

R096-0910

10 A Resolution Concerning

20 **INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND**

30 **WHEREAS:** Voter turnout is a major issue that determines the effectiveness of
40 the system on which our nation is founded; and,

50 **WHEREAS:** The separation of primary and general elections deters some
60 potential voters, being twice the time commitment of a single general
70 election; and,

80 **WHEREAS:** A winner-take-all system of voting encourages extremism and
90 negative campaigning in order to appeal to the party base; and,

100 **WHEREAS:** In the current system there is no electoral reward for politicians in
110 supporting moderation and bipartisanship; and,

120 **WHEREAS:** Voting for third party candidates in the current system is typically
130 regarded as throwing the vote away, as there is little chance for said
140 candidates' victory; and,

150 **WHEREAS:** Instant Runoff Voting is defined as a system in which voters rank
160 their choices for an office, 1 or 2 or 3, and so on, depending on how many
170 candidates are running for said office; then, after the first and only round
180 of voting, any candidate with a majority wins the election, but if no one
190 has a majority, second choice candidates of those who voted for the
200 candidate with the fewest votes are automatically allocated, and so on until
210 someone gets a majority of all votes cast; and,

220 **WHEREAS:** With the tabulation occurring electronically, a majority winner is
230 guaranteed on election night; and,

240 **WHEREAS:** Instant Runoff Voting, hereafter referred to as IRV, has been
250 adopted by many other democratic countries, such as: Australia, Ireland,
260 Great Britain, and New Zealand, as well as in 46 American elections,
270 including San Francisco; and,

280 **WHEREAS:** IRV has been shown to increase voter turnout by only requiring a
290 single election; and,

300 **WHEREAS:** IRV reduces extremism and promotes moderation in elections,
310 since it would be in candidates' best interest to be listed as second choice
320 and therefore appeal to third-party voters and members of the opposite
330 party; and,

340 **WHEREAS:** IRV encourages votes for third party candidates without risking a
350 minority victory in an election; and,

350 **WHEREAS:** IRV guarantees that all elections are won by a majority of votes,
360 regardless of the number of candidates running for office.

370 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature
380 urges the Maryland General Assembly to revise voting procedures for all
390 elections in the state of Maryland to eliminate primary elections and
400 switch to the IRV system of voting.

410 **MANDATES:**

420 Martin O'Malley, Governor of Maryland
430 Anthony Brown, Lieutenant Governor of Maryland
440 Michael Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates
450 Thomas V. "Mike" Miller, President of the Senate

Sponsor:

John Ford

Delegate, University of Maryland, College Park