

February 1, 2024
Bill number SB 368
Opponent
Nicholas Simpson
Self

Chairman Thompson and Distinguished members of the Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee,

My name is Nichola Simpson and I am a registered Republican in Lawrence, Kansas. I am writing to urge the legislature not to ban ranked-choice voting (RCV) in Kansas. Recently there has been a partisan lens toward RCV, but it is not a partisan issue. Republicans used ranked-choice voting to nominate Glenn Youngkin, and he went on to win the governorship in Virginia, flipping a seat that had been Democratic since 2014. We could have similar results here in Kansas.

I know there are electoral reform efforts in the legislature since Governor Kelly won another election without winning a majority of the vote. Although increasing the number of ballot signatures for an independent to get on the ballot may help, well-funded independents could easily get on the ballot. Ranked-choice voting would allow independent voters to rank the Republican candidate second, so they do not waste their vote and elect another Democrat like in 2022. There has also been a push to institute runoff elections instead of ranked-choice voting, but runoff elections in Georgia have gone to Democrats three elections in a row after steep turnout drops, and we might see a similar Democratic turnout bias here in Kansas under that system.

I agree that our electoral system in Kansas should represent the majority of Kansans, and that is why I believe banning ranked-choice voting is not the best option at this time. The other electoral reform alternatives can be bypassed with campaign cash and could lead to more Democratic governors. RCV is not partisan. Utah's Republican governor has found a lot of success with his local options ranked-choice voting bill. Youngkin had a stunning upset in an otherwise blue state because Republican voters did not have to split their vote in the primary. RCV leads to stronger candidates and prevents spoiler candidates from tossing the election to Democrats.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I urge you not to ban ranked-choice voting in Kansas.

Best,
Nick Simpson