Crowded Fields in the District of Columbia Voter Turnout & Results for Some Recent Elections*

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### Mayoral Primaries

#### **April 1, 2014 Mayoral Primary**

**Registered Voters:** 369,037    **Votes Cast:** 99,394 (all offices) or 26.9%

Democratic Primary for Mayor - 8 candidates, 96,915 votes cast

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Muriel Bowser	42,045	43.4%
Vincent Gray	31,613	32.6%
Tommy Wells	12,393	12.8%
Jack Evans	4,877	5.0%
Andy Shallal	3,196	3.3%
Vincent Orange	1,946	2.0%
Reta Lewis	490	0.51%
Carols Alban	120	0.12%
Write-In	235	0.24%

Statehood/Green Party Primary for Mayor - 401 votes cast

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Faith	191	47.6%
Write-In	210	52.4%

Libertarian Party Primary - 33 votes cast

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Bruce Majors	30	90.9%
Write-In	3	9.1%

## September 14, 2010 Mayoral Primary

**Registered Voters:** 370,416 **Votes Cast:** 137,586 (all offices) or 37.6%

Democratic Primary for Mayor—5 candidates, 133,854 votes cast

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Vincent Gray	72,648	54.3%
Adrian M. Fenty	59,524	44.5%
Leo Alexander	908	0.68%
Ernest E. Johnson	317	0.24%
Sulaimon Brown	209	0.16%
Write-In	248	0.19%

Statehood/Green Party Primary for Mayor - 506 votes cast

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Faith	200	39.5%
Write-In	306	60.5%

## At-Large Council Members Primaries

### April 1, 2014 At-Large Council Primary

**Registered Voters:** 369,037 **Votes Cast:** 99,394 (all offices) or 26.9%

Democratic Primary - 5 candidates, 86,859 votes cast

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Anita D. Bonds	43,586	53.3%
Nate Bennett-Fleming	18,232	22.3%
John F. Settles II	10,775	13.2%
Pedro Rubio	6,082	7.4%
Kevin Valentine, Jr	2,560	3.1%
Write-In	624	0.76%

Republican Party Primary - 1,218 votes cast

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Marc Morgan	1,136	93.3%
Write-In	82	6.7%

### April 3, 2012 At-Large Council Primary

**Registered Voters:** 379,014 **Votes Cast:** 64,361 (all offices) or 17.0%

Democratic Primary - 4 candidates, 56,629 votes cast

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Vincent Orange	23,719	41.9%
Sekau Biddle	21,973	38.8%
Peter Shapiro	6,206	11.0%
E. Gail Anderson Holness	4,348	7.7%
Write-In	383	0.68%

### November 11, 2012 General Election (Presidential Year)

**Registered Voters:** 483,775 **Votes Cast:** 294,814 (all offices) or 60.9%

At-Large Council Members - Votes Cast: 387,131 (vote for 2)

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Vincent Orange (Dem)	148,595	38.4%
David Grosso (Indep)	78,123	20.2%
Michael A. Brown (Indep)	57,762	14.9%
Mary Brooks Beatty (Rep)	27,847	7.2%
A.J. Cooper (Indep)	25,012	6.5%
Leon J. Swain, Jr. (Indep)	24,588	6.4%
Ann C. Wilcox (STG)	22,802	5.9%
Write-In	2,402	0.62%



## Special Elections in the District of Columbia

### April 23, 2013 Special Election for At-Large Council Member

**Registered Voters:** 505,798 **Votes Cast:** 57,238 or 11.3%

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Anita Bonds (Dem)	18,207	31.5%
Elissa Silverman (Dem)	15,228	26.6%
Patrick Mara (Rep)	13,698	23.9%
Matthew Frumin (Dem)	6,307	11.0%
Paul Zukerberg (Dem)	1,195	2.1%
Michael Brown (Dem)	1,100	1.9%
Perry Redd (SGP)	1,090	1.7%
Write-In	187	0.33%

Anita Bonds was elected to fill the seat vacated by Phil Mendelsohn when he was elected Chair of the Council in a special election in November 2012. The Democratic party had appointed her interim Council member after the November 2012 election.

### November 11, 2012 Special Election (Simultaneous with General Election) Chair of the Council of the District of Columbia

**Registered Voters:** 483,775 **Votes Cast:** 294,814 (all offices) or 60.9%

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Phil Mendelsohn (Dem)	174,742	70.7%
Calvin H. Gurley (Dem)	69,342	28.0%
Write-In	3,017	1.2%

Phil Mendelsohn was elected to become Chair after Kwame Brown stepped down in June 2012, pleading guilty to bank fraud and other charges.

## May 12, 2012 Special Election for Council Member Ward 5

**Registered Voters:** 61,316 **Votes Cast:** 10,428 or 17%

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Kenyan McDuffie	4,529	43.6%
Delano Hunter	2,190	21.1%
Frank Wilds	1,493	14.4%
Tim Day	592	5.7%
Ron L. Magnus	434	4.2%
Shelly Gardner	273	2.6%
Kathy Henderson	257	2.5%
Drew E. Hubbard	235	2.3%
Rae Zepata	199	1.8%
Ruth E. Marshall	78	0.75%
John C. Cheeks	57	0.55%
Amanda Broadnox	25	0.24%
Write-In	31	0.30%

Kevin McDuffie was elected to fill the Ward 5 seat after Harry Thomas, Jr. was charged with embezzlement, the first Council member to be charged with a felony.

## April 26, 2011 Special Election At-Large Council Member

**Registered Voters:** 455,794 **Votes Cast:** 47,227 or 10.4%

Candidate	Votes Received	Percent of Votes Cast
Vincent Orange	13,583	28.9%
Patrick Mara	11,851	25.2%
Sekou Biddle	9,373	20.0%
Bryan Weaver	6,069	12.9%
Joshua Lopez	3,343	7.1%
Tom Brown	1,036	2.2%
Dorothy Douglas	787	1.7%
Alan Page	610	1.3%
Arkan Haile	137	0.29%
Write-In	178	0.38%

Vincent Orange was elected to fill the seat of Kwame Brown who had been elected Chair of the Council in November 2010 after Vincent Gray had resigned to run for Mayor.

## *Background Paper: Types of Primaries & Instant Runoff Elections*

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### Closed Primary

Voters register as a member of a political party and can vote only for candidates of that party in a primary. Party registration is public. The District of Columbia has Closed Primaries.

### Semi-Closed Primary

As in a Closed Primary, voters registered with a political party affiliation may vote only that party's ballot; however, one or more parties may accept Independents voting their ballot.

### Open/Public Choice Primary

Voters choose a party ballot at the polling place and can select candidates only from that party. Their party ballot choice is recorded and is publicly available.

### Open/Private Choice Primary

Voters choose a party ballot at the polling place and can select candidates only from that party. However, no record of the party ballot chosen is kept. This is sometimes called the "Montana Primary."

### "Top Two" Primary

All candidates for each office from all parties are listed on the ballot. Voters may choose any candidate from any party in any race. When results are tallied, the top two vote getters, regardless of their party affiliation, are the candidates on the slate for the general election. These candidates may be from the same party. This is sometimes called the "modified blanket primary," as it was adopted by California and Washington State after the Supreme Court declared a "Blanket Primary" unconstitutional in 2000.

This system is sometimes called a "nonpartisan blanket" primary, which the Supreme Court declared constitutional in 2008 because it does not require parties to associate with candidates they did not endorse. Ballots must carry a statement that the candidates' stated party preferences do not reflect the party's endorsement.

### "Blanket" Primary

All candidates for each office from any party are listed on the ballot. Voters select their choice for each office and are not restricted to one party or another. Thus, a voter could choose a candidate from one party for one office and a candidate from another party for another office. The top vote getters from each party then advance to the general election. Washington State used this system from 1936 to 2003. It was legally challenged several times by the political parties. California had also adopted it, and in 2000 the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional, saying that parties had the right to select their candidates.

## Runoff Elections

In jurisdictions requiring a majority or specified percentage vote (such as New York City's 40%) for election, runoff elections may be required. In the District of Columbia one need only to obtain a plurality to be elected.

### Runoff Election

If there is no clear winner by law, a second election is called. The top two candidates, in number of votes received, are placed on the ballot; and all other candidate names are removed. This "two-round" system is used around the world to elect legislators and presidents and in many states in the United States to elect local and state candidates.

