

RE: Support Statewide Ranked Choice Voting, HB 2004
Senate Committee on Rules

June 20, 2023

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

My name is Professor Lawrence Summers and I am the Charles W. Eliot University Professor and former President Emeritus of Harvard University. I am writing to testify in support for HB 2004.

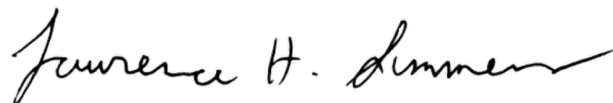
Ranked choice voting is a simple improvement to our elections. It allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference, giving them more voice and more power in our elections.

Used in over 60 jurisdictions across the United States, ranked choice voting has proven success at the city, county, and statewide level. In cities that have adopted ranked choice voting, voters have not only liked it, but, on average, the majority of voters prefer it to our current choose-one system. That is because ranked choice voting gives voters more opportunity to vote for their true preference.

Vote splitting and spoiler candidates are common afflictions of our current voting system. In current races with more than two candidates, candidates can and do win with 30% of the vote. By contrast, in a ranked choice voting race, a candidate only wins when they receive over 50% of the vote. Simply put, ranked choice voting helps ensure that the candidate with broad support wins.

As a proven solution, ranked choice voting would greatly benefit Oregon's voters and candidates alike. I urge you to support HB 2004 and bring ranked choice voting statewide to Oregon.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lawrence H. Summers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Prof. Lawrence Summers
President Emeritus
Harvard University