Submitter:	Russ Miller
On Behalf Of:	
Committee:	House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	HB3166

Testimony in Opposition to HB 3166 (2025 Version)
Submitted to the Oregon State Legislature
March 19, 2025

Honorable Members of the Oregon Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 3166, particularly its provisions mandating ranked-choice voting (RCV) for general elections of certain offices. As an Oregon resident concerned with the integrity of our democratic process, I urge you to reconsider this legislation, which appears to dismiss the clear and repeated will of the voters while introducing unnecessary complexity and potential confusion into our elections.

In November 2024, Oregonians decisively rejected Measure 117, with nearly 59% voting against adopting ranked-choice voting for state and federal offices. This was not an isolated sentiment—voters have turned down similar proposals multiple times in recent years. Yet, HB 3166 seeks to impose RCV despite this clear mandate, effectively bypassing the electorate's voice. This move risks further eroding public trust in an election system that many already view with skepticism. Democracy thrives when the people's will is respected, not when it is overridden by legislative fiat.

Beyond the issue of voter rejection, the practical implications of RCV as proposed in HB 3166 raise serious concerns. The system's complexity—requiring voters to rank or rate multiple candidates—could disproportionately burden those less familiar with electoral mechanics, including the elderly, non-native English speakers, and rural residents with limited access to voter education resources. This could unintentionally suppress participation, undermining the very inclusivity RCV proponents often claim it enhances. Additionally, suggestions that the bill might weaken political party structures threaten to destabilize a system that, while imperfect, provides voters with clear ideological choices. Ambiguity in how "voter choice offices" are defined and how rankings would be implemented only deepens these worries.

The process surrounding HB 3166's advancement further fuels opposition. Reports of a hastily scheduled public hearing with minimal notice—less than a day in some accounts—suggest a lack of transparency and an unwillingness to engage meaningfully with constituents. Legislation this consequential demands robust public debate, not a rushed push through committee. Oregonians deserve the chance to

fully understand and weigh in on changes to how we elect our leaders.

I recognize that lawmakers may intend to modernize our elections, but HB 3166's approach is misguided. Rather than forcing an unwanted system on voters, the legislature should focus on strengthening trust in our current framework—perhaps by improving voter access, enhancing election security, or increasing transparency in campaign finance. These priorities align more closely with the public's expressed needs than an RCV mandate does.

In conclusion, I respectfully urge you to vote against HB 3166. It disregards the electorate's repeated rejection of ranked-choice voting, risks complicating our elections to the detriment of participation, and has been advanced with insufficient public input. Oregon's democracy is best served by honoring the voters' voice, not silencing it. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Russ Miller
Eugene, Oregon