

Why a Resolution on Ranked-Choice Voting?

- Fairfax GOP Resolutions on Election Integrity ARE EFFECTIVE: They're models for other counties.
- The February 2022 Resolution on Election Integrity helped build support for several bills that passed the Republican House of Delegates: photo ID for voting, end of same day registration, and many other good reforms. But the Democrat Senate killed them – just as the Democrat Senate killed so many Republican-sponsored bills this year.
- That's why we have to win the Senate and keep the House in November 2023. We need to replace the bad laws passed by the Democrats in the last decade.
- Tonight, we're sharing information about the Democrat campaign to impose Ranked Choice Voting across Virginia and the USA. We want you to have a chance to think about it.
- In March, we'll propose a resolution opposing Ranked Choice Voting and to repeal the current law permitting its use for supervisor and town council races. Our resolution can act as a model for legislation to be introduced for the 2024 legislative session.
- Help our Senate and House of Delegate candidates win this year – and we can pass every one of these bills in 2024!

Current Code Allowing RCV in Virginia

In 2020, the Democrat-controlled VA House and Senate passed [HB 1103 \(Ranked Choice Voting; Elections for Local Governing Bodies, Local Option Pilot Program\)](#) which allows localities to use RCV for local races such as Board of Supervisors, School Board, etc.

Specifically, it provides that elections for local governing bodies may be conducted by ranked choice voting, which the bill defines as the method of casting and tabulating votes in which

- (i) voters rank candidates in order of preference,
- (ii) tabulation proceeds in rounds such that in each round either a candidate or candidates are elected or the last-place candidate is defeated,
- (iii) votes for voters' next-ranked candidates are transferred from elected or defeated candidates, and
- (iv) tabulation ends when the number of candidates elected equals the number of offices to be filled. The bill allows any local governing body to decide to conduct such election by ranked choice voting and requires any such decision to be made in consultation with the local electoral board and general registrar and by a majority vote of the governing body.

The bill authorizes the State Board of Elections to promulgate regulations for the proper and efficient administration of elections determined by ranked choice voting.

The bill provides that **any costs incurred by the Department of Elections related to technological changes necessary for the implementation of ranked choice voting pursuant to the bill shall be charged to the localities** exercising the option to proceed with ranked choice voting.

The bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2021, and sunsets on July 1, 2031.

*The relevant VA Code is 24.2-673.1

Ranked-Choice Voting & False Claims

RCV, also known as “**Instant Runoff Voting**,” requires voters to **rank** all candidates in a race (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) in order of preference, rather than just pick their favorite candidate.

Proponents claim that RCV:

- Is easy and “common-sense” to use.
- Requires winners to earn majority support.
- Helps form a consensus.
- Discourages negative campaigning.
- Protects Coalitions & reduces the “spoiler effect” of similar candidates splitting a set of voters.
- Allows voters to vote for less popular candidates without “wasting” their votes.
- May encourage new candidates to run for office.
- Saves time and money.
- Can help women and people of color win elected office.
- Is the same as current “run-off elections” & eliminates the need for runoffs.
- Tallying logic (and the process) is simple.
- Allows your vote to count for your next ranked choice if your first choice is eliminated.
- Is now a well-established forum.
- Is understood and liked by voters who have used it.
- Works at any scale (in both large and small communities); (for any number of candidates)

RCV Reality Check

- RCV equals **FORCED-CHOICE VOTING**
- RCV challenges the “one-person, one-vote” American Democratic system.
- With RCV, every vote does **not** always count.
- Exhausted ballots in RCV races are thrown out which silences the voice of significant portions of the electorate.
- RCV changes the election counting process and threatens accurate ballot counting.
- RCV is **not** the same as current “run-off elections.”
- RCV ballots are more complex and confusing.
- Voters are more likely to encounter “ballot exhaustion” when completing RCV ballots.
- RCV diminishes voter confidence, and Districts using RCV have lower voter turnout rates.
- RCV is **not** consensus-building and may enhance the “spoiler effect.”
- Voter education about RCV is extremely costly.
- Necessary changes to voting machines and equipment for RCV are extremely costly.
- Having to purchase new voting machines and equipment for RCV is extremely costly.
- RCV does **not** reduce or diminish “partisanship.”
- No voting system (including RCV) can claim to “ensure” women and minorities get elected, nor should they.
- RCV does **not** reduce negative campaigning.
- RCV is **not** understood and liked by voters who have used it.
- RCV may **not** require winners to earn majority support.

According to the Heritage Foundation:

- “Ranked choice voting is a **scheme** to **disconnect elections from issues** and allow candidates with marginal support from voters to win.”
- “It **obscures true debates** and **issue-driven dialogs** among candidates and **eliminates genuine binary choices** between two top-tier candidates.”
- “It also **disenfranchises voters**, because ballots that do not include the two ultimate finalists are cast aside to **manufacture a faux majority** for the winner.”
- “In the end, it is **all about political power**, not about what is best for the American people and for preserving our great republic.”
- “So-called **reformers want to change process rules** so they can **manipulate election outcomes** to **obtain power**.”

RNC Resolution Opposing RCV

Thanks to **Patti Lyman**, our Republican National Committee Woman from Virginia, the RNC passed a Resolution in January opposing Ranked-Choice Voting nationwide.

“RESOLVED, That the Republican National Committee rejects ranked choice voting and similar schemes that increase election distrust, and voter suppression and disenfranchisement, eliminate the historic political party system, and put elections in the hands of expensive election schemes that cost taxpayers and depend exclusively on confusing technology and unelected bureaucrats to manage it;

and RESOLVED, That the Republican National Committee calls on Congress, state legislatures, and voters to oppose ranked choice voting in every locality and level of government and return elections to easier systems that have worked for centuries for fair and transparent elections.”

2023 Legislative Proposals in Virginia

- **HB 1751 – Davis:** Allows ranked choice voting to be used in any state-run primary election at the option of the political party for which the primary is being held, etc.
- **HB 2118 – Hudson:** Local or constitutional office; elections allowed to be conducted by ranked choice voting.
- **HB 2301 – Bloxom:** Presidential primaries; ranked choice voting. (Same as SB 1380)
- **HB 2436 – Hudson:** Primaries for federal, statewide, and General Assembly offices; ranked choice voting.
- **SB 1380 – Deeds:** Presidential primaries; ranked choice voting. (Same as HB 2301)

****ALL of these FAILED, but only because Virginia’s existing election machines & software is unable to fully accommodate RCV.***