



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

March 21, 2023

To: Representative Julie Fahey, Chair House Rules and Members of the Committee

[House Committee on Rules](#)

Re: [HB 3509](#) – Relating to ranked choice voting (RCV) and nonpartisan elections – **Support**

The League of Women Voters (LWV), as a nonpartisan organization, has fought for over 103 years to both educate and protect the rights of voters. The LWV of Oregon supports electoral systems producing the greatest level of representation for all voters.

We have already submitted [testimony for HB 2004](#) outlining overall details of our support of RCV. We believe RCV is a superior voting method for ALL elections, including nonpartisan ones, thus repeat our support for RCV with backing of HB 3509.

We have studied RCV and other election methods since 2006 and have in-depth reports on [our website](#), produced in [2008](#), [2016](#) and [2023](#). Our written reports lay out *why* RCV is **practical, time-tested and just**.

In this testimony, we'd like to give a shout-out to all Oregon election officials, whom we admire, respect & depend on for our voter service work. We take their concerns for implementing RCV seriously. That being said, we believe that the best **democracy reforms** need to be supported with responsible finances.

To that end, we highlight 3 points regarding RCV implementation.

- 1) We suggest funds be earmarked, **if needed**, to the 5 counties with legacy voting machines, which will soon need replacement, regardless of RCV.
- 2) For the 16 counties that *could* need SOFTWARE updates and the 15 that will likely require them, transition costs should be modest. In 2021 you passed **SB 5538** allocating grant monies to modernize election equipment, offices and technology. These grants should be used NOW.
- 3) Finally, we suggest that the national [RCV Resource Center](#) be utilized. This organization of former election administrators and technologists offers resources for ballot design, voter education, and risk-limiting audit processes. More importantly, they offer a federally-tested "**Universal Tabulator**" that can count RCV ballots (**cast-vote-record data**) on all Oregon machines FOR FREE.

To repeat, while this is not the whole of the necessary voting machinery, the Universal Tabulator is federally tested and compatible with all Oregon vendors, **AND FREE**. Most jurisdictions in the US that have recently implemented RCV have used their services.

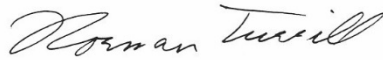
Additionally, ranked choice voting can eliminate the need for runoffs in any nonpartisan elections requiring majority winners. This too would demonstrate that HB 3509 could save time and money on taxpayer-funded elections, while getting results for which voters are more satisfied.

Tim Scott, who is implementing RCV in Portland and Multnomah County recently said “[T]his is not the hardest problem we’ll solve in our careers.” RCV is a value to voters. We urge your support of this bill and our valuable elections officials.

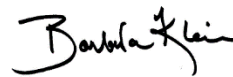
Thank you for the opportunity to voice our position and support for this legislation.



Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President



Norman Turrill
LWVOR Governance Coordinator



Barbara Klein
Electoral Systems Portfolio

CC: House Chief Sponsors of HB 2004, [Representative Dan Rayfield](#), [Representative Pam Marsh](#), [Representative Lisa Reynolds](#)