

Opponent Testimony on SB137

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*Before I begin, I'd like you to note that I am not being paid to be here and the sacrifices I make to be here are because **still have faith**. I have faith that these hearings mean something and that what citizens like me have to say matters to you.*

Good afternoon Chairman Rulli and members of the committee. My name is Sue Miller, and I want to be proud of living in Ohio. On October 16th 2023, I met with my senator who is the co-sponsor of this bill to try to understand his support for a bill that usurps the sovereign right to home rule by banning Ranked Choice Voting in Ohio. I went into his office with an open mind, certain that someone with the power to initiate a statewide ban on something that is gaining in popularity across this country must know something I do not. Maybe I could learn from him.

After that discussion, I researched the claims that were made during that meeting as well as the claims made in his supporting testimony.

I would like to review the most salient of these claims and set the record straight with the facts.

First is the claim made in our meeting and one that is included in the co-sponsor testimony is that Ranked Choice Voting was a "disaster" in Arlington Virginia when in fact, Arlington, Virginia has voted to continue using Ranked Choice in all future elections.¹ Further evidence of the popularity of ranked choice voting is found in the fact that RCV has won in 27 city ballot measures in a row.²

One of the most troubling claims made by the co-sponsor and one that is circulating is that Ranked Choice Voting was responsible for the delay in tabulating the votes for the 2021 New York City mayoral race. The reality is the two week delay resulted from their decision to hold off on tallying the absentee ballots until after the election.³ Further, the claim that the "rounds of voting" inherent in RCV contributed to the NYC delay is unfounded. Instant runoffs inherent in RCV actually saved the 30 days and the millions of dollars it would've cost if they had used the traditional runoff.

Finally, the claim that might lead you to question all other claims is the one made during our meeting and that is that the State of California has banned Ranked Choice Voting. This cannot

¹ "Arlington to Stick With Ranked Choice Voting for County Board Elections" (Wall Street Journal, December 21, 2023)

² "Ranked Choice Voting Sweeps on Election Day 2023" (FairVote, November 8, 2023)

³ "Don't Blame New York City's Mess on Ranked Choice Voting" (The New Republic Magazine, Alex Shepard, July 2, 2021)

be further from the truth. In fact, California has more jurisdictions than any other state except Utah using Ranked Choice in local elections.⁴

I close with the most frustrating of all and that is the claim that RCV is complicated, implying that Ohioans won't be able to figure it out. I'm pretty confident that the results of recent elections have proven that Ohioans are not dumb and that we are not just ready for change, but we want our vote, which is our voice, to matter. I think we are quite capable of understanding the concept of making first, second and third choices.

⁴ "Where is Ranked Choice Voting Used?" (FairVote, <https://fairvote.org/our-reforms/ranked-choice-voting-information>)