

LEADERS' DISCUSSION GUIDE for LWVMD Election Process Study – PART 2 (2014)

The purpose of this Leaders' Guide is to identify possible questions for deliberation at the Unit Meetings and provide supplementary documents for discussion. It is a supplement to the Fact Sheet.

PERMANENT ABSENTEE LIST. The current LWVMD position calls for a permanent absentee list restricted to persons with a physical condition which necessitates absentee voting, and specifies that voters on the list would receive an absentee ballot application, not a ballot, for each election in which they are eligible to vote. This position was adopted before Maryland adopted "no-excuse" absentee voting.

There are substantial differences among the states relating to permanent absentee status. Maryland does not have a permanent absentee list, but does allow a voter to request on one application absentee ballots for a primary and general election in an election cycle.

Discussion questions include whether Maryland should maintain its current system of requiring an application for absentee ballots for each election cycle or allow voters to request to be placed on a permanent absentee list, and if there is a permanent absentee list, should the voter receive an application for an absentee ballot or an absentee ballot.

This issue was also addressed in the first part of this LWVMD Study. At that time the consensus questions contained queries about various restrictions to the list, including whether it was permanent or limited to some specified number of elections or election cycles and whether voters could be removed from the list. The consensus questions in Part 2 of the study merely ask whether the State Board of Elections should have the authority to develop and maintain a permanent absentee list, thus requiring SBE to develop regulations relating to a permanent absentee list, including any restrictions.

DOCUMENTS: National Conference of State Legislatures information on Absentee Voting, 2013

ABSENTEE BALLOTS: SIGNATURE VERIFICATION. The balance question with this issue is whether Maryland, with its low number of absentee ballots, should require local election boards to expend resources, including time and money, to verify the signature on returned absentee ballots. Electronically capturing a signature for each voter from existing records would be required, as would train for election board employees (including part-time contractual employees) on signature verification procedures.

Consideration should be given to the substantial increase in the number of absentee ballots issued nationally over the past few years and whether Maryland may in the future follow this trend.

Do recent changes to Maryland election law relating to online application for absentee ballots and online voter registration make it more likely that fraud can/will occur in the absentee voting process?

Are the signature verification processes used in other states adequate?

DOCUMENTS: Maryland absentee voting statistics

California Signature Verification Process

Excerpt from US EAC publication *Election Management Guidelines*

Chart of Ballots Transmitted/Ballots Returned, From EAC data

Memo re interview with Orange County FL Election Board employee

Maryland SBE Online Voter Services Vulnerability Assessment and Penetration Testing Report, Dec. 2013

PETITIONS. The sections relating to petitions are educational and do not require a consensus. However, questions that may be discussed include:

Is the number of signatures required for a new party petition or referendum petition too few/too many?

Does the availability of online petitions make it easier/too easy to collect enough signatures for a successful petition?

Are the requirements for the petition circulator strong enough to prevent fraud?

Are the signature verification requirements adequate?

DOCUMENTS: *SBE Procedures for filing a Statewide or Public Local Law Referendum Petition, 2014*

ELECTIONIC ACCESS OF CANDIDATE AND BALLOT ISSUE INFORMATION WHILE VOTING. Recognizing that many voters, especially younger ones, receive much of their election information in an electronic form via computer, tablet or smart phone (even LWV offers online voters guides), should Maryland develop regulations that would allow for the access of this electronic data in the polling place?

The balance question is ease of access to information (no need for paper notes or records) versus potential security problems (ability to photograph ballot or other voters, potential of selling votes), and enforcement issues.

CONCURRENCE WITH MONTGOMERY COUNTY POSITION ON ALTERNATIVES TO WINNER-TAKE-ALL METHOD. Note – IN THIS Study we are only asking for consensus on the use of Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) in county and local level elections, not statewide or General Assembly elections. This can be limited to nonpartisan elections or special elections.

Because Maryland will be obtaining new optical scan voting equipment for the 2016 election, we ask whether that equipment should have the capability of allowing for IRV, thus allowing future changes in Maryland election law regarding alternative voting methods.

