

SB368

Proponent Written only testimony

January 31, 2024

Chairman Thompson and members of the committee,

I would like to thank Senator Blasi for introducing this bill. The thought of Rank Choice Voting is scary. I did a little research regarding RCV as I had an idea what it was because of the Alaska election with Sarah Palin, but not 100% sure. Most American elections are decided on the "one-person, one-vote" principle. Each voter selects one candidate and the candidate with the most votes wins. This is a fairly simple process that the majority of voters can follow.

RCV requires a voter to rank each candidate in each and every race on the ballot. This would be a burdensome task for many voters but especially for seniors and low propensity voters. For whatever reason, many voters don't perform due diligence in researching candidates. Asking voters to rank each candidate, especially intelligently is asking too much.

Are you aware that with RCV, if a voter ranks only one or a portion of the candidates, their ballot would be eliminated (exhausted) as soon as those candidates are removed from the counting process? If a voter doesn't vote for every candidate, their vote may not count in every round. An example was given of a 2018 Primary race in Maine. Although 126,139 votes were cast, the number of votes which counted towards the final round was only 117,250. Almost 9,000 votes were not counted in the final round. Another example in California in 2010 showed that after 20 rounds of counting, 53% of ballots had been exhausted, leaving only 82,000 ballots tallied in the final results. In this instance, more ballots were thrown out than counted. Talk about disenfranchising voters.

The counting process is complicated, requires a centralized tabulation process which means election results are rarely available on election day and may take weeks to complete the tabulation process. This could also increase the costs of elections.

This bill is important to our election process and I hope all legislators agree to support SB368.

Respectfully,

Kari Sue Vosburgh  
Sedgwick County Precinct Committeewoman  
We The People Kansas