April 22, 2024

Dear Chairman Rulli, Ranking Member DeMora, and members of the General Government Committee,

I am testifying to oppose the passage of SB 137, which proposes prohibiting the use of ranked choice voting (RCV). The organization I direct, RepresentWomen, tracks outcomes for women in jurisdictions with ranked choice voting as part of our mission to support solutions to address the barriers women face in politics.

Our research finds that women have better opportunities to run in and win RCV elections. More women can 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.

Women hold 53% of city council seats in jurisdictions with ranked choice voting and 12 out of the 32 mayoral seats elected with RCV. Janet Mills, governor of Maine, won the primary with RCV, and Senator Lisa Murkowski and U.S. Representative Mary Peltola were elected using RCV in Alaska.

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

We also released a report in February 2024, Breaking Barriers for Black Women Candidates, that discusses how RCV creates more opportunities for Black women to run and win.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on SB 137 to protect RCV and home rule in Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Many thanks,

Cynthia Richie Terrell
Executive Director, RepresentWomen

Brittany Stalsburg | Rina Shah Bharara | Onida Coward Mayers | Dania Korkor | Jenifer Rajkumar
Amalia Perez | Mehrnaz Teymourian | Susannah Wellford | Michelle Whittaker | Marie Wilson