DOCUMENT: Excerpt from Montgomery County LWV Fact Sheet 2008: Counting Voters so Every Vote Counts (excerpt includes sections relevant to Instant Runoff Voting)

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

ABSENTEE VOTING – Updated May 2013

States offer three ways for voters to cast a ballot before Election Day:

1. **Early Voting:** In 32 states and the District of Columbia, any qualified voter may cast a ballot in person during a designated period prior to Election Day. No excuse or justification is required.
2. **Absentee Voting:** All states will mail an absentee ballot to certain voters. The voter may return the ballot by mail or in person. In 21 states, an excuse is required, while 27 states and the District of Columbia permit any qualified voter to vote absentee without offering an excuse. Some states offer a permanent absentee ballot list: once a voter asks to be added to the list, s/he will automatically receive an absentee ballot for all future elections.
3. **Mail Voting:** A ballot is automatically mailed to every eligible voter (no request or application is necessary), and the state does not use traditional poll sites that offer in-person voting on Election Day. Two states use mail voting.

Overview

NEW! Minnesota will become the 28th state to offer no-excuse absentee voting, beginning in 2014.

The table below details the types of pre-election day voting that are available in each state. Information on the details of each category may be found below the table.

State	In-Person	By Mail			
	Early Voting	No-Excuse Absentee	Absentee; Excuse Required	All-Mail Voting	Permanent Absentee Status
Alabama			X		
Alaska	X	X		(a)	
Arizona	X	X		(a)	X

Arkansas	X		X	(a)	
California	X	X		(a)	X
Colorado	X	X		(a)	X
Connecticut			X		
Delaware			X		
D.C.	X	X			X
Florida	X	X		(a)	
Georgia	X	X			
Hawaii	X	X		(a)	X
Idaho	X	X		(a)	
Illinois	X	X			
Indiana	X		X		
Iowa	X	X			
Kansas	X	X		(a)	
Kentucky			X		
Louisiana	X		X		
Maine	X	X			
Maryland	X	X			
Massachusetts			X		
Michigan			X		
Minnesota			X	(a)	
Mississippi			X		
Missouri			X	(a)	
Montana	X	X		(a)	X

Nebraska	X	X		(a)	
Nevada	X	X		(a)	
New Hampshire			X		
New Jersey		X		(a)	X
New Mexico	X	X		(a)	
New York			X		
North Carolina	X	X			
North Dakota	X	X		(a)	
Ohio	X	X			
Oklahoma	X	X			
Oregon				X	
Pennsylvania			X		
Rhode Island			X		
South Carolina			X		
South Dakota	X	X			
Tennessee	X		X		
Texas	X		X		
Utah	X	X			X
Vermont	X	X			
Virginia			X		
Washington				X	
West Virginia	X		X		
Wisconsin	X	X			
Wyoming	X	X			

TOTAL	32 states + DC	27 states + DC	21 states	2 states	7 states + DC
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Source: National Conference of State Legislatures, July 2011

(a) Certain elections may be held entirely by mail. The circumstances under which all-mail elections are permitted vary from state to state.

No-Excuse Absentee Voting

Absentee voting is conducted by mail-in paper ballot prior to the day of the election. While all states offer some version of it, there is quite a lot of variation in states' procedures for absentee voting. For instance, some states offer "no-excuse" absentee voting, allowing any registered voter to request an absentee without requiring that the voter state a reason for his/her desire to vote absentee. Other states permit voters to vote absentee only under a limited set of circumstances.

The following 27 states and D.C. offer "no-excuse" absentee voting:

No-Excuse Absentee Voting		
Alaska	Iowa	North Carolina
Arizona	Kansas	North Dakota
California	Maine	Ohio
Colorado	Maryland	Oklahoma
District of Columbia	Montana	South Dakota
Florida	Nebraska	Utah
Georgia	Nevada	Vermont
Hawaii	New Jersey	Wisconsin
Idaho	New Mexico	Wyoming
Illinois		

