



AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

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Bill South
Zahava Zaidoff
P.O. Box 23404
Honolulu
Hawaii 96823

March 31, 2022

TO: Chair Luke & Members of Finance Committee

RE: SB 2162 SD1 HD1 Relating to Ranked Choice Voting

Support for a Hearing on April 4

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

Americans for Democratic Action Hawaii supports this bill as it would establish ranked-choice voting for special federal elections and special elections of vacant county council seats. First-past-the post elections where there are a number of candidates from one Party and only one candidate from a second Party give the advantage to the minority Party candidate; this is not democratic. This bill sets up a more democratic system.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel, President

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Monday, April 4, 2022
2:30 PM
Via Video Conference and Conference Room 308

in consideration of
SB 2162, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO RANKED CHOICE VOTING.

Chair LUKE, Vice Chair YAMASHITA, and Members of the House Finance Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB 2162, SD1, HD1, which establishes ranked choice voting (RCV) for special federal elections and special elections of vacant county council seats.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy through voting modernization efforts such as adopting RCV.

RCV is a simple electoral reform that ensures fair and efficient elections. In a traditional election, the candidate with the most votes wins, even if they do not receive a majority of the votes. This means voters often feel disengaged and are left to choose between the “lesser of two evils,” or vote for the candidate they feel has the best chance of winning, rather than supporting their favorite candidates.

RCV promotes positive, inclusive and fair elections, which encourages a diversity of candidates. The Hawaii Democratic Party’s Party-Run Presidential Primary employed RCV in 2020. There are approximately 50 jurisdictions that are using or have adopted some form of RCV. [See \[https://www.fairvote.org/data_on_rcv#research_snapshot\]\(https://www.fairvote.org/data_on_rcv#research_snapshot\)](https://www.fairvote.org/data_on_rcv#research_snapshot) (retrieved Jan. 29, 2022).

With RCV, voters rank candidates from favorite to least favorite. On Election Night, first choice votes are counted to determine who voters like the best. If a candidate receives a majority of votes, they win. If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate with the fewest first-choice rankings is eliminated. If your favorite candidate is eliminated, your vote is instantly counted for your next choice. This repeats until one candidate reaches a majority and wins.

In RCV elections, you always get to vote for your favorite candidate, even if they do not have a good chance of winning. If your favorite candidate gets eliminated, then your vote immediately counts for your next choice. You can truly vote your conscience without worrying about wasting your vote. Ranking your 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices will never hurt your favorite candidate. It simply amplifies your voice in the process.

Cities that have RCV elections have seen a steady increase in voter turnout. When voters feel their vote will matter, they turn out in greater numbers.

In RCV elections, candidates often need 2nd and 3rd choice votes to win a majority of the vote. As such, they will ask for your first-choice vote, but if another candidate is your favorite, they will also ask for your second and

third choices. Candidates are not likely to get your second or third choice vote if they have been engaging in negative “mudslinging” personal attacks against your favorite candidate.

RCV will require voter education to implement successfully. Common Cause Hawaii hopes that the Office of Elections and Clerks’ Offices are provided with sufficient public education tools to implement RCV and will work cooperatively with the community to disseminate information about RCV.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of 2162, SD1, HD1, and Common Cause Hawaii respectfully urges the committee members to pass SB 2162, SD1, HD1 out of your Committee with an effective date upon its approval. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii





49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813
www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwv-hawaii.com | @LWVHawaii on Facebook

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Monday, April 4, 2022, 2:30 p.m., Conference Room 308, and Via Videoconference
SB 2162, S.D.1 HD1 RELATING TO RANKED CHOICE VOTING

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Committee Members:

The League supports this bill, which would establish ranked choice voting for special federal elections and special elections of vacant county council seats. The limited scope of this bill (for special Federal elections and for special elections of vacant County Council seats) is appropriate, since this method has not been used before in Hawaii.

Ranked choice voting is appropriate where there are more than two candidates. The method allows voters to choose their candidates in order of preference, by marking candidates as their first, second, third, and subsequent choices, followed by tabulation of votes in rounds, with the lowest-ranked candidates eliminated in each round until there is a candidate who receives the majority of the votes (more than 50%) in a final round and is declared the winner.

