

## **ELECTION PROCESS**

We support election systems that produce results that reflect community sentiment, increase voter participation and are easy to understand and implement. We support Instant Run-off Voting for electing single seat or executive offices, members of the Board of Education or to fill vacancies when special elections are held. Support for: (2009)

### **Election Criteria**

1. We believe it is important that election systems:
  - a) produce representation that reflects community sentiment,
  - b) help increase voter participation by encouraging a broader range of candidates and more civil campaigns and
  - c) are feasible to implement.
2. We also prefer election systems that:
  - a) are easy for the voter to understand, both in terms of how to vote and how their vote is counted,
  - b) help ensure minority views and interests have some influence in selecting elected officials,
  - c) help raise the level of political campaigns by encouraging a focus on the issues and discouraging negative campaigning,
  - d) maximize the power of each voter's vote and
  - e) help promote more openness and responsiveness between candidates and constituents.

### **Election Systems**

3. 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.
  - a) To fill vacancies in any county offices, when special elections are held, we support a single election requiring a candidate to receive a majority of votes (using Instant Runoff Voting) instead of conducting both special political party primaries and a special general election.
  - b) In addition, we support using a single election, instead of both a primary and general, which requires a candidate to receive a majority of votes (using Instant Runoff Voting) in order to be elected to the nonpartisan Board of Education. The election should be concurrent with the general election.
4. We support the continued use of plurality voting system in our elections.
5. We do not support Limited Voting as an alternative voting method.

### **Election Equipment**

6. We believe all newly acquired voting equipment (hardware and software) for use in Montgomery County should allow alternative ways of casting and counting ballots and be usable for all county and municipal elections. (NOTE: In 2008, this includes support of Instant Runoff Voting and Single Transferable Voting for Takoma Park city elections.)

### **Campaign Finance Practices**

7. If Montgomery County establishes a program to use public funds for political campaigns, we support the use of these funds to provide services to the voters, such as a Voters' Guide, candidate forums (whether in public schools, broadcast on radio or television or available through the Internet) or other services that are available for free to large numbers of voters. This would permit each candidate for an office an opportunity to appeal for votes that is equal to all other candidates for that office.