

Submitter: Dawn Jones
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

June 21, 2023

Dear Chair Lieber, Vice Chair Knopp, and Senate Committee on Rules,

Hello from Forest Grove. As a retired teacher, I am so thankful ranked choice voting has been implemented in communities across our nation. Having such a democratic option for voting is very valuable. To know RCV is gaining traction as consideration on our state level is very exciting. 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.

As you may be aware, our very own Oregon Constitution includes voting beyond a two party system. "Section 16. Election by plurality; proportional representation. In all elections.....Provisions may be made by law for the voter's direct or indirect expression of his first, second or additional choices among the candidates for any office." To be able to implement rank choice voting is within our constitution.

Current elections negatively affect voters and candidates by causing a feeling of misrepresentation when options are so limiting or trapping. As a member of teacher unions during my career, many candidates supported public education yet we had to choose just one for representation of our needs. Being able to choose first, second and third choice candidates would keep our priorities better represented. All Oregonians including people of color, working-class people, rural residents, and young voters 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.

This legislation that you are involved with 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.

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