



119 SE 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave.  
Portland OR 97215  
503.232.5495

Date: March 16, 2023  
Re: Ranked Choice Voting (HB2004)  
To: House Rules Committee

I am writing in favor of the enactment of HB2004 regarding the use of ranked choice voting in many political elections at the state level of Oregon government as well as many other lower levels. Noticeable in its exclusion from the long list of offices for which RCV shall or may be used is any mention of races for the Oregon legislature. This should be corrected to include all state legislative offices in Oregon.

The OR Unitarian Universalist Voices for Justice is a non-partisan liberal religious organization believing in a set a principles which guide us in our daily personal lives and in our lives in the community. Our fifth principle guides Unitarians to “The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.”

Democracy is understood to mean the Rule of and by and for the people. That indicates that we believe in an equal vote for all individuals in America. That equal vote is not possible when some votes count for more than others.

Our current election system of “first-past-the-post” means that the candidate likely to win any particular office will not have the majority of the votes. All too often the winner, wins with less than 50% of the vote cast, maybe even as low as 25%; it could be even lower with a crowded field of candidates running for the same office.

In the interest in having Majority Candidates always, we must replace first-past-the-post elections with majority winners elections all of the time. The replacement is Ranked Choice Voting.

Ranked Choice Voting ensures that the winner is always the majority winner. If the candidate does not get the majority vote in the first rounds, the candidate with the least votes is eliminated and the votes for that candidate are transfer to those voter's second choice. That process continues until some one candidate does have a majority. With one candidate having the majority the process ends and the winner is declared. Note that while this system encourages voter to rank candidates, such a ranking is not required. Voters can continue to vote as they do now; just one candidate per office.

In the usual first-past-the-post elections, in order to get a majority winner, a second and expensive run-off election is required. Such run-off elections are no longer required, because the process happens within the single election by the ranking of the candidates. While voters will come out for a first vote, fewer voters come out during run-off elections. Cheaper; more efficient; more voters' voices are heard.

And voters really like Ranked Choice Voting. With a little education of how voter need to rank candidates, voters find the process easy to use. And when they learn that they can vote for more than one candidate, they are not concerned about spoiler the likelihood of a favored candidate winning. More honest voting with strategic voting court to a minimum.

We of the Oregon Unitarian Universalist Voices for Justice urge you to vote in favor of HB2004.

Thank you

David Delk

Board member of Oregon Unitarian Universalist Voices for Justice