

Dear Senators of the Election Committee RE: SF 2270

Why do certain Senators want ranked-choice voting? Is it because you/they truly want to do what is best for the people of Minnesota? Will ranked choice voting make our elections safer, increase voter turnout and give our electorate more confidence that the majority of the will of the people has been followed in who is elected? These are results people in our state want. If ranked choice voting provides these benefits, please send me the evidence of where those results have happened from cities (Minneapolis) and other states (Maine) where this has been implemented. I've seen no evidence to support this.

The evidence I have seen is ranked choice voting's ultimate winner is often not the choice of a majority of voters who participated in the election: Instead, the candidate with an RCV "majority" may be the first, second, third, or last choice of only the voters whose ballots remained in the tabulation until the last count. RCV disconnects elections from issues and allows candidates with marginal support from American voters to win.

Here is one example of what I am talking about. In 2018, the first-ever general election for federal office in our nation's history was decided by ranked choice voting in CD 2 district of Maine. Jared Golden was declared the eventual winner—even though incumbent Bruce Poliquin received more votes than Golden in the first round. There were two additional candidates in the race. Tiffany Bond and William Hoar. However, the Maine Secretary of State, Matt Dunlap, "exhausted" or threw out a total of 14,076 voters who had not ranked all the candidates.

This obscures true debates and issue-driven dialogs among candidates and eliminates genuine binary choices between two top-tier candidates. This also disenfranchises voters, because ballots that do not include the two ultimate finalists are cast aside to manufacture a fake majority for the winner.

Ranked choice destroys clarity of political debate and forces voters to cast ballots in hypothetical future runoff elections. When we have Republicans versus Democrats versus Greens and Libertarians, we know who is running against whom and what the actual distinctions are between the candidates on issues. Second or third choice votes should not matter in America. They do not provide the mandate that ensures that the representatives in a republic have the confidence and support of a majority of the public in the legitimacy of their decisions.

This is not a partisan issue; all Minnesota's deserve to know their vote towards electing the people who are the will of the majority of people in our local elections have been honored. Ranked choice voting only hurts this desire. Please consider voting against this.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

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