

February 22, 2024

Chair Senator Jim Carlson
Minnesota Senate Elections Committee

Re: Senate File 3868

Elections Committee Members,

We are writing to highlight our support for the provisions of SF 3868 (Morrison) that open a pathway for the adoption and implementation of automatic tabulation equipment for the purpose of tabulating Ranked Choice Voting elections. We thank the authors for including this section of the bill.

Minneapolis voters adopted Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) in 2006 and subsequently cast ballots in the first election using RCV in 2009. Since then, Minneapolis has been a national leader in the administration of RCV. With one of the most complex municipal RCV ballots of any jurisdiction, the task of tabulating results has been a persistent challenge due in part to the lack of a certification process for automatic tabulation equipment.

Minneapolis has made great strides in expediting the tabulation process over the years, refining what was a hand count process that took 15 days in 2009 to a spreadsheet-based system that now allows us to complete tabulation less than 24 hours after the polls close. Tabulation remains labor intensive and demanding, however, adding to the pressure that election officials face before, during, and after Election Day.

The next step in our effort to provide the public with accurate and timely results is automated tabulation. There is a great benefit to the public to have timely results reached through transparent and reliable tabulation processes. Implementing automated tabulation equipment that is available today will both modernize our administration of RCV elections and expedite when election results are announced. We strongly encourage you to support this provision of SF 3868 to allow municipalities that use RCV to produce and share election results more efficiently.



Katie Smith
Minneapolis Director of Elections & Voter Services