



Hard “NO!” to Ranked-Choice Voting

RCV is a Threat to Voters and Election Transparency in Wisconsin

The “elevator pitch”

Ranked-Choice Voting is a change to election procedures that is a terrible idea. It is anti-voter, confusing, and invites corruption. It violates the “one voter, one candidate, one vote” principle in our Constitution by demanding that voters must rank all candidates – even candidates they have never heard of, or dislike, or are even in another party.

Instead of ballots being counted once, they are counted repeatedly, creating massive opportunities for mistakes and making it nearly impossible to conduct a post-election audit.

During each round of ballot counting, some voters’ choices will fall by the wayside, discarded, and those political voices are silenced.

Mr./Ms Legislator, which of your constituents would be okay with having their ballot left uncounted? How would you explain that to them?

The Problem

1. RCV ballots are confusing, cumbersome, and highly prone to mistakes by voters.
2. SOME ballots are ALWAYS discarded - not every vote is counted.
3. RCV decreases voter confidence by making voting even more complicated and confusing.
4. RCV slows counting, delays outcomes, and delays governance
5. Hinders recounts and audits with its multiple tiers, options, and rounds of counting.
6. RCV is particularly damaging to vulnerable voters (military, seniors, voters with disabilities) who often vote remotely or by mail and are unable to immediately correct mistakes or access “replacement” ballots once a mistake has been made on their ballots.
7. Makes voting lines longer as it is a cumbersome and confusing ballot and people make mistakes and then need a “re-do”.
8. “Jungle primaries” endorsed by RCV are cross-over primaries that can, and have, resulted in members of one party picking the general election candidate of the opposing party.

Main Messaging Points

1. Proponents of RCV have a disruptive, anti-election integrity agenda and do not tell the truth about the enormous problems that RCV causes both for voters and for election officials.
2. The only response to Ranked-Choice Voting should be to ban it outright.
3. Anything that makes voting harder and more complicated is voter suppression. RCV is voter suppression.
4. Every single time an RCV election is held, some number of ballots become “exhausted.” What “exhausted” means in RCV is that the ballots of many voters are discarded and their political choices are not counted in the results.
5. Rather than “streamlining” voting, RCV adds deep layers of complications for voters and election officials.
6. Results from RCV elections are slow, complicated, and delayed.
7. It is costly to make the massive software changes that RCV elections require.
8. “Rigged” Choice Voting is inherently confusing, corrupting, and opaque.
9. Ranking candidates rather than voting for one always results in legitimate ballots being discarded through RCV’s multiple counting cycles.
10. The multiple counting cycles combined with the different “picks” through all of the counting cycles make audits nearly impossible.
11. RCV forces people to vote for candidates they do not support.
12. If you don’t rank all the candidates (because you don’t like many of them, or they are in the opposite party) then your ballot becomes far more likely to be thrown out.
13. RCV allows political parties to manipulate results by adding and subtracting candidates.
14. RCV creates opportunities for bad actors to skew results by rigging counting software.
15. RCV can also significantly delay results - and governance.
16. RCV is always a bad choice even when “misguidedly” embraced by conservatives.
17. RCV is a form of voter suppression as it creates confusion and disenfranchisement for both voters and election officials.
18. RCV is also not a good option for primaries either.
19. The only “excuse” for supporting RCV is not fully understanding why it is so dangerously anti-voter.

Resources

1. **American Legislative Exchange Council's** sample legislation opposing RCV: The SAVE (Safeguard American Voter and Elections) ACT.
<https://alec.org/model-policy/safeguard-american-votes-and-elections-act-save-act>
2. **RNC Resolution** against RCV: "The Republican National Committee has unanimously opposed complicated election schemes like Ranked-Choice Voting that is a clear example of the chaos being pushed on our states and territories ... "
<https://prod-static.gop.com/media/Resolution-Urging-a-Return-to-Excellence-in-American-Voting-and-Elections.pdf>
3. **Foundation for Government Accountability report:** [Ranked-Choice Voting: A Partisan Plot to Engineer Election Results](#) and [The Truth About Ranked-Choice Voting](#).
4. **Stop Ranked Choice Voting:** An organization that is a one-stop shop with information including "What is RCV?", "The Risks of RCV," and "How to Stop RCV."
5. **Honest Elections Project:** [RCV Fact Sheet](#)
6. **Freedom Foundation of Minnesota** report: [Ranked Choice Voting: A Risk Voters Shouldn't Take](#).
7. **Project 21** report: [What Election Reform Means for Black Americans](#). Project 21 is a project of the National Center for Public Policy Research that brings together black conservatives. In this report, it notes that RCV further disenfranchises black voters.
8. **Capital Research Center's Influence Watch** report on John Pudner: [Take Back Our Republic](#).
9. **Heritage Foundation** on RCV: [Ranked Choice Voting is a Bad Choice](#) and [Ranked Choice Voting Should Be Ranked Dead Last as An Election Reform](#).
10. One of the main donors to RCV is Katherine Gehl. She is a liberal donor primarily to Democrats and only appears to donate to Republicans in order to push RCV.
<https://www.opensecrets.org/donor-lookup/results?name=Katherine+Gehl> and
<https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/democracy-found/>
11. Another RCV donor, John and Laura Arnold of Texas, are also liberal, Democrat donors who invest heavily in RCV. <https://www.influencewatch.org/person/john-d-arnold/> and
<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/laura-and-john-arnold-foundation/>.