Where there are many candidates in the same race and the race is competitive, ranked choice voting has the potential for producing a more representative result where the winner actually receives the majority of votes. However, we hasten to add that for races where this method is not used – even close races – receiving a plurality of votes (rather than a majority of votes) remains a legal and well accepted approach.¹

This is the first time the League of Women Voters of Hawaii has endorsed a ranked choice voting bill instead of merely commenting on such a bill. Each ranked choice ballot should provide clear instructions to voters, as required under this bill. The ballot must be simple and easy to understand for both the voter and election officials. We are now encouraged by survey and exit poll results that indicate voters find ranked choice voting easy to do and a positive experience.²

¹ For example In the 2018 Democratic primary race for Lieutenant Governor, there were five candidates, and the winner was Josh Green with 30.2%, followed by Jill Tokuda with 27.5%, Bernard Carvalho with 18.5%, Kim Coco Iwamoto with 13.8% and Will Espero with 6.2%: Source: <https://elections.hawaii.gov/election-results/>.

² Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center: <https://www.rcvresources.org/faq>



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www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwv-hawaii.com | @LWVHawaii on Facebook

The League is aware of the use of Ranked Choice Voting by the Hawaii Democratic Party in its 2020 Presidential Primary³, the adoption of it for state and federal races in Alaska last fall,⁴ the adoption of it for Presidential and U.S. Senate seats in Maine's 2020 elections⁵ and a rise in its use in municipal elections throughout the country.⁶ In the past four years Hawaii legislators have also introduced similar proposals to change our electoral system for certain races.

We note that there were seven parties represented in Hawaii's 2020 general election and think ranked choice voting might help our emerging parties gain a foothold. Do we need to consider the effect on the rights of political parties for an election that uses the ranked choice method? We note that Maine's ranked choice voting provides that the number of votes cast for a party's candidate is defined as the number of votes credited to that candidate after the initial counting in the first round of tabulation.⁷ If we do not specify this in this bill, it is important that the Chief Elections Officer announce publicly how many votes each candidate received after the initial counting in the first round.

We defer to the Office of Elections and the County Clerks about any additional cost of using this method for the elections specified in this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

³ Shikina, Rob. "Joe Biden Wins Hawaii Democratic Presidential Primary With 63% of Ranked-Choice Votes". *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, 23 May 2020. <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/23/breaking-news/joe-biden-wins-hawaii-democratic-presidential-primary-with-63-of-ranked-choice-votes/>, accessed 19 February 2021.

⁴ Bohrer, Becky, "Alaska Voters Narrowly Approve Initiative Changing Elections." Associated Press. <https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-alaska-legislature-state-elections-general-elections-387ba5f6b3ab79bb841bc5c29c8bceee>, accessed 19 February 2021. Of note, Alaska now joins Maine as the second state to adopt RCV at this level of elections.

⁵ <https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-senate-elections-voting-maine-united-states-355f2859cf5dabf25bb0bb953f9c66bd>

⁶ "Ranked Choice Voting." National Conference of State Legislatures. <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/ranked-choice-voting636934215.aspx>, accessed 19 February 2021.

⁷ https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/bills/bills_127th/billtexts?B000201.asp

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 12:43:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Golojuch Jr	Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i (formerly the LGBT Caucus) Hawai'i's oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization fully supports SB 2162 SD 1 HD 1.

We hope you all will support this important piece of legislation.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.
Chair and SCC Representative
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 7:54:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Finance committee,

The Green Party of Hawai'i stands in support of SB2162 SD1 HD1, with the amendment that the bill is implemented by July , 1 2023. Ranked choice voting is gaining momentum around the nation. RCV brings people a choice instead of top two voting. Voters can rank their choices in order of preference and if your first choice is not the winner of that round than your second choice will also get counted . This instant run off continues until a clear winner emerges. This bill is a very weak attempt at RCV but at least it pulls Hawai'i into some use of RCV. Thank you for your yes vote on SB2162 SD1 HD1 with amendments for a July 1st, 2023 start date.

Mahalo nui,

Green Party of Hawai'i

Susan RobertsEmery

Co chair

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2022 4:09:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Moran	Kihei Community Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this measure. Let's get more people voting with this positive change .

Mahalo

Mike Moran President KCA



House Committee on Finance

Monday, April 4th, 2022, 2:30p.m. Conference Room 308

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action Supports: SB2162 SD1 HD1

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) I am submitting testimony in support of SB2162 SD1 HD1.

SB2162 SD1 HD1 establishes Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) for special federal elections and special elections of vacant county council seats.

HAPA supports this measure and all attempts to make our government more accountable, transparent, open and representative of the people.

RCV is a simple electoral reform that ensures fair and efficient elections. In a traditional election, the candidate with the most votes wins, even if they do not receive a majority of the votes. This means voters often feel disengaged and are left to choose between the "lesser of two evils," or vote for the candidate they feel has the best chance of winning, rather than supporting their favorite candidates.

