

Submitter: Elizabeth Walsh
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

RE: Support HB 2004, Statewide Ranked Choice Voting,
Senate Committee on Rules
June 20, 2023

Chair Lieber, Vice Chair Knopp, and members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Elizabeth Walsh, and I am a proud resident of Ashland, Oregon. I am writing today to express my unequivocal support for House Bill 2004, a legislative referral that, if passed, would bring ranked choice voting to statewide and federal elections in Oregon.

With an educational background in Political Science and Predictive Analytics, and extensive professional experience studying consumer behavior, I've developed a deep understanding of decision-making processes and their broader societal implications. In my years of study and work, I've observed how choices - whether in markets or in voting booths - are shaped not just by what people want, but also by their fears and apprehensions. The phenomenon of negative voting - casting a vote not for a preferred candidate, but against a less desired one - is a symptom of a system that restricts voters' choices.

Implementing ranked-choice voting, as proposed in HB 2004, is an opportunity to change this. Instead of being compelled to vote based on fear, citizens can vote their conscience, ranking their candidates on hope for a better future. This system allows voters to express their choices more accurately and provides a more nuanced understanding; it better represents the will of the people. Additionally, it encourages positive campaigning, reduces the possibility of "spoiler" candidates, and ensures elected officials have broad support.

The benefits of ranked-choice voting are already evident in several U.S. cities and states. The evidence suggests that such a system can enhance democratic engagement, increase voter satisfaction, and ensure our elected officials truly represent the majority's preferences.

I understand that changing the way we vote is no small decision. However, considering the potential benefits and the growing public support for such reforms, I urge you to consider the case for ranked choice voting. I strongly believe that HB 2004 deserves a place on the 2024 ballot. I am confident that voters in our state can understand the nuances of this system and make informed decisions about how they wish to be represented.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue. I, along with many other concerned citizens, hope to see Oregon take a progressive stance toward enhancing our democratic process. I am more than willing to discuss this further or provide additional resources to inform this dialogue.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Walsh