

State should rethink instant runoff voting

Eva L. Ritchey, Hendersonville • January 4, 2011

There is nothing more important to democracy than voters' confidence that their vote has been counted as they intended. Although well meaning, Instant Runoff Voting for the North Carolina Court of Appeals failed. It took five weeks to count, has yet to release all the second and third place votes, launched a recount and as in Vermont the winner lost.

Judge Cressie Thigpen led by more than 100,000 votes after the first round and if the count had ended on Election Day, Judge Thigpen would have won easily. If there'd been a separate runoff, he might have led that too. No wonder that every major paper in the state gave IRV a no-confidence vote. "Instant runoff failure" (Greensboro News & Record) and "Not the best way to boost confidence in elections" (Charlotte Observer).

After fairly accessing the advantages and disadvantages of the IRV experiment The Raleigh News and Observer concluded, "Question is, should North Carolina elect to use Instant Runoff Voting in statewide races again? Our answer is no..." (Dec. 24).

IRV is confusing, not transparent, disenfranchises voter groups and can produce unintended outcomes. Isn't it time, we went back to "one man, one vote?"

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Your daughter insists on wearing her princess costume to the grocery store. Allow it or not?

YES, at least she's dressed!

NO, I have some rules!

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