Submitter:	Sarah Haenftling
On Behalf Of:	
Committee:	House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	HB3166

Dear House Committee,

Oppose HB3166

Ranked-choice voting (RCV) undermines the clarity, simplicity, and integrity of democratic elections, making it an unsuitable system for Oregon and other states.

First, RCV is unnecessarily complex for voters and election officials alike. Requiring voters to rank multiple candidates can confuse people, leading to higher rates of spoiled or invalid ballots, particularly among less-informed or elderly voters. This complexity also burdens election administrators, increasing the risk of errors, delays, and costly recounts, as seen in some jurisdictions where RCV has been implemented.

Second, RCV distorts voter intent and can produce results that do not reflect the true will of the electorate. By redistributing votes through multiple rounds of counting, RCV can elevate candidates who may not have broad initial support but benefit from strategic second- or third-choice rankings. This can lead to outcomes where a candidate wins with a smaller base of first-choice support than they would under a traditional "one person, one vote" system, potentially alienating voters who feel their primary preference was disregarded.

Third, RCV erodes accountability and party stability. Open primaries, often paired with RCV, allow non-party members to influence nominations, weakening the ability of political parties to maintain cohesive platforms and represent their core constituents. This can lead to more extreme or fringe candidates advancing, as seen in some states where open primaries have diluted party influence.

Finally, Oregon voters have already rejected RCV through Measure 117 in 2024, signaling a clear preference for maintaining the current system. Pushing HB 3166 forward disregards this democratic decision and risks creating division and distrust in the electoral process. Ranked-choice voting may sound appealing in theory, but in practice, it introduces unnecessary complications, undermines voter confidence, and contradicts the will of Oregonians who value straightforward, transparent elections.

Respectfully,

Sarah Haenftling