### Instant Runoff Voting

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), also called Ranked-Choice Voting, Alternative Vote (AV), Transferable Vote, or Preferential Voting, allows voters to rank order their options. They mark their first choice and then may add 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and so on. If a single candidate wins a majority of votes, that candidate is declared the winner. If there is no majority, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and their votes are distributed to the candidates who were selected as the second choice by the voters. The following simple chart is an illustration:

#### Round One of Counting

Candidates	First Choice	Second Choices
A	41	6 for Candidate B 35 for Candidate C
B	40	10 for Candidate C 30 for Candidate A
C	19	4 for Candidate A 15 for Candidate B

#### Round Two of Counting

Candidates	Candidate C (lowest votes) is eliminated & those second choices added to the first choice votes for Candidate A & B
A	41+4=45
B	40+15=55
C	19

Thus, a candidate who was not the highest vote getter in the first round could ultimately win. With crowded fields, another round of distribution may be done with the candidate with the next lowest number of votes being eliminated.

Instant runoffs are used in countries such as Australia and Canada and in many US jurisdictions, such as Portland, Maine; San Francisco and Oakland, California; and Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. The system is also used to select the Best Picture for the Oscars and in other types of contests as well.

## Background Paper:

### *Types of Primaries & Registration by State*

States in **boldface** type  
practice Partisan Voter  
Registration.

Alabama	Closed Primary — request the ballot for the party they wish to vote for.
<b>Alaska</b>	Closed Primary — party affiliation 30 days prior determines ballot given.
<b>Arizona</b>	Closed — registered independents may choose 1 party ballot election day.
Arkansas	Open Primary – no party affiliation required.
<b>California</b>	“Top Two” Open Primary – took effect January 2011; controversial
<b>Colorado</b>	Closed Primary – Independents may choose 1 party; Presidential Caucus.
<b>Connecticut</b>	Closed – Independents choose 1 party day before; change party 90 days.
<b>Delaware</b>	Closed Primary – must vote as affiliated on registration.
<b>DC</b>	Closed Primary – only voters registered as sanctioned party may vote.
<b>Florida</b>	Closed Primary – only voters registered as sanctioned party may vote.
Georgia	Open – must declare on election day oath of intent to affiliate w/ party.
Hawaii	Republican primary is open. Democrat primary is closed.
Idaho	Democrats: Semi-Closed. Unaffiliated voters may vote on primary day, then are bound to the party. Republicans: Closed. Open Primaries until 2011 when Republicans obtained ruling of unconstitutional.
Illinois	Semi-Closed. Voter declares party at polling place; official repeats in loud voice; if no one challenges, voter votes that party.
Indiana	Closed Primary – voter requests ballot for party they wish to vote for.
<b>Iowa</b>	Closed Primary — may change parties on election day.
<b>Kansas</b>	Semi-Closed. Republicans permit same-day registration. Democrats permit affiliated and Independents to vote.
<b>Kentucky</b>	Closed – only those registered as Democrat or Republican may vote.
<b>Louisiana</b>	Open Primary for State and Local; Closed for Presidential.
<b>Maine</b>	Closed Primary – may change parties 15 days in advance.
<b>Maryland</b>	Closed Primary – may change parties 21 days in advance.
<b>Massachusetts</b>	Open – but to vote for another party, must change enrollment.

Michigan	Open – no need to declare party, but can vote for only one party.
Minnesota	Open – but only voters affiliated with a party may vote in a primary.
Mississippi	Open – but to participate, voters must support party nominees.
Missouri	Open Primary.
Montana	Open/Private Choice – receive all ballots & select party in private.
<b>Nebraska</b>	Closed – voter gets only non-partisan ballots if not party-affiliated.
<b>Nevada</b>	Closed – only those registered as Democrat or Republican may vote.
<b>New Hampshire</b>	Closed Primary – must vote Democrat or Republican; become a registered party member by voting.
<b>New Jersey</b>	Closed – may change party 55 days in advance; Independents may declare party election day.
<b>New Mexico</b>	Closed – only Democrats or Republicans may vote partisan ballot.
<b>New York</b>	Closed Primary – only those affiliated with a party may vote that ballot.
<b>North Carolina</b>	Open – may choose party at polls; remain Independent on the rolls.
North Dakota	Open – state abandoned voter registration in 1951. Feel small population and small precincts protect against voter fraud.
Ohio	Closed Primary – right to vote may be challenged re lack of affiliation.
<b>Oklahoma</b>	Closed – person “who does not wish to be affiliated with a political party is not entitled to influence the selection of its nominees.”
<b>Oregon</b>	Closed – Republicans voted in 2012 to allow independents to vote.
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	Closed Primary – must vote for party affiliation.
<b>Rhode Island</b>	Semi-Closed – Independents may vote any party; then seen as member.
South Carolina	Open Primary – no party affiliation required.
<b>South Dakota</b>	Republican: Closed. Democrats: Independents may choose to vote.
Tennessee	Open Primary – no party affiliation required.
Texas	Open – may choose party or unaffiliated; in runoff must vote same party.
<b>Utah*</b>	Democrats: Open Primary. Republicans: Closed Primary.
Vermont	Open Primary. For Presidential Primary, must declare party.
Virginia	Open. Republicans require loyalty oath signed for Presidential Primary.
Washington	Open/Private Choice. “Top Two Primary.”
<b>West Virginia</b>	Semi-Closed – Independents may request ballot for 1 party.
Wisconsin	Open Primary – no party affiliation required.
<b>Wyoming</b>	Closed Primary – voter may change party affiliation election day.

\* Utah registers by party, but does not report data.

*Most data taken from state websites. Delaware, Kansas, Oregon, and Wyoming taken from [www.fairvote.org](http://www.fairvote.org) on 9/3/13.*

## Summary of Registration and Primaries

### Voter Registration

Partisan	31	61%
Non-Partisan	19	37%
No Registration (North Dakota)	1	2%

### Primaries (50 States and the District of Columbia)

	State/Local 2012-13		Presidential	
Open	17	33%	16	31%
Semi-Open	6	12%	3	6%
Semi-Closed	8	16%	5	10%
Closed	17	33%	18	35%
Closed Caucuses	0	0%	4	8%
Open Caucuses	0	0%	3	6%
Semi-Open Caucuses	0	0%	1	2%
Semi-Closed Caucuses	0	0%	1	2%
Top Two Open (CA & WA)	2	4%	--	--
Non-Partisan	1	2%		

## Background Paper: District of Columbia Demographics 2013<sup>1</sup>

### Gallup Poll National Affiliation 2013<sup>3</sup>

A Gallup Poll indicated that 42% of respondents reported Independent status, 31% identified as a Democrat, and 25% cited affiliation with the Republican party.

	DC	USA
Population—2013 estimate	646,449	316,128,839
% Change—4/1/10 to 7/1/13	7.4%	2.4%
Persons under 5 years age	6.3%	6.3%
Persons under 18 years	17.2%	23.3%
Persons 65 years and over	11.4%	14.1%
Females	52.6%	50.8%
White alone	43.4%	77.7%
Black or African American alone	49.5%	13.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.6%	1.2%
Asian alone	3.9%	5.3%
Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islanders alone	0.1%	0.2%
Two or more races	2.6%	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino	10.1%	17.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	35.8%	62.6%
High school grad or higher (age 25+ 2008-12)	87.5%	85.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher (age 25+ 2008-12)	51.2%	28.5%
Per capita income last 12 mo. (2008-12)	\$45,004	\$28,051
Median Household Income (2008-12)	\$64,267	\$53,046
Persons below poverty level (2008-12)	18.5%	14.9%
Home ownership rate (2008-12)	42.4%	65.5%
Median value, owner-occupied unit (2008-12)	\$443,000	\$181,400

### Party Affiliation of Registered Voters, DC, August 2014<sup>2</sup>

Dem	Rep	STG	Lib	Oth	No party	Totals
347,639	27,785	3,633	401	1,035	76,140	456,633
76.13%	6.08%	.80%	.09%	.23%	16.67%	100%

## Endnotes

1. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/11000.html> Downloaded 10-7-14
2. [https://www.dcboee.org/voter\\_stats/voter\\_reg/2014.asp](https://www.dcboee.org/voter_stats/voter_reg/2014.asp) Downloaded 10-7-14
3. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/166763/record-high-americans-identify-independents.aspx> Downloaded 10-7-14.



## *Background Paper:* *Vote Fraud & Manipulation*

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According to Ballotpedia, Vote fraud is “*illegal interference with the process of an election. Acts of fraud are used to change the outcome of an election to be other than it would have been without the fraud.*”<sup>1</sup> Individuals might commit fraud by voting when they are ineligible (non-citizen, not registered, wrong precinct, a felon), by double voting, or by impersonating someone who is eligible.

