

# Support Statewide Ranked Choice Voting, HB 2004

## Senate Committee on Rules

Monday, June 19th, 2023

Chair Lieber, Vice Chair Knopp, and members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

My name is Samantha Gladu and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am writing to testify in strong support for HB 2004, which will establish ranked choice voting statewide and help ensure all Oregonians are represented in our democracy.

From 2021-22, I served on the Multnomah County Charter Review Committee and as co-chair of our equitable representation subcommittee. We forwarded a recommendation to the 2021 ballot that Multnomah County will use instant runoff ranked choice voting to elect county officers by 2026, and **69% of voters said yes**. So, in the near future, Multnomah County officers will be elected in the general election, except that vacancies will be filled at the next May or November election.

Ranked choice voting is a popular election method that encourages participation, reduces voters' impressions that their vote doesn't count, and discourages the practice of candidates running as spoilers. We have seen in other jurisdictions that ranked choice voting improves elections. Voters get to vote honestly and express their true preferences instead of being worried they'll waste their vote on a candidate who won't win. Voters can indicate their first choice candidate, and their next choice candidates. As a result, ranked choice voting elects candidates with the broadest possible public support. And, ranked choice voting has a demonstrated track record of improving representation for women and people of color. It sounds too good to be true, but ranked choice voting has been upheld by every court which has examined it, including state and federal courts.

In the Multnomah County Charter Review process, our charter review committee agreed that ranked choice voting is an expression of our values of inclusive democracy and innovation. Of the many options for voting methods, we decided to adopt ranked choice voting because it is a tested, proven, voting method that Oregonians are increasingly familiar with. I'm excited to see the momentum building, with over 30 organizations supporting this bill, and Oregonians in Benton County, Multnomah County, and the City of Portland blazing a trail toward a better democracy by having adopted ranked choice voting.

Please bring ranked choice voting statewide by supporting and passing HB 2004.

Thank you,  
Samantha Gladu  
she/they