

March 16, 2021

House Local Government Committee

Testimony in favor of H.F. 89 Ranked Choice Voting

To: Chair Masin and Committee Members,

Thank you for having this hearing on a major piece of legislation that has broad support across Minnesota. I urge you to vote YES on H.F. 89 and be champions for voters' rights.

I volunteered in the effort to educate voters about the local ballot measure to use Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) for local elections in Bloomington last November. I have researched and studied RCV for over ten years and talked with hundreds of voters about the benefits. I have heard all the arguments against it, some of which you may hear today. Many of these arguments were settled long ago in the [Minnesota Supreme Court's unanimous ruling](#) in 2009 that RCV is constitutional and upholds the principle of one-person, one-vote.

Democracy is our precious American experiment that requires truth and trust to work. Ranked Choice Voting increases civic participation and trust in government and reduces polarization and gridlock because:

- Candidates need broad support to win under RCV, so they connect with a wider spectrum of voters to hear their concerns.
- Although negative campaigning is increasing in use, even in polite Minnesota, it does not work well in RCV elections where voters find it offensive.
- Voters can hear more ideas for solutions to problems. Voting for a candidate who represents their views does not create a spoiler dynamic. Instead, it signals voter preference, which informs elected representatives about the will of the voters.
- In a democratic republic, elected officials are accountable to voters. Officials elected under Ranked Choice Voting are more accountable to more voters on more issues.

Voters deserve the right to try Ranked Choice Voting if they believe it will help improve their government. Please vote on R.F. 89 and move it on for further consideration.

Sincerely,

Marcia Wattson
Bloomington