### Frequency of Fraud

Despite the recent allegations nationwide and the push for voter IDs to “eliminate voter fraud,” it actually seems to be quite rare.

In August 2012, *News21*, a Carnegie-Knight investigative reporting project staffed by college journalism students, released a report of a 7-month analysis of voting fraud. They contacted election officials in all 50 states and requested reports of any kind of election fraud. In all they found 10 cases of in-person voter fraud and a total of 2,068 of any kind of voter fraud in 12 categories.<sup>2</sup>

### Manipulation and Corrupt Campaigns

A corrupt campaign might commit fraud in any number of ways. The Daly machine in Chicago, for example, was reputed to have registered whole graveyards and filled the rolls with dead people. A campaign could buy votes or intimidate voters. Or they might invent names to register.

The District of Columbia has experienced several instances of fraud over the recent past. In March 2014, businessman Jeffrey Thompson pleaded guilty to two offenses: a federal violation of campaign finance by submitting false filings to the Internal Revenue Service and conspiring to violate District of Columbia campaign finance laws by defrauding the Office of Campaign Finance.<sup>3</sup>

In June 2014 Kelvin Robinson, a former candidate for the Council of the District of Columbia, pled guilty to a felony charge for conspiring to defraud the District of Columbia’s Office of Campaign Finance by receiving and concealing campaign contributions in excess of those permitted under D.C. campaign finance laws.<sup>4</sup>

Kwame Brown resigned as Council Chair in June 2012. He subsequently pleaded guilty to federal charges of bank fraud and a minor campaign offense. In November 2012 he was sentenced to 1 day in custody, 2 years probation, and 450 hours of community service.<sup>5</sup> In June 2013, the DC Board of Elections ordered that a total penalty of \$53,400 be assessed against the Committee to Re-Elect Kwame Brown for committing 267 violations of the Campaign Finance Act.<sup>6</sup>

In May 2012 Thomas Gore pled guilty to three D.C. election law misdemeanors and a federal charge of obstruction of justice for secretly helping to finance a minor mayoral

candidate (Sulaimon Brown) to defeat incumbent Adrian Fenty.<sup>7</sup>

Also in May 2012, Howard Brooks, a former deputy to Mayor Vincent Gray, pleaded guilty to campaign violations. He admitted that he had given Sulaimon Brown more money than previously disclosed.<sup>8</sup>

In July 2010, a third person, Jeanne Harris, pleaded guilty to charges of campaign violations. A close associate of Jeffrey Thompson, she had attempted to bypass federal and District campaign laws in a “straw donation” scheme.<sup>9</sup>

Sulaimon Brown had been a special assistant in the Gray administration when he was fired in February 2011 after media reports about his salary and possible criminal past surfaced.<sup>10</sup> After his employment was terminated, he appeared at a press conference where Mayor Gray was discussing the situation to protest the action. During the mayoral campaign, he had startled observers by urging voters to support Vincent Gray.

Former DC Council member Michael A. Brown was sentenced to 39 months in federal prison for accepting tens of thousands of dollars in bribes in 2012. Despite having a good salary, Brown was delinquent in his taxes and behind in his mortgage and car payments according to reports.<sup>11</sup>

In May 2012 Harry Thomas, Jr., a former DC Council member, was sentenced to 38 months in prison after being

found guilty of embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars that were intended for youth programs. He noted that he had lost his “moral compass.”<sup>12</sup>

## Petition Fraud

In 2002 Mayor Anthony Williams, well respected for the changes he had brought about in the city, was preparing to run for a second term. The people in his campaign responsible for collecting petitions claimed to have acquired 10,102 signatures, far more than the 2,000 required to get on the primary ballot. However, when Dorothy Brizill, Gary Imhoff, Mark Sibley, and Shaun Snyder challenged the petition, more than 9,000 were disqualified for a wide range of reasons. Some were not registered voters, some names did not match, some were not witnessed. One collector claimed to have collected signatures on June 31. Williams was thus not eligible to be on the ballot for the Democratic primary.<sup>13</sup>

Williams ran as a write-in candidate<sup>14</sup> and won easily to serve a second term. There were no suggestions of malfeasance on Williams’s part. The Board of Elections and Ethics did fine the Williams campaign \$277,000. In 2005 the DC District Attorney filed hundreds of misdemeanor charges against the parties responsible for gathering the signatures—Scott Bishop, Sr., Scott Bishop, Jr., and Crystal Bishop.<sup>15</sup>

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## Endnotes

- 1 [http://ballotpedia.org/Vote\\_fraud](http://ballotpedia.org/Vote_fraud) Downloaded 10-9-14,
- 2 <http://votingrights.news21.com/article/definition-of-terms/index.html> 10-9-14
- 3 <http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2014/businessman-pleads-guilty-to-conspiring-to-violate-federal-and-district-of-columbia-campaign-finance-and-tax-laws>
- 4 <http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2014/former-district-of-columbia-council-candidate-pleads-guilty-to-conspiring-to-violate-d.c.-campaign-finance-laws> Downloaded 10-9-14
- 5 [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/tuesday-sentencing-for-kwame-brown-in-bank-fraud-case/2012/11/12/9412c386-2d08-11e2-89d4-040c9330702a\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/tuesday-sentencing-for-kwame-brown-in-bank-fraud-case/2012/11/12/9412c386-2d08-11e2-89d4-040c9330702a_story.html)
- 6 [http://www.dcboee.org/pdf\\_files/nr\\_1163.pdf](http://www.dcboee.org/pdf_files/nr_1163.pdf)
- 7 [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/vincent-gray-campaign-aide-thomas-gore-pleads-guilty-to-election-violations/2012/05/22/gIQAQjif-SiU\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/vincent-gray-campaign-aide-thomas-gore-pleads-guilty-to-election-violations/2012/05/22/gIQAQjif-SiU_story.html)
- 8 <http://www.wjla.com/articles/2012/05/howard-brooks-former-aide-to-d-c-mayor-vincent-gray-to-plead-guilty-76297.html>
- 9 <http://www.wjla.com/articles/2012/07/jeanne-harris-pleads-guilty-77723.html>
- 10 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/02/24/AR2011022406791.html>
- 11 [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/former-dc-council-member-michael-a-brown-set-for-sentencing-in-bribery-case/2014/05/28/33813c90-e68a-11e3-afc6-a1dd9407abcf\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/former-dc-council-member-michael-a-brown-set-for-sentencing-in-bribery-case/2014/05/28/33813c90-e68a-11e3-afc6-a1dd9407abcf_story.html)
- 12 [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/harry-thomas-former-dc-council-member-is-sentenced-to-more-than-three-years-in-prison/2012/05/03/gIQA7X7KzT\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/harry-thomas-former-dc-council-member-is-sentenced-to-more-than-three-years-in-prison/2012/05/03/gIQA7X7KzT_story.html)
- 13 <http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/blogs/citydesk/2011/07/15/today-in-d-c-history-anthony-williams-forced-to-run-write-in-campaign/>
- 14 <http://www.dcwatch.com/archives/election2002/williams18.htm>
- 15 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/09/14/AR2005091402414.html>

## *Background Paper: Getting on the Ballot*

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*Note: Cities marked with an  
asterisk (\*) have user-friendly  
websites.*

### **Washington, DC\***

Population 2010: 601,732<sup>1</sup>

Filing Fee: None<sup>2</sup>

Petitions: 2,000 signatures for Primaries; 3,000 signatures for General.

Financial Disclosure: No.

Campaign Finance Report: Yes. Individual/corporate names, addresses, and employers (individuals) above \$49.

### **Austin, TX\***

Population 2012 Estimate: 864,407<sup>3</sup>

Filing Fee: \$500<sup>4</sup>

Petition Signatures: 244 for Mayor, 25-52 for District seat on City Council

Financial Disclosure: No.

Campaign Finance Report: Yes with full contributor names & addresses.

Other Forms: Conflict of Interest, Code of Fair Campaign Practices

### **Minneapolis, MN\***

Population 2012 Estimate: 392,768<sup>5</sup>

Filing Fee: \$20<sup>6</sup>

Petition Signatures: No requirement.

Financial Disclosure: No.

Campaign Finance Report: Yes. Contributions above \$100, full name, address, and employer (individual).

Other Forms: Candidacy Affidavit (name, address, age, residency).

### **Omaha, NE\***

Population 2012 Estimate: 428,850<sup>7</sup>

Filing Fee: Varies<sup>8</sup>

From \$10 for City Council to \$100 for Mayor to \$950 for Attorney General.

Petition: No Requirements.

