

## Communication from Public

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**Comments for Public Posting:** To the Los Angeles City Council Elections and Ethics Committee, Thank you for the time, effort, and dedication you invest in ensuring that Los Angeles elections are fair, representative, and worthy of public trust. I sincerely appreciate the work this committee does on behalf of our city and its voters. Recently, I had a thoughtful conversation with Bob Blumenfeld regarding the possibility of placing ranked choice voting on the November ballot. During our discussion, he acknowledged several important benefits of ranked choice voting, including the elimination of the spoiler effect and the significant long-term savings the city could achieve by eliminating costly runoff elections and lame-duck periods. However, he also expressed a concern that many voters do not fully educate themselves about candidates until the field has been narrowed to two candidates after the primary election. While I understand why this concern exists, I believe our current electoral system is itself one of the primary reasons many voters disengage from the political process. Under plurality elections, voters have learned that candidates without substantial financial backing and institutional support rarely survive the primary process. Campaign visibility often depends less on the quality of a candidate's ideas and more on access to major donors and expensive advertising. As a result, many working-class voters feel that the outcome is largely predetermined by money and political machinery rather than by genuine public support. This discourages participation. Many voters stop researching candidates altogether because they feel their preferred grassroots candidates have little realistic chance of advancing. Others lose faith that elected officials backed by major financial interests will truly represent ordinary residents. The spoiler effect further compounds this problem. Frequently, several grassroots or reform-minded candidates divide support among voters who share similar values, while the Democratic and Republican establishments typically unite behind one heavily funded candidate each. Because votes among grassroots candidates become fragmented, the best-funded and most widely advertised candidates often advance, regardless of whether they represent the broader desires of the electorate. The result is widespread frustration. Many voters feel silenced, underrepresented, and pressured to vote for the "lesser of two

evils” rather than for the candidate they genuinely believe in. Ranked choice voting offers a meaningful solution to these problems. First, it encourages collaboration rather than division among candidates with similar priorities. Candidates are incentivized to build broader coalitions and reach beyond their base, which helps reduce the overwhelming advantage of money-driven campaigns. Second, ranked choice voting eliminates the spoiler effect. Voters can confidently support the candidate they truly prefer without fear of “wasting” their vote. If their first-choice candidate is eliminated, their vote transfers to their next choice. This empowers voters to engage more thoughtfully, learn about more candidates, and participate more enthusiastically in elections. Finally, ranked choice voting would allow Los Angeles to eliminate both separate primaries and runoff elections. This would not only save the city millions of dollars over time, but also create a single decisive election that encourages voters to pay attention from the very beginning, rather than waiting to see who “makes it through” to later rounds. Los Angeles deserves an election system that gives voters more voice, more choice, and more confidence that their participation truly matters. Ranked choice voting would strengthen representation, increase voter engagement, and save public resources that could instead be invested in critical city needs. I respectfully urge the committee to support placing ranked choice voting on the November ballot. Thank you again for your service and consideration.