

Submitter: Cathy Wright
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

RE: Support HB 2004, Statewide Ranked Choice Voting,
Senate Committee on Rules
June 21, 2023

Chair Lieber, Vice Chair Knopp, and members of the Senate Committee on Rules,
My name is Cathy Wright and I live in Tigard. I am writing to testify in strong support
for HB 2004, a referral to the 2024 ballot that would establish ranked choice voting for
statewide and federal elections.

In our current elections, fear of “vote splitting” is affecting both voters and candidates:
Candidates are often deterred from entering a race for fear of splitting voter support
and voters are often forced to choose a candidate with a better chance of winning,
instead of the candidate they actually prefer. As a result, many Oregonians –
especially people of color, working-class people, rural residents, and young people –
are less incentivized to participate in our elections. With over 70% of Oregon voters
“extremely” or “very” discouraged by politics, we need a solution that will empower
voters by giving them a real say in our elections.

In addition, politics is becoming overly polarized to the point where elected officials
don't feel the need to compromise. It affects progress on important issues. I believe
RCV will allow greater opportunities for middle of the road candidates to pull back
into a climate of compromise and working together rather than against each other.

I am not alone in my support of this bill. This legislation is supported by a coalition of
over 35 organizations, including culturally-specific organizations, labor unions,
environmental groups, housing advocates, rural communities, youth-empowering
organizations, and good government groups.

Ranked choice voting is Oregon's next step as a leader in election reform. Please
support HB 2004, which will refer this critical piece of legislation to voters for the 2024
ballot, and pass it out of committee.

Thank you,

Cathy Wright
She/Her