Financial Disclosure: Yes. (Statement of Financial Interest +others on conflicts).

Campaign Finance Report: Yes. Contributions above \$250.

### **San Francisco, CA**

Population 2010 Census: 804,235<sup>9</sup>

Filing Fee: Generally 2% of salary<sup>10</sup>

Mayor Salary 2014-2014 \$285,319; filing fee \$5,706.

Petitions: May submit in-lieu of fee; for Mayor requires 11,412 signatures.

Financial Disclosure: Yes. Statement of Economic Interests.

Campaign Finance Report: Yes. Complicated rules and multiple forms.

Code of Fair Campaign Practices.

### **Boston, MA**

Population 2012 estimate: 637,845<sup>11</sup>

Filing Fee: Do not appear to have one.

Petitions: Not clear for city; need 1,000 signatures for County Council and 10,000 for Governor.<sup>12</sup>  
Financial Disclosure: Yes. Statement of Financial Interest.  
Campaign Finance Report: Yes. Names of organizations listed.

### **Baltimore, MD**

Population 2010: 620,871<sup>13</sup>  
Filing Fee: \$150 for Mayor or Council Chair; \$50 for District Candidate<sup>14</sup>  
Petitions: No requirement. Party officials must sign nomination certificate.  
Financial Disclosure: Yes.  
Campaign Finance Report: Yes.

### **Denver, CO\***

Population 2010: 600,158<sup>15</sup>  
Filing Fee: None.  
Petitions: 300 signatures for Mayor; 100 for Council seat.<sup>16</sup>  
Financial Disclosure: Yes. Within 15 days of becoming a candidate.  
Campaign Finance Report: Yes.

### **Nashville, TN**

Population in 2012: 624,496<sup>17</sup>  
Filing Fee: Cannot find any indication.  
Petitions: Petitions are required; cannot find any indication of how many signatures. It takes 25 signatures to

get on the ballot for US House of Representatives.  
Financial Disclosure: Yes. Statement of Disclosure—SS8005.  
Campaign Finance Reports: Yes. All contributors over \$100 with addresses and employers.

### **Portland, OR**

Population 2012: 603,026<sup>18</sup>  
Filing Fee: \$50 Mayor; \$30 Commissioner.  
Petitions: 500 signatures from at least 10% of precincts in the city or county for a county office.<sup>19</sup>  
Financial Disclosure: Did not see any reference.  
Campaign Finance Reports: anyone contributing \$750 must file a report.

### **Oklahoma City, OK\***

Population 2012 estimate: 599,679<sup>20</sup>  
Filing Fee: \$200 OR<sup>21</sup>  
Petitions: 500 signatures in lieu of payment of filing fee.  
Financial Disclosure: State and County candidates must file.  
Campaign Finance Reports: All municipal candidates.

### **Columbus, OH**

Population 2012 estimate: 810,103<sup>22</sup>  
Filing Fee: \$45<sup>23</sup>  
Petitions: 25-50 for mayor; 13-25 for ward council seat.  
Financial Disclosure: All must file with Ohio Ethics Commission.  
Campaign Finance Reports: Extensive rules; online filing.

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## **Endnotes**

- 1 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/11000.html> Downloaded 10-3-14
- 2 [https://www.dcboee.org/candidate\\_info/general\\_info/index.asp](https://www.dcboee.org/candidate_info/general_info/index.asp) 10-3-14
- 3 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/4805000.html>. Downloaded 10-2-14
- 4 <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/candidate-packet>. Downloaded 10-2-14
- 5 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/27/2743000.html>. Downloaded 10-2-14
- 6 <http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/candidate/index.htm>. Downloaded 10-2-14
- 7 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/31/3137000.html>. Downloaded 10-2-14
- 8 [http://www.votedouglascounty.com/candidate\\_filing.aspx#requirements](http://www.votedouglascounty.com/candidate_filing.aspx#requirements) 10-2-14
- 9 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06075.html> Downloaded 10-4-14
- 10 <http://sfgov2.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/elections/candidates/Nov2014/Nov2014LocalCandidateGuide.pdf> Downloaded 10-2-14
- 11 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/25/2507000.html> Downloaded 10-3-14
- 12 <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/elepdf/Candidates-Guide-14.pdf> 10-3-14
- 13 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/24/24510.html> Downloaded 10-3-14
- 14 <http://www.elections.state.md.us/candidacy/requirements.html> 10-3-14
- 15 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08/08031.html> 10-3-14
- 16 [http://www.denvergov.org/Portals/778/documents/CampaignInfo/Package\\_2015MunicipalCandidate\\_2014-10-01.pdf](http://www.denvergov.org/Portals/778/documents/CampaignInfo/Package_2015MunicipalCandidate_2014-10-01.pdf) Downloaded 10-3-14
- 17 <http://www.city-data.com/city/Nashville-Davidson-Tennessee.html#b> 10-4-14
- 18 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41/4159000.html> 10-4-14
- 19 <http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?&c=54762> 10-4-14
- 20 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/40/4055000.html> 10-6-14
- 21 <http://www.okc.gov/clerk/elections/howtofile.html> 10-6-14
- 22 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/39/3918000.html> 10-6-14
- 23 [http://www.sos.state.oh.us/sos/upload/publications/election/2013\\_CRG.pdf](http://www.sos.state.oh.us/sos/upload/publications/election/2013_CRG.pdf)

## *Results of Survey on the DC Elections Process Study*

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*Thank you to all who took the time to give us their opinions.*

*They are very useful.*

Early in September study co-chairs Abigail Nichols and Linda Beebe prepared a survey of members, which was emailed or mailed via the US Postal Service to all 153 members at the time. By September 27, 30 completed surveys had been returned.

In responses to a question about criteria LWVDC might use to evaluate the electoral system, “Protect against fraud and political manipulation” and “Encourage greater voter participation” were tied for number 1. Second place went to “Be easy to use and administer,” whereas “Provide a reasonable range of voter choices” was third. More than 60% of the respondents cited “Ensure majority rule” and “Encourage minority representation,” which were tied for fourth place.

To the question about flaws, if any, respondents see in the current DC electoral that includes closed primaries and plurality winners, 17 people answered, some citing multiple issues:

- 7 noted the lack of a majority vote.
- 7 pointed to the fact that minority parties and independents have little say.
- 2 thought the system works well, 1 voicing support for closed primaries.
- 2 expressed concern that voters use their votes against a candidate, rather than for one.
- 2 noted the low turnout DC usually experiences.
- 1 expressed concern that the city does not consider an all-mail vote, which they feel would reduce costs and voter fraud.
- *“If you are not part of the in-crowd, why bother voting at all, since your vote won’t make any difference.”*

About 56% of those responding felt that these flaws could be remediated with new proposals.

When asked what background materials would be most useful for the study, 60% or more of respondents chose the following:

- Pros and cons for each option (top request)
- Current election regulations (second most cited)
- Definitions of terms (third most requested)
- Voter turnouts and results from recent elections (fourth)
- Demographics for the District (fifth)

Positions taken by other LWVs, opinions expressed by the media and others, and case studies all were requested by fewer than 50% of respondents.

About 40% of respondents have lived in a jurisdiction with a different electoral process. One respondent noted the need to educate the changing DC population about the DC government structure and the electoral process.



## *Background Paper: Relevant League Positions*

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### League of Women Voters of the United States

#### Representative Government

*Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.*

#### Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote.

*Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.*

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation.

*Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.*

### League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia

#### Local Self-Government And Representation

In Congress (Adopted in the 1920s)

*The LWVDC supports local self-government and representation in Congress. Our goal is the fullest possible citizen participation in and responsibility for the government of the District of Columbia and full voting representation in the Senate and House.*

Statehood (Adopted June 1993)

*The League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia supports self-government and full voting representation in Congress for the District of Columbia, and accepts statehood as a means of achieving this goal.*

### Positions from Other State Leagues

**Arizona.** Supports adopting Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) system for single state seat races; supports adopting proportional representation for multi-seat races, specifically Ranked Choice Voting. Consensus 2005, Amended 2008. [http://www.lwvaz.org/about\\_action.html](http://www.lwvaz.org/about_action.html)

**California.** Supports election systems for executive offices, both at the state and local levels, that require a winner to receive a majority of the votes, as long as the majority is achieved using a voting method such as Instant Runoff Voting, rather than a second, separate runoff election. Adopted 2001; Modified 2003; expanded to all single-winner elections 2011. <http://lwvc.org/issues/election-systems>

**Florida.** Recommends instant runoff voting as an alternative to plurality voting.

**Maine.** Endorsed ranked choice voting (instant runoff voting) on March 7, 2011. <http://lwvme.org/RCV.html>

**Massachusetts.** When electing someone to a single executive office at the state level, such as governor or attorney general, including primary and general elections, the voting system should require the winner to obtain a majority of the votes. The League supports



instant runoff voting. Adopted 2005. <http://lwvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Where-We-Stand.pdf> (p. 14)

**Minnesota.** Alternative voting systems. Support of the option to use Instant Runoff Voting to elect State or Local Officials in single-seat elections. LWVMN also supports the continued use of the plurality voting system in our elections. LWVMN strongly supports the right of local governments and municipalities to choose Instant Runoff Voting for their own elections. <http://www.lwvmn.org/document.doc?id=716> (p. 3)

**North Carolina.** The LWVNC will support legislation that assures that a candidate preferred by a majority of voters wins the election. Specifically, the LWVNC will support instant runoff voting (IRV) for all statewide and local elections. Adopted May 31, 2008.