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures, July 2011

Permanent Absentee Voting

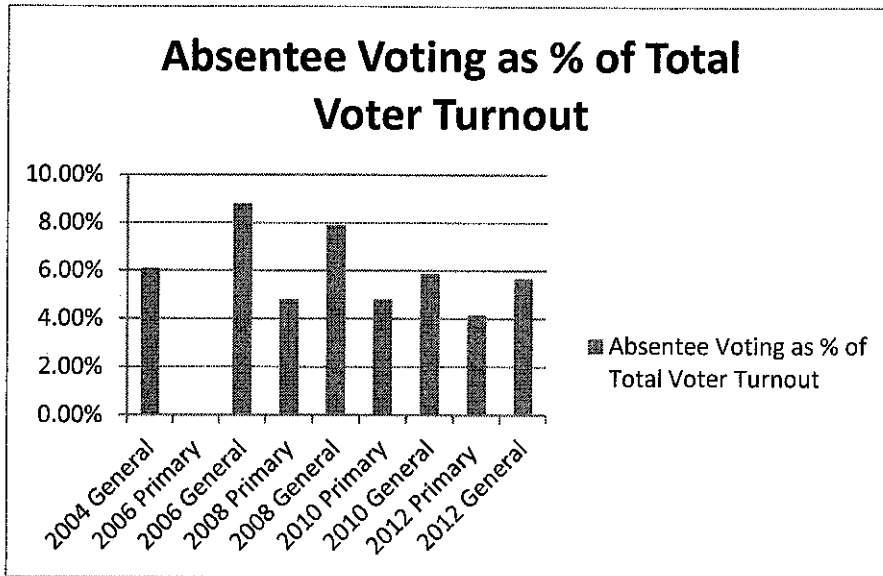
Some states permit voters to join a permanent absentee voting list. Once a voter opts in, s/he will receive an absentee ballot automatically for all future elections. The states that offer permanent absentee voting to any voter are:

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- District of Columbia
- Hawaii
- Montana
- New Jersey
- Utah

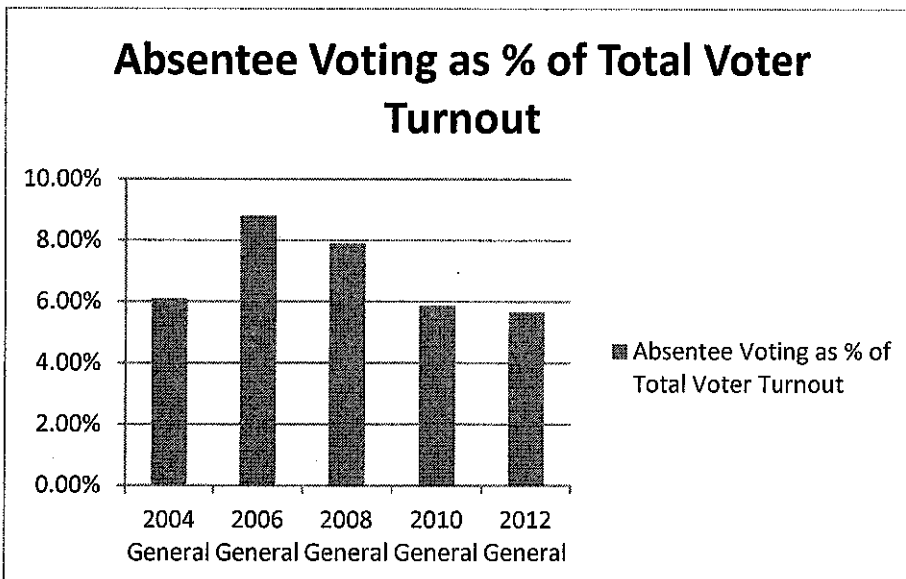
At least seven states offer permanent absentee status to a limited number of voters who meet certain criteria:

- Alaska - voters who reside in a remote area where distance, terrain, or other natural conditions deny the voter reasonable access to the polling place
- Delaware - military and overseas voters, and their spouses and dependents; voters who are ill or physically disabled; voters who are otherwise authorized by federal law to vote by absentee ballot
- Kansas - voters with a permanent disability or an illness diagnosed as permanent
- Massachusetts - permanently disabled voters
- Minnesota - voters with a permanent illness or disability
- Missouri - permanently disabled voters
- West Virginia - voters who are permanently and totally disabled and unable to vote at the polls

Source: Maryland State Board of Election, 2014



2004 General	6.09%
2006 Primary	
2006 General	8.79%
2008 Primary	4.80%
2008 General	7.89%
2010 Primary	4.80%
2010 General	5.88%
2012 Primary	4.15%
2012 General	5.67%



Absentee Ballots Cast as % of TVT	
2004 General	6.09%
2006 General	8.79%
2008 General	7.89%
2010 General	5.88%
2012 General	5.67%

SIGNATURE VERIFICATION PROCESS

Guiding Law in determining signature verification:

Election Code § 3000: "This division [California Elections Code Division 3] shall be liberally construed in favor of the absentee voter."

