

Submitter: James Mason
On Behalf Of: HB2004
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

I favor the implementation of ranked choice voting. Voting, in our representative form of democracy, is pivotal in the relation of individuals to their government(s). A crisis of faith is eroding our elections. Ranked choice voting automatically reduces the hard polarization resulting, I believe, from the present system: party primary...runoff...general election...runoff.

Primaries and general elections often have many candidates. A voter may not have a clear preference. Ranked choice voting is a system that encourages voters to designate a second (third, fourth and so on) choice for their vote, should their first choice lose out in the first count. Voters are free to designate a rank for as many or as few candidates on the ballot as preferred. The voter need not feel their vote is a "protest" vote if their first choice is an underdog. Their vote may or may not devolve to the lead candidate through the rounds of counting, depending on the voter's rankings. The automatic rounds of counting accomplish an instant runoff. The voting public is immediately rewarded with a final result.

RCV is especially suited to two other implementations I favor: Open Primaries (and/or Open General Election w/o primaries), and At-Large US Representatives (RCV process until 6 remain). Open elections are efficient, economical and immediate when conducted as RCV elections. At-Large US Representatives would lessen the urban/rural divide because more people would feel that one or more of the six representatives are "my representative".

Any method for increasing enfranchisement and reducing polarization deserves support.

Respectfully,

Jim Mason
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