**Oklahoma.** Took position in support of IRV over runoffs in 2011. [http://www.lwvok.org/files/lwvok\\_positions\\_2013\\_rev\\_3\\_14\\_.pdf](http://www.lwvok.org/files/lwvok_positions_2013_rev_3_14_.pdf) (p. 39)

**South Carolina.** Endorse proportional representation for several reasons that include better turnout and less voter cynicism, more emphasis on issues than on personal attacks, lessen election costs, etc. Systems which may be considered include Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), Limited Voting, Cumulative Voting, and others. Of these, IRV . . . is likely to be the most effective and widely accepted new system. Adopted by the State Board March 2005. <http://lwvsc.org/files/leaguepositions20132015.pdf> (p. 12)

**Vermont.** The LWVVT will support legislation that assures that a candidate preferred by a majority of voters wins the election. Specifically, the LWVVT will support instant runoff voting (IRV) for all statewide and local elections. Adopted 1999. <http://www.lwvofvt.org/Advocacy.html>

**Washington State.** “Action to support a majority vote requirement if achieved through a mechanism such as Instant Runoff Voting (IRV). Action to support a primary that is “open” and encourages minor party participation if a primary continues to be used.” 2013-2015 Action Agenda. <http://www.lwvwa.org/pdfs/PIA13-15.pdf> (p. 6)

## Positions from Other Local Leagues

**Berkeley, CA.** “Instant runoff voting” should be used in all elections involving more than two candidates for a single position.” Adopted 2000.

**Oakland, CA.** “Instant runoff voting” should be used in all elections involving more than two candidates for a single position.” Adopted 2003. <http://www.lwvoakland.org/positions.html>

**Pasadena, CA.** “Advocacy of Instant Runoff Voting for single seat elections”. Advocacy of Choice Voting as a priority for local elections for boards and councils.” [http://lwv-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2013/09/lwvpositions.pdf](http://lwv-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2013/09/lwvpositions.pdf)

**Montgomery County, MD.** “We support the option to use Instant Runoff Voting for single seat or executive office elections, both at the county and local level. This would require the winner to receive a majority of the votes cast.” <http://mont1.lwvmd.org/n/node/8655>

## *Background Paper:* *Sampling of Media Opinions on Elections*

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*The Elections Process Committee will add additional references as they find them.*

Elections and political primaries in particular—their role and their effectiveness—continue to be the subject of many talk shows, columns, and editorials. This web page will provide brief descriptions and links to the actual material, and we will add more as we discover them.

### The Role of Political Primaries

*Diane Rehm Show* on NPR, July 24, 2014

<http://thedianerehmshow.org/shows/2014-07-24/debating-role-political-primaries>

**Introduction** “New York Sen. Charles Schumer recently declared: “*Polarization and partisanship are a plague on American politics.*” He says one of the main culprits is our party primary system. It is not a new criticism. Political scholars have long argued that when primary elections are restricted to voters from one party, nominees with the most extreme views often win. But some question whether open primaries – where voters can cross party lines -- actually improve the electoral fortunes of moderate candidates. And others worry open primaries dilute a party’s ability to nominate their own candidate without outside interference. Diane and her guests discuss the role of primaries in today’s polarized politics.”

#### Guests

Amy Walter, National Editor, *Cook Political Report*.

Norman Ornstein, Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute; co-author with Thomas Mann of, “*It’s Even Worse Than It Looks: How the American Constitutional System Collided With the New Politics of Extremism.*”

Elaine Kamarck, Senior Fellow, Governance Studies, Brookings Institution.

Gabriel Lenz, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of California at Berkeley.

### The Charles Schumer Op-Ed that Sparked the Diane Rehm Discussion

In a July 21, 2014 *New York Times* OpEd, Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY), decried polarization and partisanship. He was most vocal about the gerrymandering that has taken place across the country and the lack of compromise in the U.S. Congress. He called for a national move to the “Top-Two” primary system now in use in California and Washington State.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/22/opinion/charles-schumer-adopt-the-open-primary.html?ref=opinion&asetType=opinion&r=2>

### Another Opinion on Top-Two Primaries

Linda Killian is a journalist and senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center. Her brief article “*Why the Top-Two Primary Won’t Solve the Turnout Problem*” appeared on *Washington Wire* on July 31, 2014.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2014/07/31/why-the-top-two-primary-system-wont-solve-the-turnout-problem/>



## Northwest Current on Majorities

Following the poor turnout in the April 2013 special election, the *Northwest Current* newspaper published an editorial favoring instant runoff elections. The editorial noted that only 10% of registered voters voted, with Anita Bonds winning with 32% of the vote ahead of Elissa Silverman with 28%. Commenting that the Council is unlikely to vote for a change in the election process, the writers cited the need for a broad-based grassroots effort.

<http://www.currentnewspapers.com/admin/uploadfiles/NW%2005-01-2013%201.pdf>

## Washington Post Editorial on Runoffs #1

On April 24, 2013, *The Washington Post* issued a call for an instant runoff electoral system. They noted the unofficial returns of the previous day's election when 10% of registered voters turned out to elect Anita Bonds with 31.5% of the votes cast.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/district-should-adopt-instant-runoff-elections/2013/04/24/71c581e2-ad19-11e2-b6fd-ba6f5f26d70e\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/district-should-adopt-instant-runoff-elections/2013/04/24/71c581e2-ad19-11e2-b6fd-ba6f5f26d70e_story.html)

## Washington Post Op Ed on Nonpartisan Open Primaries

On January 31, 2014, Bryan Weaver, an Independent hopeful candidate for the District Council wrote "*D.C.'s next mayor could win with 12 percent of voters. There is a better way.*" He called for a "nonpartisan election system in which candidates of any party affiliation, or none, run as a group in a single, open primary."

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/dcs-next-mayor-could-win-with-the-support-of-12-percent-of-voters-theres-a-better-way/2014/01/31/1101ca8e-886d-11e3-916e-e01534b1e132\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/dcs-next-mayor-could-win-with-the-support-of-12-percent-of-voters-theres-a-better-way/2014/01/31/1101ca8e-886d-11e3-916e-e01534b1e132_story.html)

## Washington Post Editorial on Runoffs #2

On March 27, 2014, *The Washington Post* published an editorial supporting Councilmember David Grosso's bill calling for instant runoff elections. The writers noted that 76,000 city residents were in effect disenfranchised because they are registered as Independents. They also wrote in favor of a system that achieves a majority winner.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-runoff-system-would-improve-the-districts-democratic-process/2014/03/27/aaab4c32-b5e0-11e3-8cb6-284052554d74\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-runoff-system-would-improve-the-districts-democratic-process/2014/03/27/aaab4c32-b5e0-11e3-8cb6-284052554d74_story.html)

## Minneapolis Star Tribune Blog on Instant Runoffs

On February 12, 2014, Lawrence R. Jacobs and Joanne M. Miller outlined some of the flaws they saw in ranked choice voting.

[http://blog.lib.umn.edu/hhhevent/hhh\\_in-the-news/2014/02/ranked-choice-voting-by-the-da.php](http://blog.lib.umn.edu/hhhevent/hhh_in-the-news/2014/02/ranked-choice-voting-by-the-da.php)

## Counterpoint in the Star Tribune

On February 16, 2014, Matthew F. Filner published an opinion countering the Jacobs and Miller article. He agreed with the previous writers that sober analysis is called for, but suggested the data demonstrate a different outcome than Jacobs and Miller found.

<http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentaries/245609991.html>

## Washington Post Report on Readiness for November 2014 Elections

Following the April 1 primary, there was an unusual 4-hour delay in reporting results. Between April and September there was considerable discussion about the issue and concern about the November 4 general election. On September 18, *The Washington Post* reported on a hearing before a Council Committee: "D.C. election officials 'cannot guarantee' a smooth Nov. 4 general election."

