



Written Testimony of Jason Snead
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Senate Bill 63
Ohio House General Government Committee
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Chair Ray, Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 63. My name is Jason Snead, executive director of Honest Elections Project Action, a nonprofit group dedicated to preserving free and fair elections. I also serve as the co-chair of the Stop RCV coalition, a nationwide network working to halt the spread of RCV.

SB 63 is a crucial safeguard for Ohio's elections. Banning the complicated scheme known as ranked-choice voting will ensure that Ohio elections are transparent, efficient, and accessible to every voter.

A national movement against ranked-choice voting is gaining momentum. Seventeen states have already banned RCV, including [Missouri](#), where in 2024 nearly 70% of voters approved a constitutional prohibition on RCV. Just this year, Arkansas, Kansas, Iowa, North Dakota, West Virginia, and Wyoming have all passed bans on ranked-choice voting. And in Utah, lawmakers refused to re-up a floundering pilot program, meaning that ranked-choice voting in Utah will end this year.

And, in 2024, the voters in [six states](#)—Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Oregon—overwhelmingly rejected ballot measures that sought to bring RCV to their elections. The public consensus is unmistakable: Ranked-choice voting has no place in American elections.

RCV makes every stage of the voting process more complicated. It requires an extensive public education campaign, costing taxpayers millions. [New York City](#) spent \$15 million to teach people how to vote in an RCV election, while [Maine](#) was forced to produce a 19-page guide for voters.

Even for those familiar with the system, RCV makes voting needlessly time-consuming and burdensome. Instead of selecting a single candidate, voters must rank multiple candidates for each race, including those who are fringe or unqualified. Research from MIT shows that RCV ballots take significantly longer to complete, with a "Final Five"-style system adding a full minute per race—a delay that, in aggregate, could double voting times at the polls.

Because of the complexity of RCV, errors can go undetected. The case of, Oakland, California proves this. In 2022, hundreds of votes were mistakenly eliminated and officials certified the wrong [winner](#) in a school board contest. It took months and a lawsuit to seat the true winner, but alarmingly the error was almost missed because RCV is so complex.

With RCV, any election that spans multiple jurisdictions requires centralized tabulation. That would force Ohio to make substantial changes to the way you currently tabulate ballots. Because counties use equipment from different vendors, harmonizing election data across counties would



require third-party software that does not currently exist. That only compounds ranked-choice voting's risk of error and delay.

Supporters of ranked-choice voting make grand claims that RCV improves elections and moderates divisive politics. Independent studies debunk all these claims. A 2023 [study](#) by the Hubert Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota found that ranked-choice voting does not reduce political polarization, increase diversity among election officials, increase voter turnout, or decrease negative campaigning. In fact, one [study](#) of RCV in Maine found that “negative spending increased significantly...casting doubt on the claim that RCV makes campaigns more civil.”

Many jurisdictions try ranked-choice voting only to repeal it. For instance, proponents tout the Utah pilot program I mentioned earlier, which recruited two-dozen cities. Over half have [withdrawn](#) early and the program will sunset at the end of this year.

Ohio law must be crystal clear on this issue. That is why I strongly encourage passage of SB 63. By passing this bipartisan reform, the Ohio Legislature will eliminate any doubt and send a clear message: Ranked-choice voting is not acceptable in Ohio—now or in the future.

I urge passage of this critical measure to protect the integrity of Ohio's elections.