

April 8, 2024

Common Cause MN is a nonpartisan grassroots organization working to create open, honest, and accountable government, more information about our work at www.commoncause.org.

We are grateful to Rep. Frazier, for moving HF3276 local RCV option. Common Cause has led local RCV reforms in at least three states and continues to support RCV. **Currently, we ask members of the committee, and Rep. Frazier to allocate funding to HF3276, for education and outreach. Not including funding places an unfair burden on impacted communities to do outreach and education in non-metro areas that have not had RCV elections. These statewide grassroots partners are some of the most underfunded groups outside the metro area.**

Minnesota is home to over 18,000 statewide Common Cause MN multipartisan members and despite belonging to various MN party affiliations, or not being affiliated, the one thing they've come together to do is support our work ensuring our Republic's democracy is safeguarded, our elections continue to reflect the will of Minnesotans and everyone's vote counts.

We believe democracy is how a free society resolves its differences. And to do that well, we must all agree the process is fair, produces equitable outcomes, and reflects our communities, our values, and our priorities. Nobody wins all the time, but if the process is fair, at least we can trust it.

Ranked choice voting puts Minnesota voters in charge. Common Cause has supported RCV in New York, Oregon, and California.

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- HF3276 currently has no education and outreach provisions. Although the Twin Cities and other local pockets in first ring suburbs may be used to RCV in local elections, the vast majority of Minnesotans are not.
 - **The Center for Civic Design cautions that any major change in elections creates a need for voter education, esp. as the ballot layout changes. That is top line in the Center for Civic Design handout on RCV education: <https://civicedesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/CCD-RCV-Best-Practices-Education-Materials-2022.pdf>.**
 - It isn't fair to place the burden on outreach and engagement on grassroots, BIPOC or other impacted communities.
 - Mpsl/St.Paul and those larger surrounding suburbs have greater opportunity and access to resources and money won't be disparately impacted as those emerging populations in growing sectors of greater MN and other predominantly BIPOC areas.
 - The bill in its current form doesn't address the outreach and education needs of the very population RCV advocates say help to "level the playing field".
 - Not funding an educational and outreach component to HF3276 only hampers a successful rollout for all Minnesotans, not just some.

Key factors we consider when assessing proposed RCV reforms from the administrative process side are 1) Equipment, 2) Outreach, 3) Audits and 4) Budget. Other things we also look for is:

- whether there is equitable representation that is meaningful in the composition of who is making the decisions,

- whether there is parity in power among those decision makers, are members mentioned relevant to the process and/or matter they are leading; do they have special knowledge.
- whether the process maximizes opportunity for transparent, and
- does the public have access to information, voting and other relevant information.
- does the public get to interact with the task force or participate in a public and open process or is it a closed body.

Common Cause is grateful to everyone who've worked diligently to have RCV considered. RCV can be a valuable reform IF Minnesotans know about it, understand how to leverage it AND successfully cast a ballot under RCV. That requires investing in a budget that lines up all Minnesotans to have a positive experience voting under RCV. Creating a "multiracial democracy" means co-creating it in partnership with impacted Minnesotans not just some.

Thank you for your dedication to all Minnesotans as you work in committee.

Anastacia Belladonna-Carrera
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