

Submitter: Connor Salisbury
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

Dear Oregon gov House Committee on Rules members,

I am writing to express my support for the adoption of a fairer voting system in Oregon. The current plurality voting system allows for a "vote splitting" scenario where the majority can negate each other's votes, resulting in the minority candidate winning the election. This is unfair and disenfranchises the majority of voters.

To ensure that the majority truly has a voice in elections and to allow for greater diversity in candidates beyond binary choices, I believe that the adoption of either Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) or Score Then Automated Runoff (STAR) voting would be a significant improvement in fairness.

Both RCV and STAR voting have the potential to increase voter satisfaction, leading to increased civic engagement and ultimately, a healthier democracy in Oregon. By empowering third parties, both systems also have the potential to bridge the political and cultural divide between urban and rural areas in the state.

While RCV would be a good improvement over the current system, I believe that STAR voting would be the best option. It reduces the cost of implementation and potential recount controversy by using a simple scoring system relative to RCV. Additionally, STAR voting always resolves in a maximum of two rounds, and can run on existing Oregon ballot scanning technology at the county level & in the 21st century the public is increasingly familiar with 0-5 scoring for movies or eating options etc. The Round1 data from STAR also would prove an invaluable and simple civic good for political journalism and public interest and transparency beyond the single winner outcome from Round2, and of course there are forms of STAR to accommodate multi-winner. Due to the scoring rather than ranking, in addition to the simpler local and county implementation with existing infrastructure saving on cost of implementation, the simple scoring also would allow greater ballot flexibility if there were many options for a given race (ranking as the option count goes above 4 or 5 becomes a ballot maker headache, whereas an arbitrarily longer set of options including write-ins is more easily supported on a printed ballot taking the zero to 5 score) AND the ability to vote 'equal preference' on two great candidates should reduce hard feelings between neighbors.

I urge Oregon lawmakers to consider the adoption of a fairer voting system for the benefit of all Oregonians. Let us ensure that every vote truly counts and that our democracy reflects the will of the majority.

Thank you for your service and time reading Sincerely,
Connor Salisbury (originally from Coos Bay, but having had the privilege of living
abroad in much less polarized multi-party democracies hence I think we can make
Oregon a happier more democratic & less divided place too | if we had a vote on this,
I'd vote

1????? current plurality system (better than places with no vote) < 3????? RCV
classic (good improvement) < 5????? STAR voting (best improvement) for Oregon's
future,

or 3rd, 2nd, 1st choice in the boolean ranking system)