

Submitter: John Raymonda
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

Chair Fahey, Vice Chair Breese-Iverson, Vice Chair Kropf, and members of the House Committee on Rules,

My name is John Raymonda and I live in Florence, OR. I am writing to testify in strong support for 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 primaries, 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. Ranked choice voting is a simple improvement to our elections that will lead to more reflective elected bodies for Oregonians from every community.

Specifically, Ranked Choice Voting will allow voters who actually favor a party other than the traditional Democratic and Republican parties to vote for the party of their choice knowing that their vote will not be wasted, but will still go to a candidate of their choosing. The most glaring example is the Y2000 Presidential election, in which votes for Ralph Nader turned out to be votes for Bush even though it is fair (I think) to assume that the majority of Nader voters would have preferred their vote to go to Gore. Thus, we were stuck with a President that was NOT the choice of a majority of the voters.

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 a proven solution and Oregon's next step as a leader in election reform. Please support HB 2004 and pass it out of committee.

Thank you,

John Raymonda
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