



### 06.16.23 Rules Committee Testimony on HB 2004 - Ranked Choice Voting

To: The Senate Rules Committee

From: Michael Alfoni, Oregon Ranked Choice Voting Advocates Executive Director

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Thank you Chair Lieber, Vice-Chair Knopp, and members of the Rules Committee for this hearing on HB 2004 which will make our elections more representative through ranked choice voting.

My name is Michael Alfoni. I am the co-founder and Executive Director of Oregon Ranked Choice Voting Advocates. We are the organization supporting the broad coalition behind HB2004, which is led by groups representing communities of color, labor, youth, good government organizations, environmental organizations, and a broad array of other advocacy groups representing hundreds of thousands of Oregonians.

**Ranked choice voting creates a more reflective democracy** - benefitting candidates, elected officials, and most importantly: voters. It removes many barriers to entry for new voices running for office, and allows them to run (and govern) on the issues they and voters care most about.

Voters in the 63 jurisdictions that have adopted ranked choice voting consistently greatly prefer it to our current “plurality” elections. All of this is supported by research, compiled over years across **over 500 RCV elections and 20,000,000 ranked choice ballots cast in the United States**. Because of this, RCV is being rapidly adopted across the country.

It is important to note that this reform is wildly popular amongst voters young and old, urban and rural, and across ethnic and other demographics. In places that RCV has been enacted, **it is not only well understood but overwhelmingly preferred by voters**.

I spent a career managing, staffing, or consulting on nearly 100 electoral campaigns here and across the nation. I have seen firsthand – and at times contributed to – the dangerous increase in political polarization in America, driven largely by our current election system.

There is no one silver bullet, but **your work here in this committee supporting ranked choice voting can be a significant step forward in solving these issues**. Community advocates, elected officials, and elections experts from Oregon - alongside national supporters including ten Nobel laureates, the Harvard Business School, publications from The New York Times to the The Economist - all agree: Enacting ranked choice voting is one of the critical steps we must take to create a stronger, more representative democracy.

**Oregon’s election systems have been a model for others nationwide. We ask that you support HB2004 and enact the simple, proven upgrade that is ranked choice voting.**

Thank you again for your time, and for the work that you do. **As HB2004 is a referral, we hope you move it forward and allow voters the opportunity to decide on how they conduct their elections.**

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