

February 3, 2025

Honorable Craig Hickman  
Honorable Laura Supica, Co-Chairs  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

Re: LD 234 An Act to Eliminate Ranked-choice Voting

Good afternoon. My name is David Souers. I am a resident of Friendship. I am speaking in opposition to LD 234, as I support Ranked Choice Voting. I submitted my testimony online and am here to present it in person.

I am 76 years old having voted for more than 50 years in elections that were not ranked choice. I often witnessed more than two candidates, won without a majority by the least favored candidate. Ranked choice voting provides greater choice for the best overall liked or acceptable candidate to win, with less risk of getting the least liked elected.

The process is fair. First choices of every voter are counted, as we have without ranked choice voting. If one candidate receives a majority of votes, they win, as they would without ranked choice voting.

But if no candidate receives a popular majority vote in the first round, then the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated in each round of tabulations until a majority winner is achieved based on the voters ranking for each choice.

The benefits of Ranked Choice Voting are significant for our democracy:

1. We get more choices. Ranked choice voting encourages more candidates to run outside the major parties, without losing our opportunity to elect the most popular candidate.
2. It offers more opportunities to hear and discuss issues, increasing the diversity of views available for voters to consider and select from.
3. It allows voters to support a favorite candidate without losing the chance to elect a like-minded candidate, and unintentionally giving the election a candidate they do not like.
4. It reduces negative misinformation campaigning as candidates must appeal to more voters for second or third choice rankings. Voters are less likely to rank a candidate highly who is malicious toward their preferred candidates.
5. It enables candidates with less money to compete in elections against negative big money PACS, when they appeal to enough voters who rank them high. This helps reduce the influence of out of state money in our politics.
6. It avoids electing a candidate that a majority objects to and would not elect into office.

I urge you to vote against LD 234, in favor of ranked choice voting now and in the future to expand ranked choice voting to all elections in Maine.