

Presentation to House State Affairs Committee

March 28, 2023

Benefits

- Fewer barriers to entry for citizen legislature.
- Increases competition in the general election, where more voters participate.
- Gives all voters a voice in selecting candidates.
- A candidate needs broad support to win.
 - ✓ Encourages candidates to talk to a larger percentage of their constituency.
 - ✓ Elects representatives that are more accountable to their constituents.

Benefits

- Allows candidates with similar ideologies to compete in the same election without splitting the vote and letting a less popular candidate win with a plurality.
- ✓ Allows Alaskans to vote their heart without fear of contributing to their least favorite candidate getting elected.
- ✓ More choice for voters at the higher turnout general election.
- ✓ Government reflects the electorate.

What changed in 2022?

All statewide elections now follow the same, two-step process:

STEP 1: Nonpartisan/Open Primary.

- All candidates appear on the same ballot; all voters get to choose among all candidates; top four vote-getters move to General.
- Unaffiliated voters don't have to choose a ballot and limit their choices – 58% of Alaskans are not affiliated with a party.
- The most competitive candidates advance.

What changed in 2022?

STEP 2: Ranked Choice Voting General Election.

- Voters rank candidates in order of preference.
- If a candidate receives a majority (50%+1 vote) of first-choice votes, they win.
- If not, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and voters who ranked that candidate as their 1st choice have their vote counted for their next choice.
- This process continues until two candidates are left and the one with the most votes wins.

Alaskans Understand RCV

In the first RCV election in August:

- 99.83% of ballots were correctly filled out.
- 73% of voters ranked at least two candidates.

In the November election:

- Statewide average, 99.94% of ballots were correctly filled out.
- Voters were more likely to rank:
 - ✓ In competitive races;
 - ✓ In races with multiple candidates; and
 - ✓ When their first choice wasn't favored to win.

2022 Alaska Elections – Successes

- RCV didn't favor one party over another: in the three statewide races, incumbents were favored but the winners represented different points on the political spectrum.
- More choice for voters: larger, more diverse candidate pool
- Vote-splitting was prevented and candidates had majority support: The three "come from behind" victories show that the system works.
- Alaskan voters are complex and independent. The system allows them to express that.



Questions?

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