

Dear Members of the Ohio State Senate,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 63, which seeks to prohibit the use of ranked choice voting (RCV) in Ohio and to withhold Local Government Fund distributions from municipalities or chartered counties that implement this voting method. I firmly believe that adopting RCV would enhance our democratic processes, and I urge you to reconsider the implications of this bill.

Benefits of Ranked Choice Voting:

1. **Majority Support:** RCV ensures that elected officials have broad support by requiring a majority to win, rather than a simple plurality. This leads to more representative outcomes and strengthens the legitimacy of our elections.
2. **Civil Campaigning:** Evidence indicates that RCV encourages more positive and issue-focused campaigns. Candidates are incentivized to appeal to a wider audience, including supporters of their opponents, fostering a more respectful political environment.
3. **Voter Engagement:** Jurisdictions that have implemented RCV have observed increased voter participation and satisfaction. By allowing voters to rank candidates by preference, RCV provides a more nuanced and expressive voting experience, which can lead to higher turnout.
4. **Cost Efficiency:** RCV can eliminate the need for separate runoff elections, saving taxpayer money and reducing the logistical challenges associated with organizing multiple election rounds.

National Trends and Local Autonomy:

The adoption of RCV is gaining momentum across the United States. For instance, Park City, Utah, recently formalized the use of RCV for its municipal elections, reflecting a growing trend toward this voting method.

Senate Bill 63's provision to withhold funding from municipalities that choose to implement RCV undermines local autonomy. Local governments are best positioned to understand and respond to the preferences of their constituents. Penalizing them for adopting a voting system that may better serve their communities contradicts the principles of local self-governance.

Conclusion:

In light of the demonstrated benefits of ranked choice voting and the importance of respecting local decision-making, I respectfully urge you to oppose Senate Bill 63.

Embracing RCV can lead to more representative, civil, and cost-effective elections, thereby strengthening our democracy in Ohio.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J.R. Kosch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "J.R." and the last name "Kosch" clearly distinguishable.

Joseph R. Kosch

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