RCV promotes positive, inclusive and fair elections, which encourages a diversity of candidates. In RCV elections, you always get to vote for your favorite candidate, even if they do not have a good chance of winning.

If your favorite candidate gets eliminated, then your vote immediately counts for your next choice. With RCV you can truly vote your conscience without worrying about wasting your vote. Ranking your 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices will never hurt your favorite candidate. It simply amplifies your voice in the process.

The Hawaii Democratic Party's Party-Run Presidential Primary employed RCV in 2020. There are approximately 50 jurisdictions that are using or have adopted some form of RCV¹. Cities that have RCV elections have seen a steady increase in voter turnout. When voters feel their vote will matter, they turn out in greater numbers.

¹ https://www.fairvote.org/data_on_rcv#research_snapshot (retrieved Jan. 29, 2022)

Please pass SB2162 SD1 HD1 and help take measures to restore faith in our democracy.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Frederick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director



KE ONE O KĀKUHIEWA

O'ahu Council of the
Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs

Hawai'i State Legislature
House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Pō'akahi, Apelila 4, 2022
Lumi 'Aha Kūkā 308
Ke Kapikala Moku'āina
415 South Beretānia Street

RE: SB 2162 SD1 HD1: RELATED TO RANKED CHOICE VOTING

Aloha Luna Ho'omalua Sylvia Luke, *Hope Luna Ho'omalua* Kyle Yamashita, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

Ke One O Kākuhihewa-O'ahu Council for the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (Council) **SUPPORTS** SB 2162 SD1 HD1 which establishes ranked-choice voting for special federal elections and special elections of vacant county council seats.

Ranked choice voting (RCV) promotes positive, and fair elections and encourages a diversity of candidates. For voters, you get to vote for your favorite candidate regardless of their chance of winning.

The Council at a special meeting on August 7, 2021 passed a resolution encouraging the use of ranked choice method of voting for all partisan primary elections, special elections, and nonpartisan general elections having more than two candidates (attached).

Mahalo for allowing O'ahu Council to offer its support on SB 2162 SD1 HD1.

Ke One O Kakūhihewa-O'ahu Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, is a native Hawaiian organization made up of 24 Hawaiian civic clubs on the island of O'ahu. Our oldest member, Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu was established by Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole on December 7, 1918.

Sincerely,

Benton Kealiikiamoku Pang, President

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 8:56:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Benjamin Reilly	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

I write in support of this bill, as an Australian political scientist currently resident in Hawaii. I believe there is abundant evidence to show that RCV is superior to the current plurality voting system.

First, RCV guarantees that any elected member will be chosen by a majority of the community, either outright or after all rankings are counted, rather than the minority victories and split-votes that can and often do occur under plurality voting.

In 2010, Hawaii faced this issue when Republican Charles Djou won a special federal election with only 39% of the vote after Colleen Hanabusa and Ed Case split the almost 60% Democratic vote between them. The same year, a vacant county council special election saw a Tea Party Republican, Tom Berg, win with just 18 percent of the vote in a 14-candidate split field.

Similar majority-denying outcomes spurred Australia’s introduction of RCV a century ago, while in Maine and Alaska, split votes leading to the election of unpopular and unrepresentative Governors from the minority party (Democrats in one state, Republicans another) were a key factor in the adoption by initiative poll of RCV. In both cases, voters rebelled at being represented by politicians clearly at odds with most of their constituents.

Such unrepresentative results are not possible under RCV. Instead, if no candidate has a majority of first rankings, successive rounds sees the candidate with the lowest support eliminated and their ballots transferred according to the next candidate ranked, until one has achieved an absolute majority. Politicians elected this way can thus claim a true majority mandate for their victory.

This majority mandate is key to a second advantage: less polarized politics. There is no room under RCV for narrow or extremist positions at odds with majority of the electorate. This is one reason why Australian politics has remained relatively centrist, without the polarization seen in the United States and other Western democracies in recent years. Big parties seek to win not only their own first-choice votes, but pick up preference flows from smaller parties too.

The centre-left Labor Party, for instance, relies on voters for the smaller Green Party choosing it as a ‘second best’ option, and has shifted its policies to incorporate environmental issues accordingly.

The main centre-right Coalition similarly uses RCV to encourage its supporters to rank both its constituent Liberal and National parties when they complete their ballot.

This process has generated a third benefit: RCV encourages politicians to cut deals with other candidates, not just their allies but sometimes their competitors too, in the course of election campaigns. These deals can be the basis for negotiation and cooperation once in government.

