

During today's committee meeting there were numerous possible sources of confusion.

In my role as the VoteFair guy I've been involved in election-method discussions for three decades, so I'm offering these clarifications:

1. Three kinds of ballots were discussed: ranked ballots, rating (or score) ballots, and Approval ballots. Of the methods discussed, only STAR voting uses rating ballots.
2. The current wording of Senate Bill 791 specifies the vote-counting method that is commonly known as instant-runoff voting (IRV).
3. Most of the opposition to SB 791 is not opposition to the use of ranked ballots. Rather it is opposition to instant-runoff voting (IRV).
4. Several fans of STAR voting said they like STAR voting because it is so much better than "ranked choice voting." They were referring to IRV, not to other better methods that also use ranked ballots.
5. "Ranked choice voting" has different meanings to different people. The FairVote organization defines "ranked choice voting" as including both instant-runoff voting (IRV) and the single transferable vote (STV).
6. The hidden agenda of the FairVote organization is to get the single transferable vote (STV) adopted in the US. In Canada the FairVote organization openly dismisses instant-runoff voting (IRV) and exclusively promotes the single-transferable vote (STV) for use in Canadian elections.
7. The single-transferable vote (STV) does not permit a voter to mark two candidates at the same ranking level. This is why the FairVote version of instant-runoff voting (IRV), which Senate Bill 791 specifies, does not allow such "equal" rankings. Yet a few wording changes can easily avoid this limitation.
8. Some STAR voting fans suggested that ranked ballots do not allow the same preference level to be assigned to more than one candidate. This limitation only applies to FairVote's version of instant-runoff voting (IRV).
9. STV would make it easier for third-party candidates to get elected to the Oregon legislature. The FairVote organization believes that STV would be a big improvement. However, neither the Republican party nor the Democratic party would benefit from this FairVote goal. Therefore it is not necessary to cling to the current wording that has been provided by the VoteFair organization.
10. The big pattern in today's testimony (and in the written testimony) is that there is lots of support for ranked ballots, and not lots of support for rating ballots except as an alternative to instant-runoff voting (IRV).

With these concepts in mind, I'll repeat my verbal recommendation that the wording of Senate Bill 791 can be, and should be, improved. I recommend the specific changes that are presented in the following document:

<https://www.rankedchoiceoregon.org/SenateBill0791SuggestedChanges.pdf>

Thank you for taking time to learn about better voting methods!

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