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Thank you, Chair Peterson, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey and members of the House Government Oversight Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on HB684, which will preserve Ohio's trusted one-person, one-vote system by banning ranked-choice voting in all elections.

Ranked-choice voting is a deeply flawed system that undermines the integrity of our elections. Across the country, state legislatures are rejecting it. Since 2022, ten states— Alabama, Florida, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Tennessee—have banned ranked-choice voting. It's clear that Ohio should follow suit.

Proponents claim this system improves elections, but its track record tells a different story. Ranked-choice voting forces voters to rank candidates in order of preference; however, the candidate with the most votes doesn't win unless they receive a majority of votes. The only way to achieve this 50 percent plus one result is to toss out valid ballots through a ranking system. In this system, voters are given an ultimatum—either vote for candidates you dislike and who oppose your principles, or risk having your ballot tossed out. This system disenfranchises voters and invalidates their preferred candidate.

All you need to do is look at a couple noteworthy examples:

- In Maine's 2018 Second Congressional District election, more than 8,000 ballots were thrown out.
- In Alaska's 2022 special election, nearly 15,000 votes were discarded, and voters had to wait 16 days for results.
- In New York City's 2021 Democratic mayoral primary, 140,000 ballots—15% of the total—were not counted.

Ranked-choice voting also delays results. In Maine, a congressional race wasn't decided until 10 days after the election. In Alameda County, California, a programming error discovered two months after a ranked-choice election flipped the results of a certified race.

Ohioans deserve an electoral process that is transparent, efficient, and trustworthy. Ranked-choice voting fails on all counts. HB684 will protect voters from this chaos and preserve our democratic principles.

Thank you, Chair Peterson, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey and members of the House Government Oversight Committee. I'd like to expand on the perils of ranked-choice voting and its disastrous consequences.

Ranked-choice voting creates lengthy, confusing ballots that complicate elections. For instance:

- In one Minneapolis race, the ballot presented over 40,000 possible candidate combinations.
- In San Francisco, it took 20 rounds of tabulation to declare a winner, and more ballots were discarded than counted.

This system also undermines voter confidence and fairness. Ranked-choice voting demands a majority of votes to declare a winner. To achieve this, valid ballots are discarded through a ranking process, disenfranchising voters:

- If you're pro-Second Amendment, for example, you could be forced to vote for candidates who oppose your principles or risk your vote being trashed.
- This ultimatum is un-American and contrary to Ohio's commitment to fair elections.

Finally, the results of ranked-choice voting often contradict voter intent:

- In Maine's 2018 Congressional race, the Republican candidate received the most votes but lost the election.
- In Alaska's 2022 special election, Republican candidates collectively earned 60% of the vote, but the Democrat won due to ranked-choice tabulation.

Ranked-choice voting is a confusing, error-prone system that has no place in Ohio. HB684 will safeguard our elections, ensuring that every valid vote is counted and every voter's voice is heard. I urge your support for this crucial legislation.