



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
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To the Editor,

Vermont's election laws need fixing. The election of the Vermont Auditor of Accounts continues to draw more attention than usual this year. The race is now headed for a recount. With multiple candidates splitting the vote, the top four candidates appear to have received 44.47%, 44.41%, 9.39% and 1.69%.

The real issue is that there will still be no true majority winner after the recount is completed. When there are three or more candidates, our current method of casting and counting votes allows a candidate with less than half the votes to be declared elected, even if a majority (over 50%) of voters do not favor that choice. That is unacceptable. Vermonters deserve a majority voting system that will elect a candidate preferred the majority, regardless of how many candidates are running.

The League of Women Voters of Vermont advocates the adoption of instant runoff voting (IRV), in which voters have the option of ranking candidates on the ballot in order of choice, to solve this failing of our current election method. The only two realistic alternatives are instant runoff voting or amending the constitution to have separate runoff elections. Holding separate runoffs is extremely costly, and actually undemocratic, as voter participation usually plummets in runoffs (just imagine how few voters would turn out in a December runoff for Auditor). The legislature should take up instant runoff voting election reform immediately after convening in January.

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