

Johnson, Doug

From: Ellen Lempres <elempres18@students.claremontmckenna.edu>
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News Release: California Voters Approve Changes in Local Government and Elect More Latinos to City Councils

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ROSE INSTITUTE OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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While the Presidential contest grabs the headlines, California's continuing tsunami of change at the local level continued Tuesday as voters in nine cities appear to have approved changing their city council elections from citywide to by-district systems, and the twenty-one cities holding their first-ever by-district council elections saw an increase from their previous eight to a new count of twenty Latinos on those twenty-one Councils.

Voters in Corona, Costa Mesa, El Cajon, Eureka, Placentia, Rancho Cucamonga and Stockton easily approved changing city council elections from citywide (or "at large") to by-district. In Fullerton and Bellflower, the "Yes" side leads but there remains a chance that late ballot counts could reverse the results. In Fullerton, the current margin is 53% yes, 47% no, and in Bellflower the yes side leads 51% to 49%.

In the twenty-one cities holding their first-ever by-district council elections, the number of Latinos on the council increased in Banning, Chula Vista, Dixon, Highland, King City, Merced, San Juan Capistrano, Sanger, and Woodland (and may increase in Palmdale if late ballots change the result in District 1).

While Chula Vista and King City saw the most change with two new Latinos on each Council, other cities saw disappointing results for the Latino groups that pushed for by-district elections. In Anaheim, despite a hotly-contested California Voting Rights Act legal battle, the change to by-district elections did not lead to the

election of any Latinos. In both Anaheim and Garden Grove, Latinos failed to win any of the four districts up for election this year.

In Palmdale, which also saw an expensive legal battle over the change to by-district elections, current results have one new Latino elected, but the (appointed) incumbent Latina losing.

For more information, contact **Douglas Johnson** or **Justin Levitt** at the **Rose Institute of State and Local Government**, or see our recent **White Paper** on the California Voting Rights Act. Please note that we learned of the votes in Victorville and Stockton after releasing that report.



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Ellen Lempres
Claremont McKenna College '18
elempres18@cmc.edu