

Chair Masin and Members of the Local Government Division:

John Lewis famously said, “If you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have a moral obligation to do something about it.” Today, you’re being presented with a moral obligation to protect and promote democracy. All too recently, we’ve seen our cherished form of government tested in unimaginable ways. Your vote on H.F. 89 is a powerful statement and testament to your support for our American way of life.

Though there are numerous reasons to support ranked choice voting. I’ll briefly focus on three. First, our country has reached toxic levels of political polarization. Minnesota is not immune to this national phenomenon. Ranked choice voting incentivizes candidates to build broad majority coalitions in order to win elections, as well as remain responsive once in office. In order to gain broad appeal among a closely split electorate, candidates will have to rely on issue-oriented civil rhetoric rather than hyper-partisan personal attacks. People are tired of the divisiveness that leads to political gridlock. Second, spoiler candidates are gaming our electoral system in Minnesota (multiple races in 2020 serve as unfortunate examples). It’s politely referred to as “siphoning votes;” however, in reality, it’s sabotaging democracy. We can all agree that if a candidate can’t win fair and square, she or he should not be elected into office. Third, ranked choice voting gives voters a stronger voice in who represents them. Under our current system, the candidate with the most votes wins, regardless of whether she or he has earned a majority of voters’ support. A candidate with extreme views can win a multi-candidate race even if the majority of voters would have preferred someone else. If voters don’t have the power, we don’t have a democracy.

Please vote in favor of H.F. 89 and fix what is not right, not fair, and not just.

Respectfully,
Sarah Kruger