

Submitter: Cassandra Allen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

RE: Support Statewide Ranked Choice Voting, HB 2004
House Committee on Rules
3/10/2023

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

My name is Cassie Allen and I live in Portland. 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, 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'm 28 years old and I've been an advocate for ranked-choice voting since I first heard about this issue in a college class. Since then, I'm proud to have been part of organizing efforts in Washington state to adopt RCV, which just passed with a majority of votes for city-wide elections in Seattle. The movement for RCV is growing year by year and has bipartisan support. Republicans in Utah and Democrats in California have supported and implemented RCV in their local elections. Now it's our turn. I urge you to support this legislation.

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 currently used by over 14 million people in 56 cities in the United States. It's a proven, tested solution to voting splitting, negative campaigning, and voter apathy and should be Oregon's next step as a leader in election reform. Please support HB 2004 and pass it out of committee.

Thank you,
Cassie Allen
She/hers