

Date: January 30, 2024
Bill number: SB 368
Disposition: Opponent
Name of Conferee: Dylan Tracy
Representing: Self

Chairman Thompson and the Members of the Committee,

I am a resident of Wichita writing as an opponent to Bill SB368. Stopping Rank Choice Voting limits voter freedom by restricting viable choices. I want to share two ways I believe Ranked Choice Voting could help voters in my community. .

1. **Ranked Choice Voting could help reduce unethical behavior amongst candidates.**
The system could allow multiple people from the same party to run. This protects against bad behavior from a few because voters could keep their policy preferences and still vote for a more virtuous candidate. In our community, it was discovered that a County Commissioner candidate was involved in unethical behavior related to the Wichita Mayoral Race and later was fined for campaign finance violations. Because only one person from each major party is on the ballot, Sedgwick County Republicans were forced to choose between a candidate with ethical violations or one that may have violated their policy priorities. Ultimately, the party lost the race by a few hundred votes. Having a preferential voting system would have given conservatives another viable, more virtuous candidate to choose from without splitting the vote.
2. **Ranked Choice Voting better represents the will of the people when more than two candidates run.** When there are three or more candidates running, voters select the candidate who 1) most agrees with their policy priorities AND 2) who they think enough other voters will like too. Many voters believe that independent and third party voters do not have enough support from others to be viable. Under the current voting system if a voter chooses their preferred candidate they essentially 'waste' their vote and could decrease the chances of a candidate that fits the majority of their views from winning. In our current system, the winner is selected by who has the highest number of votes. They are not selected by who has the support of the most voters. This means that a politician can be elected with less than a 34% of those who voted supporting them as a candidate. Kansans are unsatisfied with elections because they are often not reflecting the preferences of even a majority of the voters. Ranked choice voting allows for preferences to be accounted for so that the winning candidate is more likely to have majority support.

For these reasons and many more, I respectfully ask that the committee oppose this bill and any other limitations on Ranked Choice Voting.

Dylan Tracy