

Kim Nelson - Ranked Choice Voting Testimony 3/17/23

I'm Kim Nelson, a MN-based executive, here to express business support for Ranked Choice Voting.

MN businesses are proud to contribute to the growth and well-being of the great state of MN. To successfully sustain our growth, we need stability and predictability in the operating environment and depend on good governance in our state.

We rely on elected officials to provide sustaining, bipartisan solutions to address major issues in our community - ensuring public safety, making sure our youth are educated and prepared to join the workforce, and building the modern infrastructure needed to support our state's growing economy. These solutions are essential to our ability to conduct business and attract and retain employees and they are critical to the long-term prosperity of Minnesota.

Political extremism is incompatible with the needs of MN business. Many business leaders support RCV because, by requiring candidates to achieve at least 50% of the vote, it disincentivizes personal attacks and incentivizes policy driven campaigns designed to appeal to the broad center of the electorate. Candidates will be unlikely to secure the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> vote of an opponent's supporters if their focus is on personal attacks. This simple, effective reform is a bipartisan opportunity.

And that's why RCV has been championed by Republicans in red states like Utah and Alaska and by Democrats in blue states like Maine and Massachusetts.

RCV elections are more competitive, voter turnout is higher, campaigns are more civil. Studies show that voters find RCV easy to use and they prefer it because it eliminates the so called "spoiler effect" and allow them to vote their preferences. We also note the efficiency of

avoiding the kind of costly run-off elections we've seen in places like Georgia (and yes, MN taxpayers have paid for our fair share of those as well).

Our political system works best when elected officials work together to hammer out the kind of bipartisan legislation that can stand the test of time - and provide the climate of stability we need to invest, expand and build the economy in our home state.

In the spirit of supporting the adoption of good bipartisan legislation, I join a number of local business leaders, who have signed the letter before you urging you to adopt Ranked Choice Voting statewide.

Thank you for hearing my testimony.