

Submitter: Katherine Eichner
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

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

My name is Dr. Katherine Eichner and I live in Portland, OR. I am writing to testify in strong support for HB 2004, a referral to the 2024 ballot that would establish ranked choice voting for statewide and federal elections.

In our current elections, fear of “vote splitting” is affecting both voters and candidates: Candidates are often deterred from entering a race for fear of splitting voter support and voters are often forced to choose a candidate with a better chance of winning, instead of the candidate they actually prefer. As a result, many Oregonians – especially people of color, working-class people, rural residents, and young people – are less incentivized to participate in our elections. With over 70% of Oregon voters “extremely” or “very” discouraged by politics, we need a solution that will empower voters by giving them a real say in our elections.

I have read about and researched the use of ranked choice voting, and know it would help me feel that my voice is heard and considered. I believe it would also strengthen our democracy and show younger and disillusioned voters that our political system does strive to be representative and that it is worth it to participate and engage.

I am not alone in my support of this bill. This legislation is supported by a coalition of over 35 organizations, including culturally-specific organizations, labor unions, environmental groups, housing advocates, rural communities, youth-empowering organizations, and good government groups.

Ranked choice voting is Oregon’s next step as a leader in election reform. Please support HB 2004, which will refer this critical piece of legislation to voters for the 2024 ballot, and pass it out of committee.

Thank you,

Dr. Katherine Eichner
She/her