



March 25, 2025

**Ohio Senate General Government Committee
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215**

Dear Chairwoman Roegner and Members of the Committee,

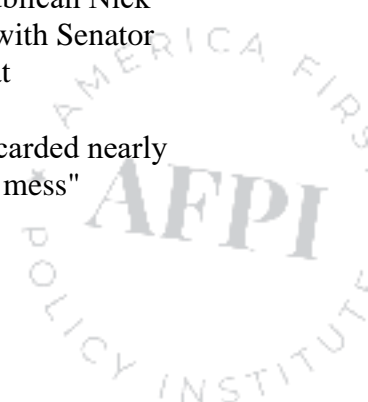
Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today on Senate Bill 63, which would proactively ban Ranked Choice Voting (RCV). My name is Ken Blackwell, and I am proud to be the former Treasurer and Secretary of State in Ohio. I currently serve as the Chair for the America First Policy Institute's Center for Election Integrity.

Over the past years, Ohio has shown itself to be a gold standard of elections administration, and I am thankful for the work that all of you have done towards this end. Now, you have an opportunity to further safeguard elections. Senate Bill 63 would be a critical part of Ohio's dedication to ensuring that elections are fair, transparent, and accountable.

Preventing RCV is a good decision. RCV is a chaotic and confusing system of running elections which often results in the candidate with the most first-round votes losing the election. It also often results in the complete discarding of ballots, an increase in public confusion, and additional work for election workers. Unlike typical "one person, one vote" systems, RCV requires voters to rank candidates in order of preference, with votes redistributed in rounds until a majority emerges. This process can easily overwhelm voters, especially in races with many candidates.

The data is against RCV. Here are just a few examples from many:

- A San Francisco RCV study from 1995-2011 found a significant correlation between RCV adoption and declining voter turnout ([Mountain States Policy Center, 2023](#)).
- In the 2021 New York City Democratic primary, nearly 10,000 ballots were exhausted in a 20-round count, meaning those unfortunate voters had literally no say in the final outcome ([Mountain States Policy Center, 2023](#)).
- Likewise, in Maine's 2018 congressional election, over 8,000 ballots were exhausted, allowing a candidate to win without a true majority of all votes cast ([Foundation for Government Accountability, 2022](#)).
- In Alaska's 2022 special election, Democrat Mary Peltola won despite Republican Nick Begich being preferred in head-to-head matchups. This exasperated voters, with Senator Tom Cotton condemning the "convoluted process and ballot exhaustion" that "disenfranchises voters" ([U.S. News, 2024](#)).
- In San Francisco's 2011 mayoral race, the RCV process took 20 rounds, discarded nearly 10,000 votes, and left voters bewildered, with many labeling it a "confusing mess" ([Mountain States Policy Center, 2023](#)).



- Voter feedback often reflects this discontent: in Minneapolis and St. Paul, where RCV has been used for over a decade, voter turnout lags behind other cities, and voters complain of its complexity and delayed results ([Foundation for Government Accountability, 2022](#)).
- In Pierce County, Washington, RCV experiments from 2006-2008 led to multi-day counts, prompting a return to traditional voting due to public frustration ([Mountain States Policy Center, 2023](#)).

The complexity of RCV, the disenfranchisement of voters via ballot exhaustion, and the history of confusing or inaccurate outcomes make it a flawed system that should be soundly rejected across the board. Ohio would do well to pass Senate Bill 63 and proactively prohibit RCV, protecting Ohioans in the process and joining the many other states who have done the same.

Sincerely,

The Hon. J. Kenneth Blackwell
Chair, Center for Election Integrity
America First Policy Institute

