Statement in opposition to ranked choice voting legislation unless STAR voting is included

Dear Chair Wagner, Vice-Chair Girod, and Senators Burdick, Manning, and Thatcher,

As a native Oregonian, I am very proud of our state's history of voting reform leadership, and as an independent voter, I have felt alienated by our electoral process my whole life. That's why I was so excited when I heard claims that ranked choice voting could allow me to vote my conscience without fear of wasting my vote. I have since learned that the claims of this 150-year-old voting method don't hold water, and that election scientists have known about its serious flaws for decades.

The fantastic news is that better, more modern, voting methods already exist, and one of them, STAR voting, was invented here in Oregon and is gaining momentum here and around the country. There are three active ballot initiative campaigns in Oregon for STAR voting, and STAR voting is being used internally by Multnomah County Democrats, Deschutes County Democrats, and the Democratic Party of Oregon. In 2020, the Independent Party of Oregon chose STAR voting to elect their nominations for state office. In other words, STAR voting is of, by, and for Oregonians.

Unlike ranked choice voting, STAR voting:

-- Eliminates the spoiler effect.
-- Uses all ballot data.
-- Has no exhausted ballots.
-- Is precinct summable for greater transparency.
-- Provides great data on relative voter support for candidates.
-- Won't harm a candidate by scoring them higher.

Multiple studies have proven STAR to be a top-notch voting method and have shown that ranked choice voting performs very poorly, almost as bad as our current plurality voting method.* Please include STAR voting in any legislation you pass. It is what Oregonians have been fighting for. If you do not have the time this session to study the options, then I encourage you to form a task force to do so. This reform is too important to get wrong.

Thank you,
Annie Kallen
Portland

*Sources:
https://electionscience.github.io/vse-sim/VSEbasic/
http://votesim.usa4r.org/spatial5dim/spatial5dim.html
http://sites.gallets.org/election-sim/irv-vs-star/