

Submitter: Donna Torres  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules  
Measure: HB2004

I STRONGLY OPPOSE Ranked Choice Voting (RCV).

In an era where election integrity is in question, why would any politician want to implement this type of system on purpose?

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) requires voters to assign a rank to each candidate whether they support that candidate. If no candidate is ranked first by a majority of voters, the lowest-performing candidate is eliminated. Voters who gave their highest ranking to the eliminated candidate then have their second choice counted instead. This process repeats until one candidate receives a majority.

As implied above, RCV can lead to candidates with little genuine support winning elections. The system confuses voters, distracts from policy issues, and forces voters to vote for candidates they otherwise would not support.

RCV is a scheme to disconnect elections from issues and allow candidates with marginal support from voters to win. The more complicated voting is, the greater the risk of manipulation strategies or fraud. It obscures true debates and issue-driven dialogs among candidates and eliminates genuine binary choices between two top-tier candidates. It also disenfranchises voters, because ballots that do not include the two ultimate finalists are cast aside to manufacture a faux majority for the winner. Most importantly, it confuses voters, especially the elderly.

America is supposed to let the people vote in an actual election between candidates. RCV disenfranchises voters from participating in the actual election between two candidates. So how about let's stop trying to rig the process and just let the voters go vote like they always have — by picking one candidate for each political office.

Another concern: voter confusion.

In California, one county announced that a programming error led to a miscount across all ranked choice contests, including a race in which an Oakland school board candidate was wrongly declared the winner.

We don't need to change the way people vote.

What we need to do is ensure that all the rules are followed. We need clean voter rolls. We need to ensure that only citizens are voting in our elections, allow in-person voting and mail-in ballot voting by request with proof of ID, and hand counting.

Ranked choice voting is most definitely not the way to go.

How does RCV work?

Here is how it works. In 2008, instead of choosing to cast your ballot for John McCain, Barack Obama, Ralph Nader, Bob Barr, or Cynthia McKinney, all of whom were running for president, you would vote for all of them and rank your choice. In other words, you would list all five candidates on your ballot from one to five, with one being your first choice for president and five being your last choice.

If none of the candidates were chosen as the number one pick by a majority of voters in Round One, then the presidential candidate with the lowest number of votes would be eliminated from the ballot. People who selected that candidate as their top pick—let us say it was McKinney—would automatically have their votes changed to their second choice. Then the scores would be recalculated, over and over again, until one of the candidates finally won a majority as the second, third, or even fourth choice of voters.

In the end, a voter's ballot might wind up being cast for the candidate he ranked far below his first choice—a candidate to whom he may have strong political objections and for whom he would not vote in a traditional voting system.

Real Solutions?

The real solution should be a runoff in any close race or a race where one person has not received more than 50% of the vote period.

RCV should NEVER be implemented if you want to create trust in elections.

- 1) <https://www.heritage.org/election-integrity/report/ranked-choice-voting-bad-choice>)
- 2) <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/restoring-america/fairness-justice/ranked-choice-voting-is-a-bad-idea>
- 3) <https://jbs.org/alert/stop-ranked-choice-voting-threat-to-election-integrit>