

Re: S.B. 63

I'm writing to voice my opposition to S.B. 63, co-sponsored by Sens. Gavarone and DeMora. This bill would effectively prohibit ranked-choice voting (aka instant runoff voting) in Ohio.

As we've seen in many elections throughout the United States and abroad, ranked choice voting (RCV) provides voters a simple, accurate, and cost-effective method to determine the majority winner of an election--not merely the plurality winner.

RCV is a necessary upgrade from the flawed "first past the post" voting. This is particularly important in primary elections, during which more than two candidates compete for a nomination, and winners can be declared with less than 50% support. RCV encourages voters to vote with their hearts, allaying fears that their vote might be "wasted" on a less-popular candidate.

Elections using RCV have been shown to moderate campaign discourse, which has become increasingly bitter and polarizing in the last 10 years. A simple change to RCV would be a key step toward restoring dignity and respect in our democratic process.

Notably, S.B. 63 would almost certainly violate the "home rule" clause of the Ohio Constitution, by withholding state funds from local governments who choose RCV for their local elections. As a registered Republican, I support home rule as a bedrock foundation of small government. I urge the Ohio Senate to oppose the ban on RCV that's at the heart of S.B. 63.

Sincerely,
Brant W. Jones