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/dc-lawmaker-still-waiting-for-answers-on-primary-vote-counting-delay/2014/09/18/a35d99fc-3f16-11e4-b03f-de718edeb92f\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/dc-lawmaker-still-waiting-for-answers-on-primary-vote-counting-delay/2014/09/18/a35d99fc-3f16-11e4-b03f-de718edeb92f_story.html)

## *Elections Process Study Discussion Paper*

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The League of Women Voters works to build citizen participation in the democratic process, and we believe in representative government. Throughout our history, we have worked to protect every citizen's right to vote and to ensure a representative electoral process. This winter LWVDC members will have an opportunity to reach consensus on the District's electoral process.

In January 2013, LWV members decided to study The Elections Process in the District of Columbia, focusing on primaries and runoffs. Since then a small committee co-chaired by Abigail Nichols and Linda Beebe have researched voter turnout, election results, and election guidelines. After looking at positions taken by other Leagues and interviewing several individuals who have expressed opinions, they formulated questions for consensus. This paper is intended to provide context for the discussion meetings to be held in November.

Then in January 2015, League members will meet to reach consensus based on written materials and the discussions at the November meetings.

### **Why Review the DC Electoral Process?**

Two major issues prompt concern. The first is low voter turnout. In the 2010 Mayoral primary 37.14% of registered voters actually voted; that November the turnout was 30%.<sup>1</sup> In the April 2014 primary, only 26.9% of the registered voters went to the polls. In contrast to voters in other jurisdictions, more District voters vote in primaries than in general elections in many years. A common refrain is "my vote doesn't count." Demographics may play a role in this, as 76% of registered voters declare as Democrats; the next largest group is Independents with more than 16%.

Research has shown that opening up the process of registering and voting generally increases participation. The District has done a good job of this—voters can register in advance at half a dozen government agencies, by mail, by fax, or in person on Election Day. Anyone can request an absentee ballot without providing any reason. And the District offers extensive early voting. For the April 1, 2014 primary, eligible residents could vote every day except Sunday, March 23, from March 17 to March 31 in 13 different locations.

Voter characteristics, especially higher levels of education and income, also have been shown to encourage voting participation. In 2009 48.5% percent of DC residents held an undergraduate degree, and 28% had earned a graduate degree. The average US educational attainment for 2009 was 27.9% percent for undergraduates and 10.3% for graduate degrees. In 2011, the median income in the US was \$50,054, and the median income for the District of Columbia was \$55,251.<sup>2</sup>

Nonetheless, voter turnout in the District has been low and appears to be getting lower.

The second issue is fraud. Since 2012, three DC Councilmembers have pleaded guilty to federal corruption charges.<sup>3</sup> In June 2013 former Councilmember Michael A. Brown agreed to a sentence of 3 years and a month in a federal prison for accepting \$55,000 in bribes. There was also a question about \$114,000 missing from his campaign funds. In June 2012 former Council Chair Kwame R. Brown pleaded guilty to bank fraud charges and a misdemeanor of use of 2008 campaign funds. In January 2012 Harry Thomas, Jr. a former Councilmember, pleaded guilty to 2 charges: embezzlement of public funds and not reporting income on 3 tax returns. See background paper “Vote Fraud and Manipulation” for more information.

Many studies in the social policy arena have found that political corruption has a negative impact on voter turnout. There may be a somewhat circular effect. That is, officials elected with a small percentage of voters may not feel they are answerable to a wide constituency, and subsequent bad behavior on their part may lead to lower turnouts in the future.

The recent corruption cases in the District have led to special elections to replace the disgraced officials. Some believe that the need for so many elections has increased voter fatigue and further depressed voter turnout. Another factor there may be the crowded fields. For the November 2014 election, for example, the ballot includes 6 Mayoral candidates, 5 candidates for Council Chair, and 15 candidates for the 2 At-Large Council seats.

## What Criteria Should be Used in Building Consensus?

To ground discussion, it is helpful to formulate some criteria that could be used to consider conclusions. Committee members offer the following possibilities:

1. The system should encourage greater voter participation. Getting out the vote may be paramount.
2. The system should protect against fraud and political manipulation.
3. The system should be easy to use and administer.
4. The system should provide a reasonable range of voter choices.
5. If possible, the system should reduce election costs without hindering the democratic process.

## What Questions Have Been Posed?

Committee members have considered 3 questions:

- Closed Primary or Open Primary?
- Plurality Winner or Majority Winner?
- If consensus is for Majority—Instant Runoff or Subsequent 2<sup>nd</sup> Election?

### Closed Primary or Open Primary?

*Would DC residents be better served by the current closed primary elections or a change to open primaries?*

Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, political parties have used primary elections to select their nominees for a general election. Primaries were implemented to take power away from the party bosses who were making decisions in smoke-filled closed rooms and give the decision-making power to the voters who are members of the parties. Thus, primaries democratized the process. Primaries have been one of the longest-lasting reforms of the Progressive Movement. Another advantage has been that primaries serve as a proving ground for candidates, exposing them to voter ad media scrutiny.

Today some are questioning the value of primaries. Some say they diminish the will of the people because candidates often feel a need to take an extreme position, right or left. (The apparent motivation is that many who vote in primaries tend to hold more extreme positions than do voters as a whole.) The cost of running in a primary may discourage some from running. Primaries also lengthen campaigns, and the longer time span may lead to voter apathy and low turnouts.

Another consideration is the increasing number of people who are not affiliated with a political party. A Pew Research poll in 2012 found that 38% of Americans described themselves as Independents, up from 32% in 2008 and 20% in 2004 and 2000.<sup>4</sup> In the District, the outcome of the Democratic primary very often foreshadows the outcome of the election because 76% of registered voters are Democrats. There have been suggestions that primaries could be eliminated entirely without harming the democratic process.

Closed primaries, meaning a voter can cast a ballot only for the political party with which they are affiliated, have generally been the rule. Although 17 states offer open primaries, “open” has different meanings in different states. In Minnesota’s open primaries, for example, only voters affiliated with a party may vote. To vote in Georgia’s open primaries, a voter must swear an oath of intent to affili-

ate with a party. Six states—Arkansas, Missouri, North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Wisconsin—have fully open primaries. In some states, such as Louisiana, Vermont, and Virginia (Republicans only), the state and local primaries are open, but the Presidential primaries are closed.

The District of Columbia has voted in closed primary elections since Home Rule was put in place. On March 4, 2014, Councilmember David Grosso introduced the “*Open Primary Elections Amendment Act of 2014*,” co-sponsored by Councilmembers Catania, Cheh, Evans, and Wells.<sup>5</sup> The Act (B20-0717) would change the time frames in which a person could change party affiliation and permit changes

after the 30<sup>th</sup> day preceding elections and on Election Day. It was referred to the Committee on Government Operations where no action has taken place.

Note: Two of the 30 respondents to the LWVDC September survey specified that they prefer closed primaries.

The following tables outline advantages and disadvantages of the two systems. We have deliberately chosen to frame the discussion so that the reader first sees the potential advantages of each side of the question and then the potential disadvantages. The thinking is that doing so makes it easier to weigh the arguments on both sides.

Closed Primaries—Potential Advantages	Open Primaries—Potential Advantages
Prevent “spoiler” votes that set up weak candidates of another party or select candidates not representative of the party’s positions.	Favor all voter wishes over registered party voter’s desires.
Encourage participation by all party activists.	Encourage participation by Independents and third parties who do not run their own primaries.
Party nominees are believed to lead to stabilization and representation of the wishes of party members.	Guard confidentiality about party affiliation and protect voter privacy.
Protect the right of free association. <sup>6</sup>	Can spur new, moderate coalitions; can protect against rigid ideological orthodoxy.
For the District of Columbia, require no change in the election system.	Preserve the right of political parties to endorse candidates.
	May produce competitive, substantive general elections.

Closed Primaries—Potential Disadvantages	Open Primaries—Potential Disadvantages
May discourage registered Independents and members of third parties from participating, at least in the primaries.	May discourage engagement by core political party activists and people who believe in the principles espoused by a political party.
Given the political makeup of the District, may account for low voter turnout in elections.	Nominees who have stated a party preference may have beliefs inconsistent with party views.
May encourage extremism on both left and right.	May require changes in procedures, particularly if the District were to move to a truly open primary with all candidates from all parties on one ballot.
Tends to support two-party systems and discourage minority party and Independent candidates.	

