



Testimony of Harrison Hems, State Director  
Heritage Action for America  
February 27, 2025

**Supporting: Senate Bill 6**

Submitted to the House Committee on Elections

Chairman Proctor and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony in favor of Senate Bill 6. My name is Harrison Hems and I represent Heritage Action for America, a grassroots organization with two million grassroots activists nationwide, including thousands of Kansans.

**Heritage Action urges the House Committee on Elections to pass SB 6.**

Senate Bill 6 takes important steps to protect the integrity of our elections by prohibiting Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) for federal, state, county, and other municipal elections.

Ranked-choice voting fundamentally changes the election process and is fraught with problems<sup>1</sup>.

- **RCV is confusing and complicated.** This is true for voters because the system relies on them to not only know each candidate in a race, but also what each one stands for and how the voter would rank them in relation to one another. It is also confusing for election administrators who are tabulating votes and reporting outcomes of elections. In races where a candidate does not receive a majority of votes in the first round, the candidate in last place is eliminated, along with all of the votes cast for him or her. The votes are then re-tabulated based on those voters who marked second choices<sup>2</sup>. This process continues until a candidate reaches a majority – not of all the votes cast – but of “all valid votes in the final round of tallying.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>1. Hans von Spakovsky, “Ranked Choice Voting Is a Bad Choice,” The Heritage Foundation, August 23, 2019, <https://www.heritage.org/election-integrity/report/ranked-choice-voting-bad-choice>.

<sup>2</sup> 1. Hans von Spakovsky, “‘Ranked Choice Voting’ Should be Ranked Dead Last as an Election Reform” The Heritage Foundation, January 27, 2023, <https://www.heritage.org/election-integrity/report/ranked-choice-voting-should-be-ranked-dead-last-election-reform>.

<sup>3</sup> Craig M. Burnett and Vladimir Kogan, “Ballot and Voter ‘Exhaustion’ Under Instant Runoff Voting: An Examination of Four Ranked-Choice Elections,” *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 37 (2015), pp. 41–49,

- **RCV is prone to errors.** Alameda County, California officials admitted two months after a 2022 school board election that they had incorrectly tabulated the RCV votes and had certified the wrong person as the winner. Because of the overly complicated process of ranked-choice voting, no election official noticed the mistake until an outside advocacy group flagged the issue after the fact.
- **RCV disenfranchises voters.** Nearly one in three voters do not rank multiple candidates in RCV elections, whether due to a lack of understanding the process, being unwilling to cast a vote in favor of a candidate they do not support, or other reasons. Thus, they risk their ballot being thrown out in subsequent rounds of vote tabulation. In the 2021 New York mayor’s race in which 1.1 million votes were cast, by the eighth round, the ballots of more than 140,000 voters (more than 1 out of every 10 votes) had been thrown out because they did not rank all of the candidates. These voters were effectively disenfranchised due to “ballot exhaustion.”<sup>4</sup>
- **RCV undermines the democratic process.** The ultimate winner in RCV is often not the choice of a majority of voters who participated in the election, and thus, does not have a genuine mandate to govern from a majority of voters.
- **RCV has already been banned in 11 states.** Florida, Tennessee, Idaho, South Dakota, Montana, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Missouri have already done this, and many other states are considering such protections.

Our nation was built on the principle of consent of the governed. When citizens believe elections produce clear results between candidates holding differing ideas, they are able to live with the results even if they do not like the outcome. Ranked-Choice Voting is a gimmick that would undermine Kansas’ elections and all of the hard work done over many years to ensure voter confidence.

### **Heritage Action urges you to pass SB 6.**

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Harrison Hems  
 State Director  
 Heritage Action for America

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<https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/u.osu.edu/dist/e/1083/files/2014/12/ElectoralStudies-2fupfhd.pdf> (accessed August 17, 2019).

<sup>4</sup> Von Spakovsky, H. (n.d.). Ranked-Choice voting should be ranked dead last as an election reform | The Heritage Foundation. The Heritage Foundation. <https://www.heritage.org/election-integrity/report/ranked-choice-voting-should-be-ranked-dead-last-election-reform>