



Date: April 3, 2023

To: Chair Carlson and Members of the Senate Elections Committee

From: Clean Elections Minnesota

Re: Testimony on the A24 Amendment of SF1636

Mr. Chair, Members of the Committee:

My name is David Fisher, and I am a volunteer and supporter of Clean Elections Minnesota, a nonpartisan nonprofit organization working to build a healthy and inclusive democracy. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today.

First, thank you for including Rank Choice Voting in the Omnibus bill. We were surprised and concerned to see that lines 43-56 in the A24 amendment take away the local option of Ranked Choice Voting for cities and school districts that hold elections in odd-numbered years. While testifying in support of RCV and reviewing letters of support, we heard and saw enthusiastic testimony from Rochester and Red Wing, Murray County, Hennepin County, Cook County, Ottertail County, and other cities that would like the option to adopt Ranked Choice Voting. The local options provision doesn't require cities to adopt RCV but allows local governments to set their own rules for their elections.

Currently, only 15% of our cities can set their own rules for their local elections. The remaining 85% must ask the Minnesota Legislature for permission. Metro Cities like Minneapolis, St. Paul, Bloomington, St. Louis Park, and Minnetonka, have adopted RCV. Greater Minnesota cities should be able to do the same. We believe we need to remove existing regulatory barriers and extend the authority to local statutory jurisdictions so they can adopt RCV. We believe it's more efficient and more democratic. We urge you to reinstate this provision.

Next, thank you for creating the Voter Engagement Task Force and including the Ethnic, Indian Affairs, and disability councils. We believe having the councils involved at the beginning of the process will ensure the successful implementation of RCV. We assume the committee will build on the work that has already been done, the years of data and research that has been gathered, and will focus on further understanding the impact of RCV.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.