Note: The Home Rule Charter includes a mandate designed to provide some political party diversity on the District Council. The provision is as follows: “*Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, at no time shall there be more than three members (including the Chairman) serving at large on the Council who are affiliated with the same political party.*”<sup>7</sup> Other jurisdictions that have adopted open primaries do not operate within this restriction.

## Some Possible Discussion Questions

1. What do League members see as advantages and disadvantages of each option?
2. Would offering open primaries potentially encourage greater turnout in the District of Columbia?
3. Which system is more likely to meet stated criteria?
4. Is one system more likely to result in representative government?
5. How do open primaries affect political party participation?
6. At the District level, are there differences between the parties? What are the implications for the primary system?
7. How might the rule that only 3 at-large positions on the District Council be from the same political party affect the management of an open primary?

## Plurality or Majority Vote Requirement?

*Should the District continue its current system of plurality winner-take-all or move to requiring a majority vote for election? And should a majority be required to win both a primary and a general election?*

The District of Columbia uses a plurality “winner-take-all” system of determining the outcome of an election, as do most of the states in the U.S. Candidates win elections by getting the most votes, not necessarily more than 50% of the votes cast. Approximately 1/3 of the countries belonging to the United Nations have plurality requirements

for electing their leaders.

Some jurisdictions specify a percentage that is lower than 50%, either for all offices or for some. New York City, for example, sets the threshold at 40% and requires runoffs if no candidate obtains that percentage.<sup>8</sup>

No legislation to change the plurality requirement has been introduced in the Council; however, David Grosso’s Instant Runoff Voting Amendment (see page 30) appears to presume a majority vote would be required for a candidate to win an election. If only a plurality were required to win, there would be no need for a runoff.

Plurality Requirement - Potential Advantages	Majority Requirement—Potential Advantages
Requires no runoff of any kind.	Majority rule is a basic tenet of democratic politics.
Is easy for voters to understand.	Is needed to assure more representative government.
Requires no change in policy or legislation nor does it add to costs.	Could reduce the “my vote doesn’t count” feelings.

Plurality Requirement—Potential Disadvantages	Majority Requirement—Potential Disadvantages
Rewards tactical voting, that is, voting for the candidate one thinks most likely to win.	If no candidate gets 50%+1 on the first round, some kind of runoff is required, thus adding complexity.
May promote more votes “against” than “for.”	May require changes in voting equipment if Instant Runoff Voting is used.
Often results in electing officials who have the support of a small percentage of registered voters.	May result in another preliminary election to select the candidate for the general election if Instant Runoff Voting is not used.

## Some Possible Questions

1. What do League members see as advantages and disadvantages of each option?
2. What groups would feel they have more of a voice and what groups would feel they had less of a voice?
3. What part do media play in either scenario?
4. Is there merit in naming a winner at a percentage lower than 50%+1?
5. Do other jurisdictions have similar crowded fields?



# Runoffs—Instant or Subsequent Separate Election?

*If the preference is for a majority requirement, how should runoffs be conducted? Should the District employ Instant Runoff Voting (Ranked Choice Vote) or should the top two candidates be presented in a separate runoff election?*

A runoff is generally not necessary if there are only two candidates for a seat. However, the District has a history of crowded fields, and those contests infrequently end with a single candidate achieving a majority vote. For example, in the April 2014 Democratic mayoral primary with 8 candidates, Muriel Bowser won with 43.4% of the vote. In the November 2012 At-Large Council Member race, there were 7 candidates for 2 seats. Vincent Orange won with 38.4% of votes cast, and David Grosso won with 20.2%. In 3 special elections for Council seats between 2011 and 2013, no winner achieved a majority of votes cast. In those elections, Anita Bonds (2013) won with 31.5%, Kenyan McDuffie (2012) won with 43.6%, and Vincent Orange (2011) won with 28.9%.<sup>9</sup>

If a primary election does not yield a candidate with a majority of the votes, many jurisdictions hold a subsequent second election with the top two candidates running against each other to determine who will be on the ballot. This is generally known as a “Two-Round Runoff.”

Instant Runoff Voting (also known as Ranked Choice Voting) is an alternative. Voters cast their vote for their

first choice, then rank other candidates in their order of preference. They can rank all the remaining candidates or choose none other than their number one or however many they choose if the voting equipment permits. (For example, San Francisco limits ranking to 3 candidates because of system limitations.) Instant runoffs in some form have been used around the world since 1850 and in the current form since 1871. For example, they are used today to elect members of the Australian parliament, the Irish president, and mayors in cities such as Minneapolis, Oakland, San Francisco, and London, England.

Different runoff approaches each carry some level of complexity and cost. There is the cost of another full election with subsequent runoffs and the potential for voter fatigue. On the other hand instant runoffs may require expenses in changing voting machines and voter education.

Councilmember David Grosso introduced the “Instant Runoff Voting Amendment Act of 2014” on March 4, 2014.<sup>10</sup> Referred to the Committee on Government Operations, the bill (B20-0716) was co-sponsored by Councilmembers Wells, Cheh, and Catania. The legislation calls for “Ranked Choice Voting” for candidates for Mayor, Attorney General, Chair of the Council, and members of the Council in both primary and general elections. Voters would rank their choices from 1 to as many as there are candidates. If the voting machines would not accommodate all, the voters could rank as many as 3 from 1 to 3. The bill provides 120 days for voting machines to be made functional for instant runoffs.

Instant Runoff—Potential Advantages	Two-Round Runoff—Potential Advantages
Allows outcomes that better reflect voter choice.	Gives voters time to study the final two candidates carefully.
Can result in wider voter participation.	Provides space for the candidates to clarify their positions.
Alleviates the “spoiler” effect—a minority of voters can never defeat a candidate supported by the majority.	Is easy for the voter to understand.
Assures a more fair and accurate representation of the voters.	Enables candidates to stick to their positions rather than potentially altering them to ensure attracting second place votes. Conversely, candidates may change their position to build a majority vote.
Can reduce the costs of an election, compared to subsequent runoffs.	
Could eliminate the need for primaries.	
Promotes civility in campaigns and reaching out beyond the candidate’s base to earn more support.	
Tends to focus candidates on issues, rather than attacking opponents.	

Instant Runoff—Potential Disadvantages	Two-Round Runoff—Potential Disadvantages
Can appear to be complex—more apt to confuse voters.	More costly than instant runoffs for the jurisdiction.
Requires more voter education to assure voter participation.	More costly for candidates.
Might result in cost to reprogram ballot-counting machines and increase hand counting.	Experience significantly lower turnouts than the original primary. <sup>11</sup>
May elect a candidate with low intensity of support.	Can lead to voter fatigue and further decrease turnout by the general election.

## Some Possible Questions

1. What do League members see as advantages and disadvantages of each option?
2. Might offering Instant Runoff Voting (Ranked Choice Voting) improve voter turnout?
3. Would a second primary election be preferable?
4. How much voter education might be required? How do you think either option might change LWVDC's approach to voter guides?
5. Have any members participated in an instant runoff? If so, what was your experience?
6. Have any members voted in subsequent runoffs? If so, what was your experience?

## Administrative Issues

### Voter Education

If the District were to move from a plurality system to a majority one using Instant Runoff as necessary to achieve majority winners, it would be a fundamental change. Giving voters enough information to make them comfortable with voting in the new system would require a substantive and sustained education campaign. There are some materials available on the web, both on other League sites and from outside organizations.

### Ballot Complications

Boundaries for precincts and the Single Member Districts (SMD) that comprise the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) have been drawn along historical boundaries and are not in alignment. In 2013 the Board of Elections issued the "Precinct Boundary Efficiency Plan."<sup>12</sup> The report noted that the BOE prepared 551 different ballots for the 2012 election because of the misalignments. BOE recommended 141 new precincts to avoid splitting any SMDs into separate precincts. This plan, the Board noted, would reduce the cost of preparing ballots, improve efficiency, balance the number of voters in each precinct, and assign one ANC/SMD per precinct. Over the course of the public comment period through November 30,

2013, the Board heard suggestions and objections to longer distances to polling places. For the April 2014 primary, the Board combined 2 precincts, reducing the number to 143; however the mish-mash of precincts and SMDs continues.<sup>13</sup>

### Voting Equipment

The touch-screen and optical scanners used in the District are more than 10 years old, and many are refurbished previously used machines. WAMU reported on October 6, 2014 that the Board says the machines need to be replaced.<sup>14</sup> According to a 2008 report titled Restoring Confidence in the District's Elections," the Sequoia touch-screen voting machines did not provide a paper trail.<sup>15</sup> The report recommended that poll-workers be trained to encourage voters to use the optical scanners with paper ballots to ensure a paper trail. The refurbished machines purchased in 2009 are from another large manufacturer, Election Systems & Software or ES&S.

