

Hello,

I'm a resident of Senate District 18 and I oppose SB 343 unless amended to include STAR voting.

While it is definitely true that plurality/first-past-the-post voting is essentially the worst way to vote by almost any objective measure of voting methods, RCV is only mildly better (and to be fair, it is better) but comes with a host of downsides - greater costs to hold elections, less transparency of election tallies and ballot counting, more spoiled ballots, and due to a quirk in the mathematics of RCV, a decent chance that one's ballot either won't count by the end or end up even helping a non-preferred candidate. I get that it's popular, has the momentum, and has a lot of big money behind it (though the latter is a concerning red flag), but it would be a mistake to adopt RCV when we have a much better alternative growing its own popularity right here in Oregon: STAR voting. STAR comes with basically all the upsides of RCV and almost none of the downsides. Notably, STAR was created as an improvement to RCV and score voting methods, combining the best of both.

All studies on voting methods have come to the same conclusion I have (which is why I've come to this conclusion in the first place - following the science): RCV produces only marginally better outcomes than what we have today. If we're going to go through the real and social costs of updating our voting method (and I believe we really need to), let's go with the best option out there - not just the one most known. Please oppose SB 343 or amend it to include STAR.

Kind regards,
Damien Erlund
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