RE: Support Statewide Ranked Choice Voting, HB 2004
House Committee on Rules
March 10, 2023

Chair Fahey, Vice Chair Breese-Iverson, Vice Chair Kropf, and members of the House Committee on Rules,

My name is Brent Babcock and I live in Myrtle Creek, Oregon. I am writing to testify in strong support for HB 2004, which will establish ranked choice voting statewide and help ensure all Oregonians are represented in our democracy.

In our current elections, candidates in crowded races are consistently winning with less than a majority. Over half of statewide and federal races with more than two candidates won with narrow support in Oregon's 2020 and 2022 primaries[1], leaving voters feeling like their vote didn't count and unable to fully express their preferences. Fear of splitting the vote creates barriers for candidates to run and leads to voter cynicism. It's clear that our elections aren't serving voters or candidates as best as they could. Ranked choice voting is a simple improvement to our elections that will lead to more reflective elected bodies for Oregonians from every community.

I am a retired mechanical engineer, 76 years old and a 100% Disabled US Army veteran of the Vietnam War. I have witnessed the degradation of our governmental systems during my lifetime. We desperately need to revitalize our system of selecting our elected officials. What we currently have is **not working.** For the sake of making our system survive, please support HB 2004.

I am not alone in my support of this bill. This legislation is supported by a coalition of over 30 organizations, including culturally-specific organizations, labor unions, environmental groups, housing advocates, rural communities, youth-empowering organizations, and good government groups.

Ranked choice voting is a proven solution and Oregon's next step as a leader in election reform. Please support HB 2004 and pass it out of committee.

Thank you,

Brent R. Babcock

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[1] Oregon Secretary of State, State of Oregon Elections: Election History