

March 15, 2021

Dear Chair Masin and members of the Local Government Division

I am writing to urge you to vote to advance H.F. 89 out of committee.

This legislation has two related components. One component allows local municipalities some choice in how to conduct elections. The other component promotes Ranked Choice Voting.

Local Control

I serve on the Moorhead City Council and as a local elected official I value local control. Local control of elections is something everyone, regardless of political persuasion, should support. If states are the laboratories of democracy then cities are the petri dishes for the labs. Some cities in Minnesota are already using ranked choice voting which then allows other cities to better evaluate the benefits and challenges.

Ranked Choice Voting

I am a physicist and educator at Minnesota State University Moorhead. As a scientist I like to create models and investigate different scenarios. Ranked choice voting addresses both

- Polarization in the political process
- Binary party system with third-party candidates acting as spoilers to one of the political parties.

Ranked choice voting provides many benefits including

- Encouraging a much more civil discourse
- Encouraging more participation and exchange of ideas
- Guaranteeing a majority of the electorate support the elected person

The work of cities and counties is really non-political. Effective government benefits from a civil exchange of ideas and the establishment of broad public support. When we have an effective working local government, we create a stable environment where businesses can thrive. The result is a strong community which ultimately benefits the state.

Please vote in favor of H.F 89 to advance out of committee.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Steve Lindaas
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