Unsigned Returned Ballot Envelope Guidelines

Unsigned returned envelopes may be identified when the mail is first received and prior to any processing or during the signature verification process.

If the unsigned envelope is identified during signature verification, the ballot must be returned to the voter as described below.

When an unsigned envelope is identified when the mail is first received, the envelope is immediately returned to the voter by mail in an envelope containing a "No Signature" notice, which has instructions for how to return the ballot.

Beginning with the fifth day prior to Election Day, when there is insufficient time for the ballot to be mailed to the voter for signature and subsequently returned to the Registrar of Voters prior to Election Day, the voter will be notified by telephone of options for returning the signed ballot in time to be counted. The ballot will also be mailed to the voter immediately with the "No Signature – too Late to Mail" Notice.

Signature Verification Guidelines

A) Use the following as a guide for determining valid (Good) signatures:

1. At first glance the overall composition of the signature looks similar.
If not, look for distinctive characteristics within the signature:

- Breaks between certain letters,
- Overall slant,
- Roundness or angular appearance of letters,
- Uniqueness in the dotting of "i" or crossing of "t",
- Flourishes,
- The formation of certain letters (for example: the "s" or another letter or letters in both signatures being printed instead of cursive),
- Loops and/or vertical extensions of the more complex letters.
- Complex letters include: *b, d, f, g, h, j, k, p, q, y* and *z*.

2. If the above comparisons lead you to believe the same person signed both.
3. If the signature is distorted or shaky due to age or illness, but through comparison of the overall signature composition you believe it is the same person's signature.
4. If a disabled voter makes a mark (i.e.: X) for signature and one witness has also signed.
5. If the voter signs a nickname or has signed a different last name, but through comparison you believe the same person signed both the registration and the envelope.
6. If the signature, although not an exact match, complies with steps one thru five then it must be saved in the Good category.

B) Challenge:

If in your comparison you are unsure of the signature match or the return has any of the defects listed below, enter the appropriate challenge code.

Challenge Codes	Explanation
Un-Authorized Return	Unauthorized Return.
Duplicate	Duplicate Ballot Returned Voted / Second Ballot Returned Voted.
No Signature	No Signature on the Return Envelope.
No Signature Match	Signature does not match.
Too Late	Ballots received too late. These will be processed as a group
Other	Other – "no signature" or "wrong signature" on the computer, etc.

Challenge Board Review

Once the return absentee ballot signature checking process has commenced for any election the Election Processing Supervisor in charge of Vote by Mail shall, assemble a Challenge Board that will meet on a daily basis.

Composition:

The Challenge Board shall be composed of the Election Processing Supervisor and any two other permanent employees within the Clerk-Recorder's Office or seasonal employees with 1 1/2 years or more experience in the Elections Division.

Process:

Each VBM record that has been challenged coded by signature checkers and sorted out as signature verification exceptions shall be reviewed.

Step 1 - Open VBM record that is being challenged

- a. Check voter's information on the envelope against the information on the screen.
- b. If you need to review the voter's signature, use all of the same criteria for signature comparison as outlined in Signature Verification Guidelines.

Step 2 - Challenge Allowed:

- a. If two or more members of the Challenge Board agree with the challenge it shall be allowed.
- b. The reason for an allowed challenge shall be noted on the absentee voter envelope and all members of the current Challenge Board shall sign/initial the envelope.
- c. Verify the challenge code and reason.

Step 3 - Challenge Denied:

- a. If a majority of the Challenge Board does not agree with the challenge it shall be denied.
- b. No mark shall be made on the absentee envelope; except for the mark indicating the signature was checked.
- c. Return status shall be changed to Good.

