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Minnesota Candidates Support IRV

As we rapidly approach November 4, IRV is in use and on the ballot in many places around the country – and candidates and organizations here in Minnesota are hoping to see it in use here soon. Find out [here](#) if your legislators and candidates support IRV. If they do, thank them! If not, then talk to them about IRV and why it deserves their support.

Important Three-Way Races – IRV Could Make the Difference

As third parties have gained prominence in Minnesota, people have speculated what the effects will be. This year, two critical races showcase how our voting system breaks down when more than two candidates compete: **the U.S. Senate race, the open congressional seat in the 3rd District and the campaign for State House District 41A.**

In the U.S. Senate race, we have incumbent GOP Senator Norm Coleman facing DFLer Al Franken and Independence Party candidate Dean Barkley. Although polling shows a dead heat between Coleman and Franken, neither is polling close to 50 percent. Dean Barkley is garnering about 18 percent of the vote. That makes it likely that a candidate will win without a majority.

In Congressional District 3, Republican Erik Paulsen, DFLer Ashwin Madia and Independence Party candidate David Dillon are running to fill the seat being vacated by nine-term GOP Rep. Jim Ramstad. Polling shows top runners Paulsen and Madia in a tight race with Dillon taking about eight percent of the vote. The winner here also may gain less than majority support.

In State House District 41A, incumbent Republican – now independent – Rep. Ron Erhardt is facing GOP nominee Keith Downey and DFLer Kevin Staunton. Nine-term Rep. Erhardt was defeated in his bid for Republican endorsement following his support for the transportation bill and subsequent veto override last February. There's been no polling done, but those watching believe it's very close.

In all of these races, IRV could make a decisive difference. What if all voters knew they could cast their vote for their candidate of choice without "wasting" it? What if

we could be assured that the winner was supported by a majority rather than just a plurality of voters regardless of how many candidates were on the ballot?

We won't find out this year, but these elections present yet *another* opportunity to raise awareness about the need for a more effective voting system.

FairVote Minnesota is providing IRV talking points to election commentators and analysts for discussion during the upcoming election coverage. Click [here](#) to download the talking points. Use them when talking to friends, family and colleagues about how IRV would make a difference in our elections.

Stay tuned for post-election news alerts and analysis.

Help Make IRV a Reality in Minnesota

Help bring an end to wasted votes and plurality-take-all elections: Make IRV a reality by [making a contribution today!](#)

We know many are feeling the pinch of our struggling economy and others have given generously to election campaigns this year, but **strengthening our democracy by bringing more choices, diverse voices and independent thinking to our elections** is important to ALL campaigns – and to the future of our state and country.

Can you give [\\$25, \\$50, \\$100 or even more](#) to help us decisively defeat the Minneapolis court challenge and continue the progressive momentum for IRV in Minnesota?

Donations can be made at www.fairvotemn.org/contribute/online or by mail to FairVote Minnesota, PO Box 19440, Minneapolis, MN 55409.

Other ways to help IRV this election:

Ask your candidates to support IRV.

Write a letter to the editor about the value of preference polling.

Write an op-ed or blog about how IRV would have made a difference this election.

Invite us to speak to your group or at an event or let us know if YOU would like to be a part of Speakers Bureau.

IRV Lawsuit Update

As we've been reporting, FairVote Minnesota is a co-defendant in a lawsuit challenging IRV's constitutionality and the right of the people of Minneapolis to use IRV in city elections.

On October 8, we had our first day in court. This date was set to hear arguments in the case, but the plaintiffs delayed the arguments by introducing a new reason

they don't like IRV. To ensure that all the issues are fully covered, the judge has permitted the additional complaint and has provided FairVote Minnesota and the City of Minneapolis the opportunity to respond.

Response briefs are due November 6. At that time, the judge will issue a schedule to hear arguments in the case. We expect the judge to rule expeditiously once arguments are heard.

Click [here](#) for a full update.

IRV around the Country

Not all the IRV action is in Minnesota – in fact, it's all over the country!

Voters in Pierce County, Wash., adopted IRV in 2006 and will begin using it this year to elect county officials. **Robin Garwood, FairVote Minnesota Board member and Policy Aide to Minneapolis Councilmember Cam Gordon will be traveling to Pierce County** to observe the elections and bring back important lessons for Minneapolis implementation next year.

There also are IRV measures on ballots in several cities, most prominently in Memphis, Tenn., and Cincinnati, Ohio, where voters will have the opportunity to bring back proportional representation to their city council.

Click [here](#) to learn more about IRV successes and hopeful successes throughout the nation.

Working Together for a Better Democracy

With all the talk about partisanship that surrounds elections, it's important to remember all the important electoral work done by organizations that don't have a partisan bent – groups like [Citizens for Election Integrity](#), [Minnesota Council of Nonprofits](#) the [League of Women Voters](#) and [TakeAction Minnesota](#).

Each of these organizations support IRV, and FairVote Minnesota works closely with them to advance a continuum of critical election reforms to make democracy work better in Minnesota. We hope you'll visit their websites and help make sure Minnesota's elections work for all voters.

Citizens for Election Integrity and the League of Women Voters are seeking election audit volunteers. Can you [help](#)?

TakeAction Minnesota is training election judges on voting rights and how to [stand up for voters' rights](#).

Minnesota Council of Nonprofit's Voter Participation Project is active in [Get-Out-The-Vote work](#).

The White House Project is sponsoring "[Take Our Daughters to the Polls.](#)"

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