



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 23, 2023

Mr. Timothy G. Sekerak
Chief Clerk of the House
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Vote Explanation on HB 2004A per House Rule 3.35

Dear Mr. Chief Clerk,

I voted “no” on HB 2004A because I believe ranked-choice voting will lead to confusion and perplexity in our elections. If enacted, HB 2004A will lead to diminishing of trust among Oregon voters and sow further doubt about our election process.

At a time when we are facing increasing mistrust in our election systems, I believe it is irresponsible to move forward with such a dramatic overhaul of our elections without larger state-wide discussion on a bipartisan basis.

I also question the fact that under HB 2004A, ranked-choice voting will only apply to the offices of President, Vice President, Governor, and congressional representatives, among others. It will, however, not apply to elections for State Representatives and State Senators. This will undoubtedly create even more confusion among voters and will most certainly result in an increased number of spoiled ballots as we elect all our candidates using a single-page ballot.

On top of these concerns, I worry that, if enacted, our election campaigns will no longer be a marketplace for a genuine exchange of free ideas and beliefs about public affairs but will instead become a contest in which no serious policy proposals will be put forward as candidates will aim to appease to “big tent” electorate, hoping that they will not annoy or infuriate some voters. In that case, our elections will become gloomy, gray contests with no significant ideas and policies proposed.

Additionally, Oregon is already facing criticism for slow release of voter results and enacting ranked-choice voting threatens even more delays and increased irregularities. It will also be a significant burden on our elections and county officials that will be required to spend significant time and effort learning new system, while also maintaining the old one for our elections to the State Legislature.

I believe that instituting such a change of election system requires a diligent bipartisan effort that we currently lack. In addition, due to the controversy and scandal surrounding the office of Secretary of State, it is my belief that Oregon is currently in no capacity to successfully implement and rollout such a system – even in 2026 or 2027.

Oregon also lacks experience and precedent with ranked-choice voting in our history. Oregon has utilized the first-past-the-post system ever since it became a part of the Union in 1859. In the United States, only Maine and Alaska use ranked-choice voting on a statewide level.

For these reasons stated above, I voted “no.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Boomer Wright". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Boomer Wright
Member
Oregon House of Representatives