Misinformation from RCV proponents

- “Final Five” is not the same as Ranked-Choice Voting (it is.)
- “Instant Runoff” is not the same as Ranked-Choice Voting (it is.)
- Ensures “majority rule.” Not really, when thousands of ballots are regularly discarded. It also skews the political choices of the majority - In the Alaskan special congressional race in 2020, although GOP candidates had 60% of the votes in the first round, a Democrat won in the runoff because of RCV.
- “Everyone can vote in the primary.” Everyone already can vote in the primary that represents their chosen political parties. With RCV Jungle Primaries, now Democrats can select the Republican primary winner, and Republicans can do the same.
- “There will be more third-party diversity on the ballot.” RCV discourages third-party candidates as they know there is no chance of their making an impact in a race. In Alaska, after RCV was approved, there were fewer third-party candidates than ever before.
- “It eliminates runoffs.” No, it eliminates thousands of ballots in every election by discarding them. During a runoff, ALL votes are counted.

The Evidence

Maine, 2018. After a GOP candidate won the majority of votes in the first round, a Democrat was declared the winner. This occurred in subsequent rounds after 8,000 votes became #trashcanballots

New York City, 2021. City council race. 141,000+ ballots (15% of votes cast) were discarded and became #trashcanballots

Sandy, UT, 2021. In a mayoral race in Sandy, Utah, decided by only 21 votes, more than 18 percent of the original ballots (4,000+) in total, were trashed.

Alaska, 2022. In a Congressional election, Republicans were favored by 60% in the first round. A Democrat won after 14,000+ votes became #trashcanballots

Oakland, CA, 2022. School board candidate who came in third then discovered he may have won after the machine was incorrectly programmed for multiple rounds of RCV ballot tabulation. The winner was finally determined by a judge.

Arlington, VA, 2023. After RCV made a complete mess of a local election in 2023, Arlington, VA scrapped RCV for use in its election.

Confusing? You bet.

Standard Voting Ballot *How Voting Works in Most States*

<p>INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS:</p> <p>To vote for a person whose name is printed on the ballot, fill in the oval <input checked="" type="radio"/> to the right of the name of that person.</p> <p>To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write or stick his or her name in the blank space provided and fill in the oval <input checked="" type="radio"/> to the right of the write-in line.</p>	For United States President and Vice President <i>(vote for one)</i>	
	<input type="radio"/> Candidate #1	Democrat
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Candidate #2	Republican
	<input type="radio"/> Candidate #3	Libertarian
	<input type="radio"/> Candidate #4	

Ranked-Choice Voting Ballot *Instant Run-Off Voting*

<p>INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS:</p> <p>To vote, fill in the oval like this <input checked="" type="radio"/></p> <p>To rank your candidate choices, fill in the oval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 1st column for your 1st choice candidate. • In the 2nd column for your 2nd choice candidate, and so on. <p>Continue until you have ranked as many or as few candidates as you like.</p> <p>Fill in no more than one oval for each candidate or column.</p> <p>To rank a write-in candidate, write the person's name in the write-in space and fill in the oval for the ranking of your choice.</p>	United State President and Vice President		1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice	6th Choice	7th Choice
	Candidate #1	Democrat	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate #2	Republican	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate #3	Libertarian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate #4	Green	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate #5	Socialism/Libertarian	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate #6	Socialist Workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Write-in		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Talking Points

#trashcanballots

#RiggedChoiceVoting

#RankedChoiceVictims

#ReallyConfusedVoters

#Turning election offices into ejection offices

RCV helps winners lose elections

RCV helps losers win elections

RCV “exhausts” everyone: ballots, voters, officials

That one time “your” candidate may have prevailed does not make RCV a good idea

If the voter can’t figure it out, the election office may not be able to either

Massive opportunity for fraudulent manipulation or human error

The effort is funded by the usual left-leaning, progressive, anti-election integrity groups and individuals

The Solution

RCV cannot be fixed, changed, amended, or altered to make it an accurate, “easy to vote” method of voting that makes elections more effective and voters more confident. The only option is to ban it outright. Utilizing the SAVE Act sample model legislation from ALEC is a simple way to ensure that this anti-election integrity and anti-voter procedure is never implemented at either the state or local level.

Utilizing X to amplify the Hard No to RCV message:

- ★ Election Integrity Network: @EIWatchdogs
- ★ Honest Elections Project: @honestelections
- ★ Stop RCV: @Stop_RCV
- ★ Keep Voting Simple: @keepvotingsimple
- ★ Ranked Choice Education Foundation: @RankedchoiceEdu

