



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

6/21/2023

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

My name is Miriam Cummins and I am with Oregon Voice. Our mission is to provide support to our community partners with civic engagement plans, tools, data, and coordination. We believe that we can achieve power through grassroots transformational organizing, data-informed strategic campaigns, accessible elections, in order to have a healthy and just democracy that works towards liberation. We are part of a broad coalition of over 35 organizations, including culturally-specific organizations, labor unions, environmental groups, housing advocates, rural communities, youth-empowering organizations, and good government groups. I am writing to testify in strong support of HB 2004, which will establish ranked choice voting statewide and help ensure all Oregonians are represented in our democracy.

In our current elections, candidates in crowded races are consistently winning with less than a majority. Over half of statewide and federal races with more than two candidates won with narrow support in Oregon's 2020 and 2022 primaries¹, leaving voters feeling like their vote didn't count and unable to fully express their preferences. Fear of splitting the vote creates barriers for candidates to run and leads to voter cynicism. It's clear that our elections aren't serving voters or candidates as best as they could.

We support HB 2004 because it establishes Ranked Choice Voting statewide and helps ensure all Oregonians are represented in our democracy. We have seen that our "choose-one" elections deprive voters of meaningful choices, create increasingly toxic campaign cycles, advance candidates who lack broad support and leave voters feeling like their voices are not heard. Ranked Choice Voting improves fairness in elections by allowing voters to rank candidates in order of preference. It is also a simple improvement to our elections that will lead to more reflective elected bodies for Oregonians from every community. By allowing voters to rank candidates in order of preferences, candidates are able to run without fear of splitting the vote and voters are given more meaningful choices, creating results that reflect the true will of voters.

We have seen in recent elections that voters are left feeling that their voices are not being heard when they have to select one candidate. Ranked Choice Voting ensures that

¹ Oregon Secretary of State, [State of Oregon Elections: Election History](#)

1) voters have more power to express their preferences and vote for candidates whose values they share, 2) increases the willingness for voters to get out to vote, 3) promotes reflective representation and 4) it is a nonpartisan reform that gives voters more voice and more choice in our elections.

Ranked Choice Voting is giving power back to the people, encourages candidates from diverse backgrounds to run for office, and in the long run brings meaningful change to Oregon's elections.

Ranked choice voting is a proven solution and Oregon's next step as a leader in election reform. As a representative of Oregon Voice, we ask that you please support HB 2004 because a democracy should count every vote, hear every voice and meet every need.

Thank you,

Miriam G. Cummins
She/Her/ella
Executive Director
Oregon Voice