

2020 Elections about Elections

By the LWVBC Voting Methods Team

In the November *VOTER* we reviewed elections that we and some other Leagues were closely monitoring. Here is a summary of the results with one addition – Alaska.

Directly Elect the Mayor

√ City of Boulder 2E – Supporters cast 42,784 votes or 78% to directly elect the mayor beginning in 2023 and to use instant-runoff (ranked) voting.

√ Littleton 3A – Supporters cast 21,803 votes or 81% to directly elect the mayor (using “regular” plurality voting).

Maine – Using Instant-Runoff (Ranked) Voting for Federal Elections

Senator Susan Collins won reelection with 51% to Sara Gideon’s 42.4%. Because Collins won a majority of #1 rankings, the contest defaulted to a plurality election and nobody’s #2 rankings were revealed. The margin of victory would probably have been smaller if Maine did not have ranked voting because more people would have voted exclusively for one of the frontrunners. Maine has two congressional districts. The Democrats won both seats, but some voters split their tickets to put Susan Collins over the top statewide and Trump over the top in the 2nd district. Neither congressional district had an instant runoff for Congress or US president.

Voting to Change the Way to Vote

X Massachusetts Question 2 – Opponents cast 1,877,447 votes or 54.8% to reject instant-runoff (ranked) voting for statewide and state legislative elections.

√ Alaska Measure 2 – Supporters cast 173,725 votes (unofficial results) or 50.55% to adopt more campaign finance reporting and to change to an open primary – still with “choose one” plurality voting – but the top 4 vote-getters proceed to an instant-runoff (ranked) voting general election.

√ St Louis Prop D – Supporters cast 87,369 votes or 68% to change from a partisan to a non-partisan primary and use approval voting where you vote for as many candidates as you support. The top two vote-getters proceed to the general election.

√ Albany, CA, Measure BB – Supporters cast 7,154 votes (unofficial results) or 73.3% to adopt the proportional single transferable (ranked) vote to elect city council and school board members. Albany could provide a model for redesigning Boulder city council elections.

Voters Clearly Want More Say in Their Elections!