

Public Testimony in SUPPORT of Ranked-Choice Voting  
for November 8, 2024 Public Hearing

11/4/2024

To: Co-Chairs Senator Olsten and Senator Hwang and Distinguished Members of the Governor's Ranked Choice Voting Working Group

From: Mary Hogue, Fairfield

I write to you today in strong SUPPORT Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV). I'm sure you will hear from many experts, who know far more than I about this topic, I want to share why I feel it is an important improvement to our state and our democracy.

Of the many reasons why I have heard advocates say RCV is a better way to hold elections these are the ones that are the most important from my perspective:

- **RCV reduces the rancor and negativity in campaigning.**

I am currently on our town's Charter Revision Commission and have been trying to do my homework. In [National Civic League's Model City Charter 9<sup>th</sup> Edition published in 2021](#), they note,

“There is evidence that RCV contributes to the civility of campaigning. Instead of candidates focusing on attacking their opponents, candidates perform better when they reach out positively to as many voters as possible, including those supporting their opponents. Even though they may not get the first vote from these voters, they may get a high-ranked vote. Campaigns may be friendlier as a result. Reports on the impact of ranked-choice voting on civility in elections are available from [Fair Vote](#).”  
As a voter, I greatly appreciate hearing what a candidate stands for and plans to do if elected. I'd really rather not hear about what the other candidate did / will do wrong. That's really not helpful to know if the candidate speaking ill of another will do what I support.

As a voter watching our national politics get more and more divisive, to the point where I am truly scared for people's safety, I support the need for candidates to realize they are not just campaigning to those they know will vote for them but to everyone that they will be representing if and when they win.

- **RCV guarantees that elected officials are supported by a true majority of voters.**

This system ensures the winner has broad-based appeal, enhancing the legitimacy of our leaders. Many consider this an important equity issue, which I do and feel is very important. I think it also could bring back the public's trust in government and the feeling that are truly represented.

- **RCV would likely increase turnout, especially during non-presidential election years.**

Unless folks vote, they can't truly be represented. Because I feel RCV will require candidates to be less negative and will be elected by a true majority of voters, I think citizens will be more likely to register to vote and actually vote in every election.

- **RCV could save communities money because they do away with political primaries that leave out citizens registered as Independent – the majority of registered votes in CT, third parties and as Unaffiliated. And provide a voice to voters as Independent and Unaffiliated as to who all citizens can vote for.**

The use of ranked-choice voting provides an “instant runoff” that determines winners in a single election. Not all forms of RCV seem to follow this methodology but it seems to take the political rhetoric out and let the candidates focus on the facts and policies, not the party line. Because the majority of Connecticut registered voters are not registered as Democrat or Republican, we currently are leaving the majority of the registered voters of Connecticut without a voice on who they can vote for.

I do understand that this new approach to voting will be confusing so therefore it is important that if the state and/or local communities move to ranked-choice voting, considerable public outreach and education will be required. That means the state and/or local communities will need to expend a fairly decent amount of funding for this effort and I appreciate the concern about that. I think that expense, which would be a major one time effort, is well worth it.

Thank you for your consideration,

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