

Submitter: Justin Johnson
On Behalf Of: Myself
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

I am a native Portlander, local to the unofficial area called "East County". I have been politically unaffiliated until late, and have only engaged in these discussions as a means of self-defense and a reclamation of my personal liberties and constitutional rights. I am opposed to Rank-Choice as it is now, and would instead advocate that the legislative body consider alternatives such as the STAR voting method. There is a general consensus that our votes do not count in the "larger-picture", or have much meaningful impact. This statement is completely subjective, so I put forth my own experience as a citizen of Oregon regarding our last gubernatorial race of 2022. In this situation, we were given choice of Democrat, Republican, and one third-party candidate. I voted to my conscience, and chose the third-party. This was highly uncomfortable, and was met with criticism such as "throwing my vote away". In actuality, the vote was split down the middle and much information was left out. Many, like myself, threw away our votes because we voted for the person we chose. This leaves many to question the outcome had we went with the polar opposite to the binary parties- would it have been overwhelmingly supportive of one candidate or the other? Rank-choice attempts to address this, but comes up short in key areas. Yes, it is a vast improvement upon our current voting framework. However, if more thought and discussion is put into reform at an early stage, we can avoid future division and skepticism. Using a structure such as the STAR voting system would help give the more information about the actual direction society wants to go, rather than the choice between the least of the worst, or otherwise "throwing our vote away".

In the most basic of terms, STAR voting would help show the "none of the above" value of who is running, and the will of the people.