While RCV does not make politicians embrace their opponents or be nice to their enemies, it does give them a reason to at least talk – in stark contrast to the situation in Washington DC today, where Democrats and Republicans are no longer on speaking terms

The biggest beneficiaries of RCV, however, are ordinary voters who are not committed supporters of any party. Such voters can choose to vote for a party of their choice with the first rank, and then give a second or third-choice vote for others, without worrying that their vote is going to be ‘wasted’.

I therefore support this bill as an important first step towards introducing RCV in Hawaii.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 9:12:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear FIN Chair, Vice chair & Committee,

i support [SB2162](#) because i have used a similar system of voting in Australia where i raised my family. I am a volunteer for Common Cause and i often agree with their position on many of the bills they are concerned about. I agree with the following statements about RCV and hope the FIN passes the bill out of committee.

- Ranked Choice Voting is a simple electoral reform that ensures fair and efficient elections.
- In a traditional election, the candidate with the most votes wins, even if they do not receive a majority of the votes.
- This means voters often feel disengaged and are left to choose between the “lesser of two evils,” or vote for the candidate they feel has the best chance of winning, rather than supporting their favorite candidates.
- RCV promotes positive, inclusive and fair elections, which encourages a diversity of candidates.
- The Hawaii Democratic Party’s Party-Run Presidential Primary employed RCV in 2020. There are approximately 50 jurisdictions that are using or have adopted some form of RCV. See https://www.fairvote.org/data_on_rcv#research_snapshot (retrieved Jan. 29, 2022).
- In RCV elections, you always get to vote for your favorite candidate, even if they do not have a good chance of winning.
- If your favorite candidate gets eliminated, then your vote immediately counts for your next choice.
- You can truly vote your conscience without worrying about wasting your vote. Ranking your 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices will never hurt your favorite candidate. It simply amplifies your voice in the process.
- Cities that have RCV elections have seen a steady increase in voter turnout. When voters feel their vote will matter, they turn out in greater numbers.
- Mahalo for your consideration,
- Tlaloc Tokuda
- Kailua Kona, HI 96740

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 9:38:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nikos Leverenz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, & Finance Committee Members:

I am writing in strong support of SB 2162, SD 1, HD 1, which would implement a ranked choice voting system in a limited number of elections in Hawaii.

[Ranked choice voting has the potential to better promote representative outcomes and majority rule, provide increased voter choice, discourage overly negative campaigning, result in representation that is more reflective of the community, and increase participation from military and overseas voters.](#)

For example, San Francisco's most recent mayoral contest utilized ranked choice voting and it worked well.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 10:30:00 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Younghee Overly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit a testimony in strong support of ranked choice voting. I support RCV because you can rank the candidates and your 2nd, 3rd, and even 4th choice may be considered. You can vote without worrying about wasting your vote. Cities that have RCV elections have seen a steady increase in voter turnout and increase in voter turnout is something we can definitely benefit from in Hawaii.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 1:31:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This would make people feel they can vote for their favorite candidates rather than just the candidates who may have the best chance of winning. I've wished for a bill like this and wish it would be adopted federally if that were possible. Excuse my enthusiasm. Yes! Yes! Yes!

Mahalo for considering this bill, which I think is long overdue.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 4:53:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Voting should be fair and not force voters to choose a candidate for fear of that candidate not getting enough votes. Ranked Choice is the answer. It makes for fair elections that would entice voters back to the polls, which Hawaii desperately needs as our voter turnout record is abysmal.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2022 12:58:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ranked Choice Voting is a simple electoral reform that ensures fair and efficient elections. In a traditional election, the candidate with the most votes wins, even if they do not receive a majority of the votes. This means voters often feel disengaged and are left to choose between the “lesser of two evils,” or vote for the candidate they feel has the best chance of winning, rather than supporting their favorite candidates.

RCV promotes positive, inclusive and fair elections, which encourages a diversity of candidates.

The Hawaii Democratic Party’s Party-Run Presidential Primary employed RCV in 2020. There are approximately 50 jurisdictions that are using or have adopted some form of RCV.

In RCV elections, you always get to vote for your favorite candidate, even if they do not have a good chance of winning. If your favorite candidate gets eliminated, then your vote immediately counts for your next choice.

You can truly vote your conscience without worrying about wasting your vote. Ranking your 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices will never hurt your favorite candidate. It simply amplifies your voice in the process.

Cities that have RCV elections have seen a steady increase in voter turnout. When voters feel their vote will matter, they turn out in greater numbers.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this bill.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2022 9:13:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Trecker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The time is now to pass SB2162 SD1 HD1 when disillusionment with state and national government is high.

