

Michael Busby

Regarding SB 6: Prohibiting the use of ranked-choice voting methods for conducting elections
February 25, 2025

Hello committee members. I am a nearly lifelong Kansas resident from Prairie Village of 34 years, who has volunteered as an election worker here multiple times. Today, I would like to testify about my experiences with Ranked Choice Voting.

Since I was young, I was keenly aware that voting in elections meant compromising on my beliefs to make a choice. Like many Kansans, my beliefs and values did not fit squarely with either political party. We learned from a young age, during the 2000 election, how we would be bullied for selecting third party candidates with our votes—even if they fit our preferences better. It was made clear that our voting systems discouraged voting for our true preferences.

When I learned about Ranked Choice Voting, this finally gave me some hope—maybe we could adopt a voting system that let people truly express their preferences. Whether you lean more libertarian, or green, or conservative, or liberal, you could express your preferences directly without fear of spoiler effect, and end up with a candidate you want.

Finally, in the 2020 primary season, I got a chance to use Ranked Choice Voting in the Kansas Democratic Party Primary. I was ecstatic—I ranked my preferences and sent in my ballot diligently. When the results arrived, my chosen candidate had not won. But in viewing the instant runoff results, I could see the diverse set of preferences of my fellow Kansans. I could see that many people really did prefer Biden first. I could see how those that backed Tulsi Gabbard gave their secondary preferences to Warren, or Sanders, or Biden. I could see and hear my fellow voters in Kansas much more clearly through the Ranked Choice Voting results.

As our faith in our election and political systems is tested seemingly every cycle, it could not be more important to allow for solutions which increase voters' feelings of representation and trust in elections. Ranked Choice Voting provides opportunity for more empathy with other voters, and more expression of the people to their leaders. It could be helpful for any part of Kansas, on any political side. Committee members, I am only asking that we don't outlaw it ahead of time. I implore you to not add further barriers to this helpful, trust-positive voting mechanism.

Thank you for your time and consideration.