

# Written Testimony in support of SF 3868

My name is Paula Ramaley, and I'm writing to the Committee in support of [SF 3868](#),

I live in Minnetonka, which uses ranked choice voting (RCV) for City Council elections, and I was elected this past November to Minnetonka's City Council (Ward 3). I was a first-time candidate, ran for an open seat against two other candidates, and won by a margin of four votes. That result was confirmed by a recount that was conducted superbly by Minnetonka's elections staff.

This was Minnetonka's second RCV election since adopting it in 2020 by voter referendum. In my experience, RCV has meant more candidate voices, outreach and civility. For voters it has meant more choices, engagement and turnout. It's been good for local democracy

As a candidate, RCV allowed me to avoid the risk of having my voice and ideas extinguished in a low-turnout August primary. Under the old system, Minnetonka's primary turnout averaged 5% - that discouraged candidates from running unless they had a pre-existing local network as a real-estate broker, a lawyer, or something similar. But with RCV there are no primaries which meant that all 3 candidates in my race could have their voices heard in the marketplace of ideas all the way up until election day.

Because candidates need to earn second-choice as well as first-choice votes, RCV incentivizes them to reach out to a wider range of voters. It also encourages candidate civility - because going negative isn't just wrong, it alienates potential second-choice votes.

RCV has dramatically increased voter turnout in Minnetonka. The first RCV election saw an increase of 50% voter turnout, and the voter turnout last year was double that of similar cycles. More candidates are running, engaging and listening to residents, and they're campaigning in a respectful manner. This has in turn has fueled greater turnout - without the incivility that is often seen elsewhere. That may well be why our residents voted resoundingly against an effort to repeal RCV in Minnetonka in 2023

Minnetonka proves that smaller cities can transition to RCV and it will be even easier for them to do so with the standards and equipment that this bill also provides.

Thank you for your time and attention. Again, I encourage the committee to approve this bill and a local option for RCV so that all communities have the same opportunity Minnetonka has had to experience the benefits of ranked choice voting.

Sincerely,

Paula Ramaley

Paula Ramaley  
17306 County Road 101  
Wayzata, MN 55391 (Minnetonka jurisdiction)  
952.836.9162