

Hot Topic: Better Voting Methods



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LWV Boulder County

Why are voting methods such a **HOT** topic?





Plurality Voting

The most prevalent voting method in the US

Also known as

- Winner-take-all
- First-past-the-post (FPTP)
- Choose-one voting

Vote for ONE

<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

What's Wrong with Plurality?

Plurality voting encourages people to vote **strategically** (with their head) instead of **honestly** (with their head and their heart) because if they don't ...



Spoiler Effect

...Two or more candidates may split the vote allowing the least popular candidate to win.

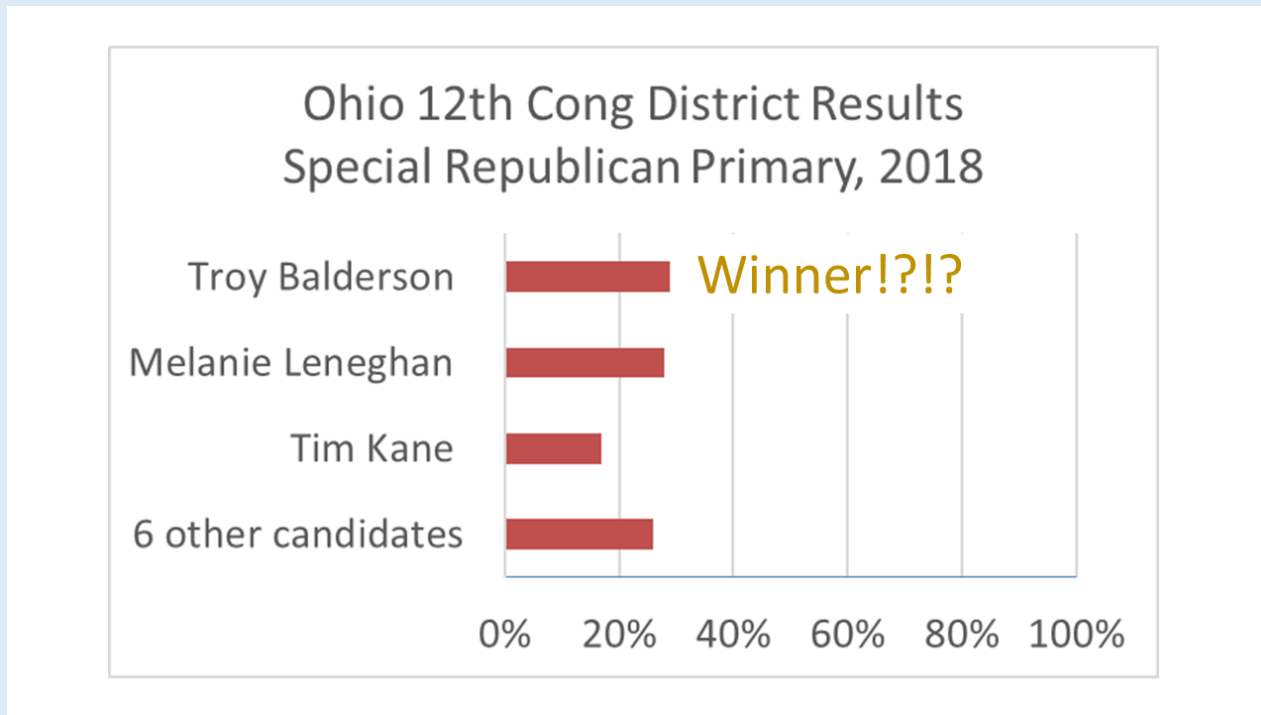


Cropped image from Mike Braun 2018 campaign ad --
Image appeared on various media websites
This slide is not meant to convey that Braun was the least popular candidate – only that vote splitting is possible.

To Win a Plurality Election

-- Get more votes than anyone else --

Do **more** votes equal **many** votes?



People Want
Their Voices Heard

Plurality voting
limits our voice.



One-Party Dominance and Polarization



Progressive Era (1890s to 1920s)

Political Improvements

- Direct election of US senators
- Women's suffrage

VOTES FOR WOMEN!—In November scenes like this will be enacted millions of times over as women—outnumbering men for the first time in history—cast the majority of the ballots.





Page Eleven

1944, women voting by elizavery (2008) <https://www.flickr.com/photos/23097960@N04/2431473634/>
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2019

Are we in a similar period now?

- Maine (Instant-Runoff Voting) 1st, 2nd, 3rd
- Fargo, ND (Approval Voting) 
- Lane County, OR (STAR Voting) 

People Want Their Voices Heard

The 2020 LWVUS Convention
may consider concurrence with
a Voting Methods position.



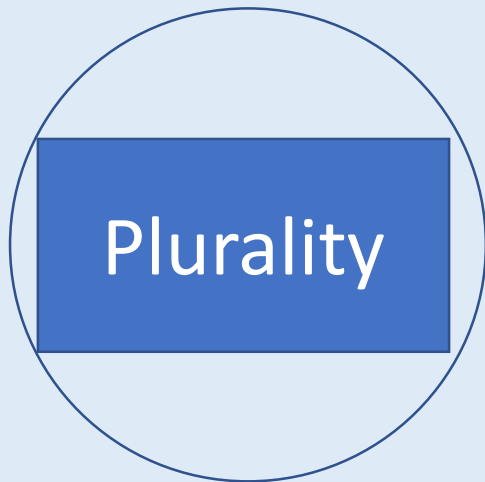
Learn about the concurrence at
the Friday, 8pm caucus!

3 Ways to Vote

Plurality

Rating

Rank Order



Plurality Ballot

Vote for ONE.

brownie

chocolate chip cookie

lemon bar

Approval Voting Ballot

Vote for ONE OR MORE.



brownie

chocolate chip cookie

lemon bar

Score Voting Ballot

Rate EACH candidate.



No support = 0. Maximum support = 3.

brownie

0	1	2	3
---	---	---	---

chocolate chip cookie

0	1	2	3
---	---	---	---

lemon bar

0	1	2	3
---	---	---	---

Instant-Runoff (or Single-Winner RCV) Ballot

Rank EACH candidate.

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
	choice	choice	choice
brownie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
chocolate chip cookie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
lemon bar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

An Important Distinction

Single-Winner: mayor, member of Congress, ward council-member

Versus

Multi-Winner: 2 or more seats filled in a single contest

Multi-Member Board Elections – 2 Types



Can Promote
**Proportional
Representation**

When Adopting a Better Voting Method

- Consider what the **electorate** wants
 - ranking vs rating, at-large vs districts
- Consider what **election officials** can feasibly implement
 - costs, post-election audits, statutory limits

LWVCO Toolkit – Part 1

- **Presentation:** Why are Voting Methods Such a **Hot Topic**?
- **Pamphlets:** Single-Winner and Multi-Winner Voting Methods
- **LWVCO Voting Methods Position**
- **Proposed LWVUS Concurrence**

LWVCO Toolkit – Part 2

- **Website Resources**

lwwbc.org → Teams At Work → Voting Methods

- Interactive Voting Exercises
- Evaluating Voting Methods
- 2017 Study

Email us at vmteam@lwwbc.org

Advocate for BETTER Voting Methods