Excerpt from U.S. Election Assistance Commission publication *Election Management Guidelines*,

Chapter 7, Absentee Voting and Vote by Mail

If signature verification is required by State law, it is important to provide your staff with signature verification training; training should include a section on how physical and cognitive impairments may cause signatures to not match. Implement a three-step process for reviewing all rejected signatures—first check is done by part time and/or regular staff; second check is done by more experienced staff; and the third check is conducted by the canvass board. Consider utilizing the following criteria as an example when comparing to the signature on file:

Capital letters match

Letters tail off alike

Letter spacing is the same

Space between signature and the line is the same

Beginning and ending of signature and the slant are consistent

Unique letters match

Overall appearances match

NOTE If it is determined that the signature does not match the voter registration card or digitized signature, notify the voter and take other action that is required by your State law, policy and/or regulations.

NOTE Review State law and/or regulations regarding signatures of voters who are, physically or otherwise, unable to sign their name.

State	Ballots Transmitted	Ballots Returned	Ballots Counted	% Ballots Counted	Rejected for non signature match	% of rejections
Alabama	63,840	55,671				
Alaska	30,144	25,486	24,681	96.8		
Arizona	1,920,746	1,542,855	1,530,465	99.2	2,051	16.6
Arkansas	34,257	31,148	27,833	89.4	74	7.8
California	9,394,212	6,634,717	6,554,199	98.8	15,206	25.7
Colorado	2,134,847	1,868,130	1,768,061	94.6	6,206	37.8
Connecticut	131,416	120,041	117,685	98		
Delaware	21,103	19,492	19,251	98.8	1	
District of Columbia	15,953	11,454	11,058	96.5		
Florida	2,807,295	2,297,627	2,276,767	99.1	5,398	26.2
Georgia	1,942,509	1,909,845	1,909,136	100	356	50.2
Hawaii	174,340	157,236	156,130	99.3	220	19.9
Idaho	168,599	163,115	162,156	99.4	53	5.6
Illinois	328,406	302,359	298,121	98.6		
Indiana	562,430	558,739	506,516	90.7	51	0.4
Iowa	736,304	684,690	676,522	98.8		
Kansas	199,306	139,146	182,169	130.9	429	8.5
Kentucky	33,690	33,690	31,876	94.6	47	2.6
Louisiana	55,818	43,686	41,312	94.6		
Maine	193,105	186,930	184,763	98.8	25	1.2
Maryland	160,663	140,650	139,136	98.9		
Massachusetts	282,365	259,114	256,616	99.0		
Michigan	1,297,672	1,259,902	1,228,162	97.5	208	2.6
Minnesota	277,294	265,315	257,542	97.1	126	1.8
Mississippi	68,692	67,657	61,160	94.6	5	0.2
Missouri	269,713	257,329	251,954	97.9		
Montana	314,536	285,388	284,535	99.7	160	18.8
Nebraska	231,377	206,956	203,014	98.1		
Nevada	91,634	77,908	76,730	98.5	195	13.1
New Hampshire	69,354	66,075	64,340	97.4	321	18.5
New Jersey	336,640	284,103	276,693	97.4	855	13.1
New Mexico	83,642	71,386	68,023	95.3		
New York	340,169	326,189	309,655	94.9		

North Carolina	229,672	205,078	202,841	98.9	45	2.0
North Dakota	99,458	94,024	93,665	99.6	129	3.9
Ohio	1,346,248	1,259,904	1,247,055	99.0	334	2.6
Oklahoma	72,820	61,429	59,523	96.9		
Oregon	17,807	12,908	12,611	99.7	81	27.3
Pennsylvania	282,822	248,561	246,716	99.3		
Rhode Island	27,105	24,425	24,099	98.7	60	18.4
South Carolina	408,388	395,422	123,920	31.3		
South Dakota	74,231	72,635	50,326	69.3	21	14.2
Tennessee	59,667	55,270	54,284	98.2	8	1.3
Texas	253,450	237,365	225,041	94.8	639	15.5
Utah	242,393	187,674	185,673	98.9		
Vermont	71,295	68,152	63,154	92.7	1	
Virginia	441,110	423,481	421,203	99.5		
Washington	3,832,560	3,140,309	3,110,331	99.0	12,067	40.03
West Virginia	15,168	13,972	13,766	100		
Wisconsin	736,123	686,860	658,240	95.8		
Wyoming	67,554	65,742	65,557	99.7		

Chart notes:

The information on the attached chart was derived from several different charts that were part of the 2012 Election Assistance Commission Election Administration and Voting Survey.

