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Weekend Election Day instead of Tuesday election day in Los Angeles (and by L.A.'s example sooner in America?): Comment to the City of Los Angeles Municipal Elections Reform Commission

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To: electionscommission@lacity.org, greg@newciv.org

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City of Los Angeles Municipal Elections Reform Commission
<http://electionscommission.lacity.org/>

Hello one more time, as the L.A. Municipal Elections Reform Commission passes out of existence today.

My compliments to the City's Municipal Elections Reform Commission, having testified with my wife Christina Coolidge to the Commission last Sunday, June 1st, in Hollywood. We were surprised to be only two of the three members of the public who appeared to offer citizen input at the hearing.

We testified that **we would like to see our City's (and County's and other local) elections moved from the dysfunctional Tuesday-workday election day to a new "Election Weekend" -- Saturday and Sunday.**

And that hopefully this change in Los Angeles would help nudge the nation itself from Tuesday elections to a new "American Election Weekend"!

We have reviewed some of the findings of this year's Presidential Commission on Election Administration (www.supportthevoter.gov). Early voting is increasingly popular, according to the Commission. A recent analysis by the Pew Charitable Trusts (www.pewstates.org/projects/stateline/headlines/presidential-commission-backs-early-voting-standardized-elections-85899534857) found that in 2012, as many as half of the votes in a number of key states were cast before Election Day (many or most of these on weekends).

A Weekend Election Day(s) would make it easier for elections officials across the country to secure the needed pollworkers for elections, as more people are available for this temporary second (or third) job on Saturdays and Sundays than on Tuesdays -- and many could use the money! Also, a greater number of the citizen pollworkers would be available to fill these positions and a correspondingly smaller number of government employees -- who are much more highly paid for poll work than non-government employees -- would be needed, resulting in significant election-related cost savings to taxpayers.

We thank the Commission and our elected leaders for this opportunity for public input and for your serious consideration of our proposal for a new **Los Angeles Saturday and Sunday Weekend Election.**

We hope you will make sure that all of the members of the Commission receive this e-mail.

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Gregory Wright's previous e-mailed comment to the Commission is copied below.

— Original Message —

From: Gregory D. Wright

To: electionscommission@lacity.org

Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2014 8:33 PM

Subject: Weekend Election Day in Los Angeles (and hopefully also in a nudged-toward-Election-Weekend U.S.): Comment to the City of Los Angeles Municipal Elections Reform Commission

City of Los Angeles Municipal Elections Reform Commission

<http://electionscommission.lacity.org/>

Hello.

Yes, I would be more inclined to vote if our Los Angeles Election Day were on a weekend! -- ideally a atwo-day Saturday and Sunday Los AngelesWeekend Election 'Day.' This would be good for the City -- and doing so in our very visible city would nudge America itself toward the institution of a new '**American Election Weekend**' to replace the anti-worker, anti-mom, anti-student, anti-apathy U.S. Tuesday workday election day (the product of an antiquated 1845 Congressional law), a reform that would be very good for democracy in this country.

I note that L.A.'s "rival" California city, San Francisco already holds its municipal elections on weekends. L.A. should no longer trail San Francisco in this important conduct of municipal elections.

Also, a two-day Weekend Election could maximize same-day voter registration (by providing more time for this somewhat longer process) and would help election administrators enlist more pollworkers.

A Weekend Election 'Day' in Los Angeles and in the country will make voting much more of a family occasion (two and even three generations going to the polls together) and a shared civic activity happening in the "commons" of what for most people (and all students) are their days off. An American Election Weekend will bring more young people, low-wage workers, overworked parents, harried single moms, minorities, disabled, and the less-affluent and socially-isolated out to cast a vote -- or to register *and then* cast a vote -- or to register and vote and then sign up to vote-by-mail.

The current prognostication for the November Midterm is that only one in four young voters will turn out to vote, and many other groups of voters will show similar electoral disinterest. This is the political reality that Los Angeles and America needs to address with this nuts-and-bolts basic election reform.

I am, by the way, a longtime pollworker myself, and will be again a week from now on June 3rd. I've seen firsthand the tremendous resources that Los Angeles City and County put into our local elections, and how little electoral participation this effort too often serves.

Thank you for the Commission's work, and particularly for its interest in the long-overdue creation of a new Weekend-instead-of-Tuesday Election Day schedule.

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