February 20, 2019

To the House Subcommittee on Elections

Letter in Support of HF 983, Local Option for Ranked Choice Voting

Dear Chair Dehn and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a letter of testimony on behalf of the Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) Local Options Bill. As a civically engaged resident and current candidate for the 2019 Bloomington City Council At-Large seat, I urge you to support the passage of this bill.

There are several reasons to support RCV across our state. First, it allows for more inclusive and fair outcomes in elections. In Bloomington, like many other communities, we have very low voter turnout in primary elections. Passage of this bill would allow our community and others to more easily move to general elections that result in outcomes that are more reflective of what the majority of voters want.

In addition, there are many communities and school boards that are not currently able to implement RCV even if they wanted to. In Bloomington’s school board election, we have repeatedly seen vote splitting result in candidates being elected who do not have the majority of the votes or represent the majority of voters. RCV would prevent this from happening and result in a more democratic outcome.

RCV also encourages positive campaigning that is focused on the issues rather than the politics since candidates need to appeal to a broader set of voters. It encourages more diverse perspectives and opinions in debates while improving civic discourse. In a time of increasing polarization, divisiveness and negativity, we need this more now than ever.

At all levels of government, we need to do everything we can to restore the people’s faith that their vote matters. We need to do everything we can to increase voter participation in our government. By giving people more choices through structural changes to repair our voting systems we can do just that. I urge you again to vote in support of the Ranked Choice Voting Local Options Bill.

Thank you,   
  
Jenna Carter, MPH

Bloomington City Council Candidate

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