Because election administration is so state specific, some of the figures on the attached chart reflect different information from each state. For instance, Washington State is a vote-by-mail state, and they call all their VBM ballots absentee ballots. However, Oregon, which is also a vote by mail state, does not call its ballots absentee ballots. The absentee ballots listed for Oregon are actually on a list of Permanent Absentee voters, different from the standard VMB ballots.

Maryland has a unified election system, so all data is collected at the state level. In many states, elections are administered – and data collected – on a county-by-county level, a city or township level, or even a Ward level. So while the data gets aggregated on a state basis, the definitions of the data may be different for each smaller jurisdiction.

Orange County, Florida

Lu Pierson interview with Lucy Melendez in the office of the Orange County, FL, Board of Elections (11/25/2013)

They have approximately 33% early votes/33% Election Day votes/33% absentee votes. According to the election board's website, they had approximately 135,000 absentee ballots returned in the 2012 General election.

They do not have a permanent absentee list, but at this time (and the statutes on this issue evidently change frequently) a voter may apply to receive absentee ballots for all elections in two election cycles (two primary elections, two general elections, and all additional elections in those cycles, up to the end of the year in the second cycle).

They use Pitney-Bowes sorting equipment for absentee ballots. This sorting equipment also captures electronically the signature on the absentee ballot envelope. The equipment has a component that conducts automated signature matching, at a confidence level set by election board. Original signatures on voter registration applications are digitized and used for comparison with absentee ballot signatures. Initial pass at signature verification is done automatically by equipment. If signature match doesn't meet confidence level, second verification is done by supervised contract employees for election board. This comparison is also a review of digitalized signatures, taken from original registration and absentee ballot envelope.

If the election board employees at second-level verification are not convinced that the signatures match, the ballot then goes to the Canvassing Board. At that time, additional research may be done by election board staff to aid the Canvassing Board in their investigation, such as pulling precinct registers if the voter has voted in a polling place and signed the precinct register, if the election board still has access to those documents. The Canvassing Board is final arbiter of whether or not the signatures match and the ballot is counted.

By law, the canvassing Board can meet up to 15 days before Election Day

Under Florida statutes, an absentee ballot is considered cast when received by election board. If there is a signature non-match, the voter is not contacted by election board.

The election board employees who process absentee ballots, including those who perform the second-step visual signature verification, are part-time contract employees. They receive on the job training for approximately two-233ks before the Election Day, and that training does include signature verification training.

COUNTING VOTES SO EVERY VOTE COUNTS – PART II

INTRODUCTION

At our annual meeting last spring, the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County adopted a study to look at some of the “Alternative Election Methods” and determine whether we think they would be a good idea for Montgomery County. These methods change the ways that voters fill out their ballots and the ways that the votes are tabulated. As mentioned in the December 2007 Fact Sheet (available at lwvmd.org/mont) Leagues in Minnesota, Washington State, Florida, Arizona, Vermont, New York, Ohio and California have studied and endorsed at least one alternative election method. Alternative election methods have been a frequent topic of discussion at recent LWVUS conventions, and caucuses are being scheduled for the June 2008 convention in Portland, OR.

Alternative election systems have growing support because they are seen by some as a way to make every person’s vote more meaningful and as a way to give minority opinions a greater say in legislative bodies. Others feel that they are too complicated and they like our current system. Fair Vote, also known as the Center for Voting and Democracy, promotes alternative voting systems nationwide. The center has presented testimony to the Montgomery County Charter Review Commission on the value of using an alternative voting system to elect the County Council, but at this time little interest has been generated at the county level. However, as mentioned in the December 2007 Fact Sheet, Takoma Park, MD adopted a charter amendment in 2005 (by a margin of 84%) to elect the city’s mayor and city council members using instant runoff voting.

