

## House Finance

## HB21-1071 Ranked Choice Voting In Nonpartisan Elections

## Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Megan M For Self</p>	<p>HB21-1071 Ranked Choice Voting in Nonpartisan Elections</p> <p>House State, Civic, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee,</p> <p>I urge you to support HB21-1071 Ranked Choice Voting in Nonpartisan Elections. This legislation will expand access to RCV elections for cities across Colorado. There are many proven benefits to RCV elections.</p> <p>RCV is sometimes called an instant run-off election because it eliminates the need for secondary run-off elections. RCV is an improvement over run-offs because it saves cities money. Denver’s last runoff election unnecessarily cost over \$800,000, Colorado Springs spent \$550,000, and Pueblo wasted \$135,000. RCV also better serves military and overseas voters because they can get their ballots back in time. RCV is also more fair than run-offs in that it is the same group of voters electing a winner.</p> <p>RCV elections are more fair because there is a requirement that the winner pass a majority threshold. Ranked choice has been used in the US for over 100 years and is proven to promote equity, in that more people of color and women run and win under an RCV system. This opportunity to compete exists because no candidate is told that they will split the vote from their demographic or viewpoint group. Results seen in RCV cities is that the campaigns become more issue-focused as candidates compete for first- and second-choice votes.</p> <p>The City of Boulder voted in November 2020 to start electing their mayor using RCV in 2023. Denver, Broomfield and Colorado Springs are all looking into using RCV for their municipal elections. Passing this legislation will create a unified system for counties to use RCV and will create an audit system to maintain our election security.</p> <p>Please support this legislation to expand a better election method for Colorado.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Megan Thornton</p>
Richard Rowlands	I am fed up with political polarization in this country and feel as if ranked choice voting is the only way to fix our broken political process. I will

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<p>For Self</p>	<p>support RCV until the day I die. Thank you Chris Kennedy and all for making our country a stronger democracy.</p>
<p>Daniel Smith For Self</p>	<p>American confidence in elected officials and political parties is lower than it has been in my lifetime. For voters in both parties, toxic partisan politics have been steadily eroding American's faith in democracy. Unaffiliated voter registration has been climbing in recent years, and candidates in both parties seem to be moving to the extremes.</p> <p>RCV isn't a silver bullet to fix these problems, but speaking as a voter who's seen it implemented successfully for local votes when I lived in another state, I'd love to see CO embrace it.</p> <p>That said, HB21-1071 isn't asking CO lawmakers to support RCV. It's simply asking lawmakers to support local government. Mandating county support for local governments who want to experiment with RCV gives us a great chance to test drive the concept and see if it actually works BEFORE we embrace it for major or statewide elections.</p> <p>Local government continues to work. Please support HB21-1071.</p>
<p>Janet Schultz For Self</p>	<p>House Finance Committee,</p> <p>I urge you to support HB21-1071 Ranked Choice Voting in Nonpartisan Elections. This legislation will expand access to Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) elections for cities across Colorado. Evidence and experience show that there are many valuable benefits to elections that use RCV.</p> <p>(1) Ranked Choice Voting SAVES money. This method eliminates the need for secondary run-off elections, thus one of the reasons RCV is also called instant run-off election. Eliminating run-offs saves valuable budget resources. Two recent examples: Denver's last runoff election unnecessarily cost over \$800,000 and Pueblo wasted \$135,000.</p> <p>(3) Doing away with the need for a second separate run-off ballot also better serves military and overseas voters.</p> <p>(3) RCV is also more fair than run-offs in that it is the same group of voters electing a winner.</p>

	<p>(4) RCV elections also discourage extreme partisan candidates since there is a requirement that the winner pass a majority threshold.</p> <p>(5) RCV has been run/approved by multiple municipalities/states (Basalt, Telluride, Sante Fe, Minneapolis, Maine, Alaska ) and has has been used in the United States for over 100 years.</p> <p>(6) RCV promotes equity in that more people of color and women run and win under an RCV system. The opportunity to compete exists because no candidate is told that they will split the vote ('spoiler effect') from their demographic or viewpoint group.</p> <p>(7) Municipalities that use RCV elections evidence campaigns that are more issue-focused, rather than ideological, as candidates must find middle ground by competing for first- and second-choice votes.</p> <p>Denver, Broomfield and Colorado Springs are all looking into using RCV for their municipal elections. The City of Boulder voted in November 2020 to start electing their mayor using RCV in 2023. I wish that my city, Fort Collins, would have this option for our upcoming mayoral election, due to having so many quality candidates running.</p> <p>Please support this legislation to expand a better election method for Colorado. Passing this legislation will create a unified system for counties to use RCV and will create an audit system to maintain our election security.</p>
<p>Stephen Benchik For Self</p>	<p>My name is Stephen Benchik and I am a resident of HD 2 in Denver. I support this bill because ranked choice voting is a better way to vote than what we have in this state currently, and the State should be working to promote it as much as possible. Ranked choice voting requires a candidate to be supported by a majority (50%+1) to win an election, creating consensus among voters. Ranked choice voting has been successfully implemented around the country in cities such Minneapolis, St. Paul, San Francisco, Oakland, and Santa Fe, as well as the entire state of Maine. RCV is also used by Basalt and Telluride in Colorado, and in 2020 Boulder voted to use it in mayoral elections. Furthermore, Denver, Broomfield, and Colorado Springs are considering moving over to it. Studies have shown that wherever RCV is implemented voter satisfaction and turnout are</p>

