



Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety

May 19, 2008

**Honorable Herb Wesson Jr.
Councilmember
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Room 430
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

Dear Councilmember Wesson:

Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety (CARS) respectfully urges your support for Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), a critical reform that will save Los Angeles taxpayers millions of dollars, allow voters to cast votes that reflect their true preferences without throwing elections to their worst nightmares, and help boost voter turnout.

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, major labor unions, civil rights organizations, and California elected officials including Secretary of State Debra Bowen, Chair of the Board of Equalization Judy Chu, and Los Angeles Controller Laura Chick have endorsed IRV. (A full endorser list is available at IRVinLA.org/endorsements.)

Currently, Los Angeles' local races are based on a wasteful, two-round election system that inflates the costs of holding elections while simultaneously depressing voting. For example, last May, a mere 6 % of voters cast ballots in the runoff election for the LACCD and LAUSD, an election that cost those jurisdictions a combined \$8.7 million. Those are largely wasted dollars that are desperately needed to provide essential services and jobs. IRV will save those dollars and improve electoral efficiency by combining the general and runoff elections into a single election.

Perhaps best of all, IRV allows voters to rank their choices in order of preference, so that if a voter's first choice does not win, that vote is then transferred to his/her next choice. If this system had been in place in Florida during the Presidential race in 2000, Al Gore would clearly have prevailed by a substantial margin—not only in the popular vote, but also in the Electoral College. In other words, IRV dramatically reduces the impact of “spoilers” and allows like-minded voters to vote their convictions, without fearing they

will end up inadvertently electing their last choice. No doubt this is one reason it has been shown to encourage larger turnouts.

IRV has developed a remarkably successful track record in San Francisco, where voters prefer IRV to the old system by a margin of 3 to 1. Since IRV was adopted, voter turnout has risen by a whopping 168 %, giving voters who previously felt disenfranchised a powerful voice in the democratic process.

We appreciate and share your longstanding commitment to ensuring that everyone's voice is heard, and believe that Instant Runoff Voting has been shown to help accomplish that goal. In short, IRV helps revitalize our democracy.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. Should you or your staff have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

With all best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosemary Shahan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rosemary Shahan
President



Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety

May 19, 2008

Honorable Richard Alarcon
Councilmember
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Room 425
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Alarcon:

Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety (CARS) respectfully urges your support for Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), a critical reform that will save Los Angeles taxpayers millions of dollars, allow voters to cast votes that reflect their true preferences without throwing elections to their worst nightmares, and help boost voter turnout.

Major labor unions, civil rights organizations, and California elected officials including Secretary of State Debra Bowen, Chair of the Board of Equalization Judy Chu, and Los Angeles Controller Laura Chick have endorsed IRV. (A full endorser list is available at IRVinLA.org/endorsements.)

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We appreciate and share your longstanding commitment to ensuring that everyone, including low and moderate income voters, as well as middle class and wealthy voters, has their voices heard, and believe that Instant Runoff Voting has been shown to help accomplish that goal. In short, IRV helps revitalize our democracy.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. Should you or your staff have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

With all best regards,

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Rosemary Shahan
President