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Good evening. My name is Chris Jerdonek. I will describe who I am, and then share with you some of California's experiences with ranked choice voting and what some of the effects were.

I'm a member of San Francisco's Elections Commission. That is the body that oversees elections in the City and County of San Francisco. I have served on it for the past seven years and was the Commission's President for two of those years. Before being on the Commission, I drafted Oakland's ranked choice voting charter amendment, which passed in 2006, so I can also speak to the practices of other cities in California.

California has four cities using RCV today, and three more that should be starting soon, for a total of seven cities. San Francisco started using RCV seventeen years ago in 2004. The cities of Oakland, Berkeley, and San Leandro started using it eleven years ago in 2010. Last November, the cities of Albany and Eureka adopted it by a vote of the people, and the seventh city, Palm Desert will be using it to settle a California Voting Rights Act issue. All of these cities use RCV for local offices like City Council and Mayor. Two of the last three cities will be using it for elections with more than one winner.

To give you a sense of why some of these cities adopted RCV, I'll use the examples of San Francisco and Oakland. In San Francisco, before adopting RCV, we had a November election followed by a December runoff election a month later between the top two candidates if no one got a majority. The problem though is that the runoff sometimes had a much lower turnout because it was over the holidays, and so on. That turnout averaged 30% lower than in November. In Oakland, before RCV they had a primary in June, followed by a runoff between the top two candidates five months later in November. So, in Oakland, the voter turnout problem was the reverse. The turnout in June was much lower than in November, so a smaller, less diverse group of voters was deciding who got to be on the ballot in the high turnout November election. These cities adopted ranked choice voting not just to save time and money from only having to have one election. They also got to hold the entirety of that one election in November when voter turnout is at its highest and most diverse.

Adding to this, one of the I would say non-obvious benefits people have seen is with regard to minority communities and women candidates. Women and candidates of color have done very well in getting elected under RCV. I'll mention a couple noteworthy examples. In 2010, Oakland elected its first Asian-American woman as Mayor in its debut RCV election. Oakland's next mayor was also a woman. In 2018, the voters of San Francisco elected its first African-American woman as Mayor. A few years ago, of the eighteen offices in San Francisco elected using RCV, thirteen of those were held by people

of color. One reason for this is that if multiple candidates from the same community run against each other in an RCV election, their supporters don't get divided as can happen in a conventional primary. This is because voters that identify with more than candidate can rank them both, first and second. Organizations can endorse both, and occasionally, candidates have even encouraged their supporters to endorse another candidate as their second choice. Thus, we don't see communities being pitted against each other as much.

To give one last example, we saw this in San Francisco last November in one heavily Asian-American district. There were seven candidates for Supervisor, including two Chinese-American candidates, a man and a woman. When the Chinese-American man was eliminated, some of his supporters' votes went to the Chinese-American woman, causing her to get a majority and win. This type of situation is very common in ranked choice voting. It allows diverse communities to organically coalesce behind a single candidate through the voting process.

Thank you.