

Submitter: Dana Dawson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2004

RE: Support Statewide Ranked Choice Voting, HB 2004
House Committee on Rules
3/11/2023

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

My name is Dana Dawson and I live in Eugene. I am writing to testify my 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.

It is pretty clear to me that our current system is broken and partly because we have such a two party system. I think that it is very sad when voters have to continually vote against the opposing party instead of voting for whoever the voter really supports, this actually seems very un-American. If Alaska and Maine can implement this system then so can Oregon. It's not that hard. If voters can name their five favorite flavors of ice cream they can figure out how to use ranked choice voting. Voters don't even have to understand exactly how it works in order to use it. They can figure out how to choose their top ranked candidate and then if they want to understand more they can read an FAQ. Certainly easier to understand the many other laws around elections.

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,

Dana Dawson