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	<p>increased, and campaigns become more civil and focused on substantive debate. It has been shown to encourage moderation among candidates, as candidates want to at least be someone's #2 choice if they can't be #1. For these reasons the Committee should approve this bill and send it to the entire House as soon as possible. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
<p>Kathleen Schmidt  For  League of Women Voters of Larimer County/RCV</p>	<p>March 8, 2021</p> <p>HB21-1071 Ranked Choice Voting in Nonpartisan Elections House Finance Committee</p> <p>Dear Chair,</p> <p>The League of Women Voters of Larimer County supports an alternative to plurality voting for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Every person’s vote should count equally.</li><li>· A winner should have majority support.</li><li>· We also appreciate that alternative voting methods can maximize voter participation, as well as encourage a variety of candidates, ideas, and positive, issue-based campaigning.</li></ul> <p>We believe that in single-seat elections, Instant Runoff Voting has the best chance of meeting these objectives. Passing the HB21-1071 legislation will create a unified system for counties across Colorado to use RCV.</p> <p>Our members in Larimer County appreciate your support for the wise move to encourage Ranked Choice Voting.</p> <p>Kind Regards,</p> <p>Kathleen Schmidt, Chair League of Women Voters of Larimer County Election Reform: Making Democracy Work electionreform@lww-larimercounty.org</p>

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	970.420.8036  Making Democracy Work for All!
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March 10, 2021

To: Members of the House Finance Committee

Re: 21-1071, Ranked Choice Voting in Nonpartisan Elections  
Representative Kennedy and Arndt

Dear members:

NFIB is an incorporated nonprofit association with nearly 300,000 members across America. NFIB protects and advances the ability of individuals to own, operate, and grow their businesses and ensures that the Congress of the United States and all 50 states hear the voice of small business as they formulate public policy.

On behalf of NFIB Colorado's 7,000 members, we respectfully **oppose** House Bill 1071.

HB 21-1071; Beginning in 2023, the bill allows a municipality to refer a municipal election using instant runoff voting to be conducted as part of a coordinated election.

**Appropriation Summary: For FY 2021-22, this bill requires an appropriation of \$580,000 to the Secretary of State.**

Fiscal Note 2 states; This bill will increase cash fund revenue to the Secretary of State's Office (SOS) by up to \$580,000 in FY2021-22, up to \$254,000 in FY 2022-23, and up to \$150,000 in future years. **The revenue is from business filing fees**, which are deposited into the Department of State Cash Fund. This additional fee revenue is subject to TABOR.

Business Filing Fees, collected by the Colorado Secretary of State, are fees paid by business entities as required by law for the pleasure of doing business in Colorado. Those fees have historically been used in support of the business division of the Secretary of State's Office. Should Business Filing Fees be used for a purpose other than use in the support of the business division, those fees would then become a tax.

Therefore, NFIB Colorado requests this committee does not pass HB 21-1071.

Thank you,

A.F. Tony Gagliardi, State Director  
NFIB Colorado  
303-831-6099



March 11, 2021

Colorado House of Representative Finance Committee,

My name is Terrance Carroll and I'm the Executive Director of Unite Colorado. I'm also a former Speaker of the House. Unite Colorado is a group of Democrats, Republicans, and Unaffiliated voters committed to bridging the growing partisan divide in order to tackle our largest challenges and leave a better state for future generations. We do this by focusing on initiatives that make our democracy more representative and functional.

Unite Colorado supports HB21 -1071 because we firmly believe this legislation places voters first by (1) ensuring the winner of an election has majority support and (2) validating the electoral choices of voters. Although this committee does not debate the merits of a particular bill, it is important to note HB21 -1071's merits have significant financial benefits.

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) saves taxpayer money. Many cities, and some states, hold runoff elections if no candidate earns majority support on the first ballot. Each year, hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are spent administering runoff elections. Instead of forcing voters to return to the voting booth for a second time, RCV captures all voter sentiment in a single ballot, allowing for faster results, and fewer expenses.

Unite Colorado urges you to vote yes on this important legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "T. D. Carroll".

Terrance D. Carroll  
Executive Director