

Submitter: Melia Tichenor  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure: HB2004

I write in strong support of HB 2004, to establish ranked choice voting state-wide.

Ranked choice voting provides a solution to the common complaint that we often must choose "the lesser of two evils" instead of feeling like we have a true option to vote our conscious. In our current system, I often feel pressured to vote for who I think has the best shot at winning against a candidate I \*don't\* want, rather than voting for the person I truly think best suited to the position. I am not alone in this. I have heard from many folks, in my role as an educator, who have slowly stopped making the effort to turn in their ballot because it feels like a demoralizing exercise in towing the party line.

Ranked choice voting offers every voter the option to share a more nuanced view of who we believe would best represent us. I can rank my top candidate first, but also have the opportunity to share who I would prefer second, or third, without feeling like I am "throwing away" my vote. I also appreciate that ranked choice voting allows voters the option to rank, but does not force the issue. Folks who just wish to list a single candidate like in our current system can still do so.

Based on its use in other cities and states, I also appreciate that ranked choice voting has been proven to reduce negative campaigning, as it benefits candidates to campaign not just for a "first place" vote, but for an "any place" vote... your chance of being someone's "second place" option are better if you don't make enemies of your opponents' base. Our country has become so divided, due in part to the way elections are currently designed. Ranked Choice voting offers a solution and feels like the logical next step for Oregon.