



The Truth About Runoffs: A Waste of Time and Money

Runoffs are supposed to ensure majority rule, but they cause added **inconvenience and lower voter turnout**. They elect candidates with only a majority of the minority -- making it hard to say what the *actual majority* really wants. All this, in spite of the extra money spent to hold another election.

Runoffs cause lower voter turnout

- In Georgia's 2004 runoff for a Court of Appeals seat, taxpayers spent \$2 million for an election where only 5% of voters went to the polls.¹



Runoffs waste taxpayer money

- For example, New York City taxpayers picked up a **\$10 million** tab for the 2001 Democratic mayoral primary runoff...² **nearly \$7 for every runoff voter**.³

Runoffs disenfranchise our troops

- The men and women in our armed forces are shut out of the democratic process because there is often not enough time to receive and return a runoff ballot from overseas. By consolidating elections, our troops can better participate in the democracy they defend.



Runoffs inconvenience voters and election officials

- Authorities must print ballots, recruit & train poll workers, locate precincts, and prepare equipment. Voters then go to the polls. After, elections officials must process the ballots and results. – **All this has to happen not once, but twice.**

Runoffs lead to longer, more expensive campaigns

- The cost of a successful campaign for San Francisco Board of Supervisors **doubled** from 1977-1979 – \$30,772 to \$61,614 – when a runoff had to be held. Most agree we need less campaign spending, not more.⁴



¹ Parsons, Barbara L. "High cost of run-off elections." The Post Searchlight. December 7, 2004. http://www.zwire.com/site/news.cfm?BRD=2068&dept_id=387472&newsid=13509188&PAG=461&rfi=9.

² Citizens for Instant Runoff Voting in New York State. "Replaces Costly Runoff Elections." 2003. <http://www.nysirv.org/overview.htm>.

³ Figures from Board of Elections in the City of New York. <http://vote.nyc.ny.us/pdf/results/2001/primaryelection/2001runoff.pdf>.

⁴ Hill, Steven. FairVote. "December Runoffs in San Francisco: a Historical Perspective. 2002. <http://www.sfrcv.com/runoffs.htm>.