Much has been written about issues around problems with Direct-Recording Electronic (DRE) machines or touch-screen voting equipment. The advantages of these machines are speed and elimination of the worries about having an insufficient number of paper ballots or too many. However, there is not a paper trail. Problems have been reported with machines from all the major manufacturers

at one time or another. If the District were to buy new machines, they could be programmed to read an Instant Voting Runoff ballot. The current optical scanning equipment may also be programmable for this option.

## Errors

Introducing any new system is likely to lead to some degree of administrative errors in the beginning. As long as there is a paper trail of votes, recounts are possible. The League of Women Voters US has taken this position: “The League supports the implementation of voting systems and procedures that are secure, accurate, recount-

able, accessible, and transparent” regardless of the voting system or equipment that is adopted.<sup>16</sup>

## Terminology

Instant Runoff Voting and Ranked Choice Voting are used interchangeably. Some jurisdictions prefer one and some the other. For example, San Francisco uses Ranked Choice Voting, in part because people may expect an instant report of an election outcome if Instant Runoff is used. Others feel that Instant Runoff Voting differentiates it from the old-style Two-Round Runoffs.

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## Positions Taken by Some Other Leagues

1. Arizona LWV supports Instant Runoff Voting for single seats. (2005, 2008)
2. California LWV supports majority rule and Instant Runoff Voting. (2001, 2003, 2011)
3. Maine LWV endorses majority rule (“bedrock of our democracy”) and Instant Runoff Voting. (2011)
4. Massachusetts LWV favors majority winners and Instant Runoff Voting. (2005)
5. Minnesota LWV supports an option of Instant Runoff Voting for state and local elections. (2004)
6. North Carolina LWV supports a majority vote system, which should include Instant Runoff Voting. (2008)
7. Oklahoma LWV took a position supporting Instant Runoff Voting over Two-Round Runoffs. (2011)
8. South Carolina LWV supports alternative voting systems including Instant Runoff Voting, which the members deemed likely to be the most effective and widely accepted new system. (2005)
9. Vermont LWV supports a majority vote system, which should include Instant Runoff Voting. (1999)
10. Washington State LWV supports a majority vote system if it is achieved through a mechanism such as Instant Runoff Voting. (2013-2015 Action Agenda)
11. Berkeley, CA LWV stated that Instant Runoff Voting should be used in all elections involving more than 2 candidates for a single seat. (2000)
12. Oakland, CA LWV stated that Instant Runoff Voting should be used in all elections involving more than 2 candidates for a single seat. (2003)
13. Pasadena, CA LWV advocates for Instant Runoff Voting for single seat elections.
14. Montgomery County, MD LWV supports Instant Runoff Voting for single seat or executive positions. “This would require the winner to receive a majority of the votes cast.”



*Note: The following question had been raised for study and potential consensus; however, time constraints limited the Committee's ability to give sufficient attention to it. Therefore, it is not being raised for consensus. The following content is included in this discussion paper because the committee believes it provides some insight into our electoral system in comparison with other jurisdictions. Also, the committee suggests that further study would be warranted.*

## Becoming a Candidate

*Do the current requirements for becoming a candidate lead to a truly representative government?*

To get on a ballot in the District, candidates must file a petition with signatures of registered voters. For a primary election for a city-wide seat, the requirement is 2,000 signatures. If the potential candidate has not been selected in a primary election, the requirement is 3,000 signatures for a position on the general election ballot. City-wide positions include the Mayor, the five at-large Council members including the Chair, Attorney General, the Delegate to the US House of Representatives, the US ("Shadow") Representative, and the US ("Shadow") Senator. The rules simply state a number; there is no requirement that signatories come from across the 8 wards. The District does not collect a filing fee.

In a non-scientific sample, the committee looked at the

requirements for getting on the ballot in 12 cities. (See the background paper "*Getting on the Ballot*.") We tried for some geographic representation, restricted it to cities not too much smaller or larger than the District, and included only cities and not their metropolitan areas. Few cities require petitions with any significant number of signatures. For example, Minneapolis has no petition process, Austin requires 244 signatures for Mayoral candidates, and Denver requires 300 signatures. Many cities require filing fees ranging from \$10 for a City Council seat in Omaha to 2% of salary in San Francisco (currently \$5,706 for a Mayoral candidate). However, in some cities a candidate may collect signatures in lieu of payment: 11,412 for Mayor in San Francisco and 500 in Oklahoma City.

Every city looked at has some variation of Campaign Finance Reporting, including the District of Columbia. Some are more extensive than others. However, 8 of the 12 cities also require that a candidate file a Financial Disclosure statement, some very extensive. The District currently has no requirement for financial disclosure. On March 4, 2014, Councilmember David Grosso filed a bill titled "*Clean Hands Elections Reform Amendments Act of 2014*" (B20-0718), which Councilmembers Cheh, Wells, McDuffie, Bowser, and Bonds co-sponsored.<sup>17</sup> If enacted, it would require any candidate for Mayor, Attorney General, Councilmember, and member of the Board of Education to obtain a clean hands certification from the Office of Campaign Finance. The certification would provide that neither the candidate nor any previous campaign by the candidate owe any outstanding taxes, fines, or fees to the District. A public hearing was held on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

## Some Possible Questions

1. Should the League of Women Voters, District of Columbia, consider undertaking an in-depth study of the requirements for becoming a candidate?
2. What issues might the League consider? Some options might include the following:
  - What was the rationale for the petition signature process now in use?
  - Are petition signatures a good indication of candidate commitment? If so, what safeguards for honest collection are or should be in place?
  - What would it take to ensure that candidates for city-wide seats get a representative sampling of signatures?
  - Should the League review the financial disclosure requirements used in other cities?
  - Should the League compare the District's campaign finance reporting requirements, forms, and processes with others to determine what would be optimal for the District?

## List of Background Papers

- Overview of the Study
- Low Voter Turnout in DC
- Crowded Fields in DC Election
- Types of Primaries and Runoffs
- Types of Primaries & Registration by State
- District of Columbia Demographics
- Vote Fraud and Manipulation
- Getting on the Ballot (sample of DC + 11 other cities)
- Results of LWVDC Survey on the Study
- Relevant League Positions
- Sampling Media Discussions of Elections

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## Endnotes

- 1 [https://www.dcboee.org/election\\_info/election\\_results/](https://www.dcboee.org/election_info/election_results/)
- 2 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/11000.html>
- 3 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/local/dc-corruption-scandals/>
- 4 <http://www.pewresearch.org/data-trend/political-attitudes/party-identification/> Downloaded 10-15-14.
- 5 <http://lms.dccouncil.us/SearchResults/?Category=0&Keyword=open%20primary> Downloaded 10-9-14.
- 6 This has been defined as the right to join or leave groups of a person's own choosing, and for the group to take collective action to pursue the interests of members.
- 7 <http://dcode.org/home-rule-act/>
- 8 <http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/hycode/ELN/6/6-162> Downloaded 10-9-14
- 9 [https://www.dcboee.org/election\\_info/election\\_results/](https://www.dcboee.org/election_info/election_results/)
- 10 <http://lms.dccouncil.us/SearchResults/?Category=0&Keyword=instant%20runoff>
- 11 <http://www.fairvote.org/assets/Uploads/Federal-Primary-Election-Runoff-Turnout-2013-correctedMarch312014.pdf>
- 12 [http://www.dcboee.org/pdf\\_files/nr\\_1213.pdf](http://www.dcboee.org/pdf_files/nr_1213.pdf) Downloaded 10-9-14
- 13 <https://www.dcboee.org/newsroom/?cat=Public%20Notices> Downloaded 10-9-14.
- 14 [https://wamu.org/news/14/10/06/dc\\_elections\\_board\\_says\\_all\\_voting\\_machines\\_need\\_to\\_be\\_replaced](https://wamu.org/news/14/10/06/dc_elections_board_says_all_voting_machines_need_to_be_replaced).
- 15 <http://www.dcwatch.com/govern/boee081008.htm#Preliminary%20Recommendations> Downloaded 10-9-14.
- 16 Citizen's Right to Vote Resolution, revised at 47<sup>th</sup> LWVUS National Convention, June 2004. <http://www.lvw.org/content/representative-government>
- 17 <http://lms.dccouncil.us/SearchResults/?Category=0&Keyword=clean%20hands> Downloaded 10-9-14.