



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 101-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

March 16, 2021

To: [Senate Majority Leader Rob Wagner](#)  
[Senate Committee on Rules](#)

Re: [SB 343](#) – Local Options to allow Ranked Choice Voting – **SUPPORT**

The League of Women Voters (LWV) at the national and state levels supports electoral systems producing the greatest level of representation. In Oregon, we most recently (in 2016) conducted an in-depth two-year [study](#) to update our electoral systems position. This position was (in part) the basis for a similar update to the LWV United States position in 2020.

The Oregon position clearly states the basis for our support of SB 343. While for multi-seat, or at-large, elections the LWV Oregon would support several systems; our position currently states that “[F]or single-winner systems, the League supports ranked-choice voting...” although we could support other alternative voting methods that meet our position’s criteria.

As SB 343 “permits counties to adopt ranked-choice voting (RCV) to conduct county elections,” it thus:

- Allows local jurisdictions to choose the voting system that is appropriate for them. This particular bill does not mandate the changes but gives jurisdictions more options.
- Allows local governments, where appropriate, to save money by combining an expensive, low-turnout primary election with a single, high-turnout general elections conducted with RCV.
- Allows jurisdictions to opt-in to running elections for multiple identical positions, like city councilors, in a pool instead of by arbitrary “position numbers” that artificially constrain choices.
- Allows jurisdictions to comply with the wishes of the voters and not be hamstrung by out-of-date machinery, not capable to the task.

We believe that where Ranked Choice Voting is adopted, it would serve the voters of Oregon in several ways.

1. It gives voters more choice of candidates who they wish to support (expressing their rankings 1-2-3 etc.).
2. Based on its use in other areas, RCV demonstrates that it curtails negative campaigning.
3. RCV avoids “vote splitting” in which voters feel they might waste their vote if they choose their favorite candidate.

These results which we advocate for are based on several of the many criteria included in our LWV Oregon position on electoral systems. Specifically, those benefits supported by SB 343 include:

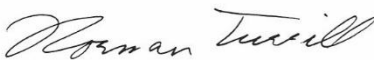
- Encouraging voter participation and voter engagement.
- Encouraging those with minority opinions to participate.
- Promote sincere voting over strategic voting.
- Discourage negative campaigning.

The LWV believes that our electoral system is a matter important to Oregon voters and of preservation of the public peace, health and safety. We ask that you support SB 343 (the RCV local options bill).

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our positions on this legislation.



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LWVOR President



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LWVOR Governance Coordinator



Barbara Klein  
Electoral Systems Portfolio

CC: [Senator Jeff Golden](#), sponsor of SB 343