



March 24, 2025

Dear Members of the Senate General Government Committee,

I am testifying to oppose the passage of SB 63, which proposes prohibiting the use of ranked choice voting (RCV) and withholding funding for the use of RCV. The organization where I serve as Programs & Partnerships Director, [RepresentWomen](#), tracks electoral outcomes for women in jurisdictions with ranked choice voting. Our overall mission is to increase gender parity in elected office and address the barriers women face in politics. **RCV is a data-proven method under which women are more often elected to public office.**

In both theory and practice, ranked choice voting eliminates the barriers women face in plurality aka winner-take-all elections, which creates more opportunities for women to run successfully. Our research finds that women have better opportunities to run in and win RCV elections. Plurality elections favor status quo candidates. There are built-in advantages for the incumbent candidates which are more likely to be male, which include but aren't limited to fundraising. Raising campaign funds is more difficult for all women but especially women of color. RCV elections also tend to include less negative campaign ads that have a more disparate impact on women. More women can successfully run for office in RCV elections because, without fear of splitting the vote, there is greater support for women candidates to run. Additionally, campaigns tend to be more civil and more issue-focused, which appeals to women candidates and provides greater incentive for them to run. We also find that when voters have the ability to express their true preferences rather than vote strategically, more women win as a result.

The impact of RCV on women's representation is best demonstrated at the local level, which has long been the testing ground for new voting systems. Of the 31 mayors in RCV cities today, 12 (39%) are women, nine are people of color (29%), and four are women of color (13%). In city councils, 147 of 300 RCV seats (49%) are held by women, 96 by people of color (32%), and 55 (18%) by women of color. Comparatively, women held 32% of all municipal seats as of March 2022.

Here are a few of our resources that may be of interest:

- a [memo](#) on ranked choice voting & women's representation
- a [dashboard](#) on ranked choice voting stats
- a [toolkit](#) with additional RCV materials

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on SB 63 to protect RCV and home rule in Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely Yours,

Katie Usalis
Programs & Partnerships Director