

A Plea from a Thread

To The members of the Governor's Working Group on Ranked Choice Voting,

Hello, my name is Astrea Finch, and I am a student in the University of Connecticut. Along with this, I am a Transgender Woman, Artist, Computer Scientist, and a Storyteller. I, for the next few minutes, would like to paint a picture for you about Voting, our Rights, our Institutions, and our lives.

In the cradle of much modern philosophy, the Ancient Greeks supposed a metaphor and myth - all humans are threads, which the fates spin, measure, and cut. Our threads are woven together into a tapestry, which is history. However, I'd posit that more than just the hands of the fates dictate our lives - our structures and institutions do just as much, if not Moreso. You are the representatives of The Institution, and so, I come to you with a plea.

One of the tools of our institution, while capable and historied, has been over-relied upon. The traditional "pick one" option, has been overused, with better tools available in many cases. Ranked Choice Voting is a different tool, with different benefits which would improve the tapestry of our histories.

These benefits include the inclusion of more diverse voter bases and leaders, higher expected voter turnout, and less antagonistic rhetoric. This 'Pick One' option forces us to pick hard sides - this has left gaps in our tapestries. It is tearing us apart at the seams and has, in part, created some of the vast splits in our democracy today across the country.

I believe RCV is a tool which will bind us back together - it will not cure the gaps in our history, but it will give us the chance to make a unified future. We could build coalitions together, We could include both the new voices and the old voices, and we could listen to the voices which we have ignored.

I am bringing this plea on behalf of my many college peers who find politics frustrating at best, on behalf of my transgender kin across the state who wish for their voice to be heard and recognized, and on the behalf of the many people who wish to see our democracy tied together. We would be safer, healthier, and a more effective Connecticut.

It would bring new voters to the table and give a better voice to the many diverse groups throughout the state, such as the queer community, which I belong to. Please consider RCV for primaries, Presidential Preference Primaries, and as an option for our local elections. Do not let this tool sit idly on our shelf.

Thank you,

Astrea Finch