



CITY COUNCILMEMBER
RIGEL ROBINSON
DISTRICT 7

16

CONSENT CALENDAR
February 26, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmembers Rigel Robinson, Ben Bartlett, Sophie Hahn and Lori Droste
Subject: Support for AB 177 (Election Day Holiday)

RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to Senator Skinner, Assemblymember Wicks, and Assemblymember Low supporting AB 177, which would add any day a statewide general election is held to the list of state holidays.

BACKGROUND

Under current election law, Election Day occurs on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each even-numbered year. Election Day is not on the list of California State holidays. Since Election Day falls on a weekday, getting to the polls can be difficult for people who have to attend school or work.

Voter turnout among young people is low, and turnout for registered voters aged 18-29 is consistently lower than all other age groups. Closing public schools and community colleges on Election Day would give young people greater opportunities to vote and exercise their civic duty.

Wait times and crowds at the polls can be unpredictable, and for people who work full time, finding time in the day to vote can be stressful. Polls are often busiest during the morning, evening, and during lunch breaks because of people's work schedules. Giving workers the day off to vote would make voting easier for them and increase efficiency at polling stations.

This bill would add Election Day to the list of days where public schools and community colleges close and state employees get paid time off. This would give students and state workers more time to cast their ballots, and is an important step towards increasing voter turnout and promoting civic engagement in California.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No impact.

CONTACT PERSON

Rachel Alper, Intern to Councilmember Rigel Robinson, (510) 981-7170

Attachments:

- 1: Letter of support to Senator Skinner
- 2: Letter of support to Assemblymember Wicks
- 3: Letter of support to Assemblymember Low
- 4: Bill Text - AB 177

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB177

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Member of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 2059
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 177 (Low) – Election Day Holiday

Dear Senator Skinner,

The Berkeley City Council would like to convey its full support for AB 177. AB 177 seeks to make voting easier for students and state workers by making Election Day a holiday.

Under current election law, Election Day occurs on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each even-numbered year. Election Day is not on the list of California State holidays. Since Election Day falls on a weekday, getting to the polls can be difficult for people who have to attend school or work.

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This bill would add Election Day to the list of days where public schools and community colleges close and state employees get paid time off. This would give students and state workers more time to cast their ballots, and is an important step towards increasing voter turnout and promoting civic engagement in California.

Berkeley City Council requests that you support this important legislation to make voting easier for Californians.

Respectfully,
Berkeley City Council

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Member of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5160
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 177 (Low) – Election Day Holiday

Dear Assemblymember Wicks,

The Berkeley City Council would like to convey its full support for AB 177. AB 177 seeks to make voting easier for students and state workers by making Election Day a holiday.

Under current election law, Election Day occurs on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each even-numbered year. Election Day is not on the list of California State holidays. Since Election Day falls on a weekday, getting to the polls can be difficult for people who have to attend school or work.

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Berkeley City Council requests that you support this important legislation to make voting easier for Californians.

Respectfully,
Berkeley City Council

The Honorable Evan Low
Member of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 4126
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 177 (Low) – Election Day Holiday

Dear Assemblymember Low,

The Berkeley City Council would like to convey its full support for AB 177.

Under current election law, Election Day occurs on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each even-numbered year. Election Day is not on the list of California State holidays. Since Election Day falls on a weekday, getting to the polls can be difficult for people who have to attend school or work.

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Voter turnout among young people is low, and turnout for registered voters aged 18-29 is consistently lower than all other age groups. Closing public schools and community colleges on Election Day would give young people more time to vote.

Adding Election Day to the list of state holidays is an important step towards increasing voter turnout and promoting civic engagement in California.

Thank you for introducing this important piece of legislation.

Respectfully,
Berkeley City Council

