



RANKED CHOICE VOTING IN UTAH CITIES

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In 2018, the Utah legislature passed HB 35 that established a pilot in which cities can use ranked choice voting (RCV). It passed 22-0 in the senate; 67-3 in the House; then Governor Herbert signed it into law in March 2018.

In 2019, Payson City and Vineyard City used ranked choice voting in city elections. In a post election survey administered by the Utah County Clerk, 86% of respondents found RCV easy to use and 82.5% want RCV used in future elections. 71.2% of Payson voters ranked all five candidates on the ballot and 58.6% of Vineyard voters ranked all seven candidates on the ballot. 87.5% of candidates had a positive impression of RCV with no candidates having a negative impression. 75% of candidates think their city should continue using RCV with no candidates opposing it.

In 2020, the Utah Republican Party and Utah Democratic Party used RCV in their state conventions and some county conventions. The Utah Republican Party surveyed delegates and over 1,100 of 3,700 delegates responded. 72% not only liked ranked choice voting, but want to use it again to nominate candidates.

WHAT IS RANKED CHOICE VOTING?

Ranked choice voting (also known as instant runoff voting) has voters rank their choices, first, second, third and so on. If someone wins over 50% during the first round, that's your winner. But if no one crosses that threshold, the last place finisher is eliminated, and that candidate's supporters are reallocated to their next backup choice. That process is repeated until someone wins over 50% of the votes.

RANKED CHOICE VOTING & MAJORITY RULE

In 2020, Utah is having an important conversation about our elections. With multiple paths to the primary ballot, four Republican candidates faced off for Governor. The winner received 35% of all votes. The Republican nominee for Utah's 1st Congressional District received 31%, and the 4th District GOP winner received 43.5%. Unlike the current process, ranked choice voting would ensure that a winning candidate receives a majority.

MERITS OF RANKED CHOICE

Encourages Civility

Candidates conduct more civil campaigns by addressing the issues and working to appeal to a broader spectrum of voters when they actively seeking second and third choice support from backers of other candidates.

More Robust Debate Of Issues

To win a ranked choice voting election, a candidate reaches out to all voters in order to see first, second and third choice support. Candidates talk about issues; not only their issues, but their opponent's issues as well.

More Engaged Voters

Voters become more informed about the candidates and issues since they have reasons to consider candidates beyond their 1st choice.

Voters More Fully Express Their Will

Ranking their choices, voters can freely vote for the candidate who they most support, even if that candidate isn't favored to win. There are no wasted votes.

Fiscal Savings For Cities

Taxpayers' dollars are saved by allowing the city to hold one election in November rather than two elections.

Shorter, Less Expensive City Campaigns

Candidates can focus on a single election in November, rather than an August primary followed by November election.

Ready For Cities To Implement

Voting equipment and software used in elections throughout Utah are fully ranked choice voting ready. Cities have until April 15th 2021 to declare their intent to use RCV.

Eliminates Vote Splitting

Longshot candidates do not win when more than one mainstream candidate split the majority of the vote.

Ends Spoiler Effect

Longshot candidates don't draw votes away from a candidate who is preferred by most voters.

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