

Submitter: Peter Simmeth  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure: HB2004

RE: Support Statewide Ranked Choice Voting, HB 2004  
House Committee on Rules  
3/12/23

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

My name is Peter Simmeth and I live in Springfield, OR. I am writing to testify in full 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.

Ranked choice voting allows for people to vote for the candidate they actually support, without a fear of "throwing away their vote." This allows candidates to have far more nuance in their beliefs, and by making sure that the final winning candidate has the majority of the population's support we can reduce the odds of extremists taking positions of authority.

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,

Peter Simmeth  
he/him

