Good morning,

I am reaching out to express my strong opposition to the adoption of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) in our community. While the intention behind RCV may be to enhance our electoral process, in practice, it complicates voting and can lead to substantial voter disenfranchisement.

One significant issue with RCV is that it requires voters to rank multiple candidates, often in elections with large candidate fields. This task is unrealistic and overwhelming for many voters, who may not have the information necessary to differentiate each candidate. As a result, many choose not to rank beyond their first choice. However, this decision can lead to ballot exhaustion: once a voter's preferred candidate is eliminated, their vote is removed from further rounds of counting. Effectively, their voice is no longer considered, which is nothing short of disenfranchisement.

The logistical complications of RCV also cannot be ignored. The 2021 New York City primary required eight rounds of counting over three weeks to arrive at a final result among ten candidates. This delay, coupled with over 140,000 discarded ballots, left many voters feeling sidelined and ignored. Alaska's 2022 primary showed similar issues, where 11,000 ballots were exhausted in a two-round process that still took two weeks to produce a winner. These delays only serve to frustrate voters and erode their trust in our electoral system.

RCV can also produce unexpected and, frankly, undemocratic outcomes. Under RCV, a candidate with the most first-place votes can still lose, which defies the foundational idea that the candidate with the most support should win. RCV results in fractured mandates, where winners lack clear support from the electorate. Rather than simplifying or clarifying election results, RCV undermines the legitimacy of the process and, ultimately, our democracy.

In addition to being complex and counterintuitive, RCV also fails to offer the clear, binary choice between top-tier candidates. This shift opens the door for marginal candidates to win by exploiting the ranking system, further alienating voters who feel pressured to rank candidates they don't fully support. Studies have also shown that RCV has a higher rate of ballot spoilage due to errors made by voters confused by the ranking process. In other words, the very system intended to increase voter engagement instead leads to higher rates of disenfranchisement.

Our electoral process should be as clear, fair, and accessible as possible. The complicated nature of RCV, combined with the likelihood of ballot exhaustion, lengthy delays, and voter confusion, poses a significant risk to the integrity of our elections. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to oppose Ranked Choice Voting and to support a voting system that maintains transparency, accessibility, and a straightforward process.

Thank you for considering these concerns. I hope that you will work to uphold a voting system that truly empowers all voters.

Sincerely,

Peter Wrampe

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