I strongly support this bill! It is a powerful strategy to encourage voters to participate in the democratic process and to help ensure candidates with the most public support win elections.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2022 9:19:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
dhyan sandhya	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern

- You can truly vote your conscience without worrying about wasting your vote. Ranking your 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices will never hurt your favorite candidate. It simply amplifies your voice in the process.
- Cities that have RCV elections have seen a steady increase in voter turnout. When voters feel their vote will matter, they turn out in greater numbers.
- Please vote yes SB216

Dhyan Sandhya

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2022 9:57:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William R. Higa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Finance Committee:

I'm writing in support of this bill on ranked-choice voting. I think it provides for a true democratic election in our state. This is especially true since most of our elections here are dominated by one party and elections are often determined in the primary. And, I say this as a lifelong Democrat! Mahalo & Aloha___Bill Higa from Hilo

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2022 11:38:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dave Kisor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RCV tends to strike fear in the hearts of those with a fear of the unknown. For those who harbor that fear, I recommend they not get out of bed! The states with it are quite content with RCV.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair
Monday, April 4, 2022 2:30 p.m.

SB 2162, RELATING TO RANKED CHOICE VOTING

Good afternoon, Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee,

My name is Bart Dame and I am testifying as an individual in **STRONG SUPPORT** of this bill.

I have seen references to the experience of the Democratic Party in using Ranked Choice Voting in our 2020 party-run Presidential Primary. I was the person chosen by the Party leadership to go before the Democratic National Committee to make our case for using Ranked Choice Voting. We were the first state party to receive such authorization, though several other states followed. If you have questions about this, I may be well-positioned to help answer them for you.

SB2162 would not adopt Ranked Choice Voting for all elections, but just for the limited case of elections to fill vacancies in Congress and county councils. I think that is a very prudent approach to take. Use of a Ranked Choice ballot is well-suited for the specific conditions of such special elections. A regular election would provide for two rounds of voting, the primary and the run-off in the general election. That winnows the pool of candidates in the first round while allowing voters a chance to learn more about the top contenders in time for the run-off in the general election. In general, I think the two round election is preferable to a single round election. But special elections to fill a congressional or council vacancy does not allow enough time to hold a two-round election.

Ranked Choice Voting is also known as Instant Run-off Voting, a name which emphasizes that it is a form of voting that has a run-off built into its structure, thereby reducing the chances of an unpopular candidate to eke out a victory with a small plurality, producing a result very unlikely in a normal, two-round election. For a candidate to win, they cannot be opposed by a majority of the voters. Put more positively, they must receive the support of a majority of the voters, if only as a second or third choice.

One lesson we learned during the use of Ranked Choice Voting for our presidential primary is that fears of voter confusion turned out to be baseless. At the beginning, some of our people had a hard time explaining Ranked Choice Voting to members. But the more people heard about it, the more they realized it aligned with their own thinking. It is not hard for a voter to know which candidates they like better than others. What they are slow to understand is that RCV allows them to vote according to those preferences. Which candidate do you like best? Mark them on the ballot as your first choice. Who is your second choice? Mark them as second choice. Third choice, etc..

Voters turned out NOT to be confused by this at all.

I believe there needs to be transparency in how the votes are reported. The DPH made public all the rounds of voting so an observer could see who got the fewest votes in each round, was eliminated and where the votes they received were transferred to other candidates. I believe the Office of Elections can provide similar transparency for the special election results. This will help ensure voter confidence.

Please pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am available for questions.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2022 4:33:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
irene kloepfer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. This is a bill whose time is now. It brings fairness back to our elections, hopefully eliminating the big money that buys politicians, as we have just seen firsthand here in Hawaii. I voted rcv for president and it was the greatest feeling. That I could vote my 1st choice, even knowing that most likely my 2nd choice would win. I felt my vote mattered. Please pass SB2162. Mahalo. Irene kloepfer

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2022 12:12:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meribeth Kekumu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill because the 2020 election still needs to be investigated and audited. HAVA ACT all electronic voting machines need to be certified before polls open for voting. We need a overhaul of how the election system protocols are put in place.

SB-2162-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2022 12:28:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/4/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
james pirtle	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Candidates that are for the people by the people wanted by the people. Who represent the people and not a "minority special interest" should win the vote. This bill protects agaisnt small interest minorities from a "default" win in voting. So I support any bill that supports WE THE PEOPLE. No more under handed crooked elections/selections. We The People are watching EVERYTHING.