At our December 2007 Unit meetings, members filled out ballots and watched how the results changed when voters cast their preferences for candidates using some of these alternative voting methods. The Instant Runoff Voting simulation showed how a candidate, under our current “winner take all” system, could be elected or nominated by a minority of the voters participating in the election. By transferring second and third choice votes, the original “minority” winner sometimes gained sufficient additional votes to win a majority of voters. Other times, someone new took over first place because the majority of the voters supported the previous second place candidate. The Cumulative/Weighted Voting simulation showed how a group of voters, who may be in the minority but have a strong preference for representation by a particular candidate, could have a better chance of getting that candidate elected to a multiple-position contest such as the County Council at-large race. The Limited Voting simulation also focuses votes on the candidates for whom voters have the strongest preferences. The Single Transferable Voting simulation gives voters the chance to rank their choices so that at the end of the counting, at least one of their chosen candidates may be a winner.

This Fact Sheet will describe those four systems in more detail and add one more, Approval Voting. At the end are consensus questions that we will be discussing at the May Unit meetings. The results of those discussions will shape the LWVMC position on alternative election methods to the Winner Take All method now in place.

CRITERIA

As you are reading about these methods, please keep in mind the following criteria the committee used for evaluating them. An election system should:

- Produce representation that fairly reflects community sentiment.
- Maximize the power of each voter’s vote.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS ARE INVITED TO DUPLICATE THIS FACT SHEET WITH ATTRIBUTION GIVEN TO LWVMC. BEFORE REPRODUCING, PLEASE CALL THE LEAGUE OFFICE AT 301-984-9585 FOR CORRECTIONS OR UPDATED INFORMATION.

- Ensure minority views and interests have some influence in selecting elected officials.
- Promote openness and responsiveness between candidates and constituents.
- Raise the level of political campaigns by encouraging a focus on the issues and discouraging negative campaigning.
- Increase voter participation by providing a broader range of candidates and more civil campaigns.

The system should be:

- Easy for the voter to understand and use.
- Feasible to implement.

OPTION A. INSTANT RUN-OFF VOTING

Instant Run-off Voting (IRV) is used to reach a single winner with support of a majority of the voters.

How does it work?

- Each voter may rank a candidate by preference: 1, 2, 3, etc.
- A computer scans and tabulates all ballots.
- If no candidate has a majority of votes on the first count, the candidate with the lowest number of first-choice votes is eliminated and the votes are transferred to the voters' second choices.
- The counting proceeds by sequentially eliminating candidates with the least number of votes and redistributing the votes to that voter's next choice.
- This process continues until one candidate has a winning majority.

When was it conceived? It has been used in various forms around the world since 1850.

Where is it used? Takoma Park municipal elections, San Francisco CA, Burlington VT, Cambridge MA, Vancouver WA, Aspen CO, Cary NC, Minneapolis MN, City of London U.K., Australia, Ireland, New South Wales, Bosnia, Fiji, overseas and military voters from Louisiana, Arkansas and South Carolina.

What are the advantages of this system?

- It ensures that a minority of voters can never defeat a candidate supported by a majority.
- It enables citizens to vote honestly according to their preferences and not because they view a candidate as more likely to win.
- It has the potential to maximize voter participation and available choices of candidates.
- It assures a more fair and accurate representation of the voters.
- It could reduce campaign costs and can eliminate the cost of a primary.
- It may lead to more informative and positive campaigns and promote issue-based campaigns.
- Third party candidates are more likely to get votes if the voter may cast a follow-up vote for another candidate; therefore, their first choice does not "spoil" the chances of their second choice.

What are the drawbacks of this system? This system is complex. Voter education is key to understanding this new method of voting. Ballot design would be quite different from what voters are accustomed to. The City of Takoma Park prepared voters with two separate mailings and had a video available on line for a cost of about \$3,500. This effort seemed to work because, according to a sample of voters questioned after the election, 88% of the voters knew this system would be implemented and ranked it as easy or very easy to use. However, Takoma Park is a small jurisdiction and educating the voters in the entire county would be more challenging.

League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, MD, Inc. (revised May 9, 2008) Fact Sheet, May 2008

The current touch screen voting machines used in Montgomery County are not compatible with this method of voting. Computer assisted optical scanning devices which have been mandated for elections in 2010 would have to be programmed with the correct tabulation software but could more easily be adapted to accommodate the Instant Run-off voting process.