

Testimony **opposing** Ranked Choice Voting for Oregon

My name is Mark Osterloh. I am a retired physician with law and pharmacy degrees. Before moving to Eugene, Oregon fourteen years ago I lived in Arizona where I was extensively involved in leadership roles in the enactment of laws creating public funding of political campaigns, establishment of an independent redistricting commission, and increasing the income level from 33% to 100% of the federal poverty level to qualify for Medicaid health care coverage.

I am here to urge the Oregon legislature to **not** enact Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) (aka Instant Runoff Voting) into law, nor place it on the ballot as a referendum in 2024. It has serious flaws. Those flaws include not counting some votes, potential occurrence of the “spoiler” effect, some candidates being disadvantaged, complicated counting requiring multiple elimination rounds, and the requirement for centralizing tabulation of ballots. Since the tabulation has to be done in a central “black box” computer, public suspicions will be heightened and the lure for nefarious actors to hack into the computer program will be high.

Spoilers have affected both Republicans and Democrats. In 1992 Ross Perot took votes away from George H.W. Bush allowing Bill Clinton to win. In 2000 Ralph Nader took votes away from Al Gore allowing George W. Bush to win.

Some jurisdictions that enacted Ranked Choice Voting and subsequently repealed the law due the unsatisfactory results it produced are: Burlington, Vermont; Cary, North Carolina; Pierce County, Washington; Aspen, Colorado; and Ann Arbor, Michigan. The Maine Supreme Judicial Court has ruled that Ranked Choice Voting is unconstitutional.

I am an advocate for STAR Voting (Score Then Automatic Runoff) that has been shown to be the best voting system in existence by numerous voting system researchers. STAR Voting was created at a national voting conference held at the University of Oregon on October 4, 2014 in Eugene, Oregon which was attended by Rob Richie the President and CEO of FairVote which is aggressively pushing Ranked Choice Voting around the country. So why hasn't FairVote come around to accepting that someone has “created a better mouse trap” if you will? The reason is that FairVote is a big money making organization with a lot of salaried individuals, reputations, and egos that feel threatened. A similar situation likely occurred in the past when the automobile first came along. Horse drawn carriage manufacturers undoubtedly felt threatened and likely doubled-down in badmouthing the automobiles and singing the virtues of their product.

If you would like to see a more in-depth explanations and scholarly articles of the flaws inherent with Ranked Choice Voting, this can be found at starvoting.org

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Mark Osterloh, MD, JD, RPh
Eugene, Oregon
m.osterloh@equal.vote
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