

Welch introduces Ranked Choice Voting Act

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Legislation would require ranked choice voting for all congressional primary and general elections, giving voters more meaningful choices at the ballot box.

Vermont Business Magazine U.S. Senator Peter Welch (D-Vermont), a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and U.S. Representative Jamie Raskin (D-MD-08), Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability and U.S. Representative Don Beyer (D-VA-08), today introduced the bicameral *Ranked Choice Voting Act*, legislation to bring ranked choice voting to U.S. congressional elections across America. The bill would require ranked choice voting in all congressional primary and general elections starting in 2028, allowing voters to express support for multiple candidates for public office, with the candidate receiving the most votes declared the winner.

Representatives Dan Goldman (D-NY-10), Derek Kilmer (D-WA-06), Barbara Lee (D-CA-12), Seth Moulton (D-MA-06) and Scott Peters (D-CA-50) cosponsored the bill in the House.

“Our democracy is at its strongest when everyone is heard and represented. Ranked choice voting offers an opportunity to break through polarization and strengthen our democracy by ensuring that our elected candidates have received the broad support of the folks they’ll represent,” said Senator Welch. “This pro-democracy bill will make our elections more equitable, more civil, and more representative.”

“Ranked choice voting focuses American elections and campaigns on coalition-building,” said Rep. Raskin. “Our legislation incentivizes candidates to reach a broader range of the voting public, making our electoral process more democratic, more positive, more efficient and more representative—and our Congress too.”

“In an increasingly polarized Congress, it’s become ever more difficult to produce pragmatic legislation and solutions that benefit the American people,” said Rep. Beyer. “By implementing ranked choice voting, which ensures that winners are elected with majority popular support, we can encourage the election of leaders who build broad and diverse coalitions and are focused on solutions rather than divisive rhetoric. This would increase voter satisfaction and be a great win for a healthier democracy.”

With ranked choice voting, voters rank candidates in order of choice. If a candidate receives more than half of the first choices, that candidate wins, just like in any election. If not, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and voters who picked that candidate as ‘number 1’ have their votes redistributed and counted for their next favored choice. This process continues until a candidate wins with more than half the votes.

Voting and elections experts observe that ranked choice voting can help foster political goodwill in a polarized, partisan environment. States like Maine and Alaska already successfully implemented ranked choice voting in congressional races, and many other states have ranked choice voting legislation under consideration.

“Ranked choice voting is the fastest-growing election reform in the nation because it works,” said Meredith Sumpter, President and CEO of FairVote, a nonpartisan organization seeking better elections. “RCV fixes the ‘spoiler problem’ and ensures winning candidates represent the majority of voters—without the need for expensive, low-turnout runoffs. Everywhere it’s used, voters have embraced RCV and the better choices, better campaigns, and better governance that it delivers. The *Ranked Choice Voting Act* will give every voter the freedom to make their voice truly heard in Washington.”

“We appreciate Representative Raskin’s strong leadership on this important election reform aimed at expanding voter choices and increasing voter participation in elections,” said Jon Golinger, Democracy

Advocate, Public Citizen. “Given the unprecedented threats to the integrity of our elections, we need to work harder than ever to advance bold reforms that strengthen American democracy.”

“We are in the midst of a crisis in democracy,” said Debra Perlin, Policy Director, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW). “Rep. Raskin and Senator Welch’s *Ranked Choice Voting Act* is welcomed democracy reform legislation aimed at decreasing political polarization and increasing the power of communities to elect candidates that truly represent their needs. Preliminary studies show that by giving voters more choices, along with voter education and assistance, ranked choice voting increases the electoral viability of community-based candidates and expands access to the ballot for all voters, including voters of color. We call on Congress to pass the *Ranked Choice Voting Act* in order to build towards a more inclusive democracy, where politicians are more accountable to their constituents and focus on the issues that matter to the people they serve.”

“The *Ranked Choice Voting Act* would help make our democracy fairer and more representative because it gives voters more choice and enables the election of candidates who have broader support in their community,” said Trevor Potter, Founder and President, Campaign Legal Center. “Ranked choice voting is proven to increase voter turnout and leads to a more diverse array of candidates. Additionally, ranked choice voting gives the public the opportunity to vote for their preferred candidate, regardless of party, without fear of wasting their vote or ‘spoiling’ the election. CLC fully endorses the *Ranked Choice Voting Act* and encourages Congress to pass it.”

National Organizations – American Sustainable Business Council Business for Democracy, Campaign Legal Center, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), Divided We Fall, FairVote Action, National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, People Power United, Public Citizen, Rank the Vote, RepresentUs, RepresentWomen, Secure Elections Network, Third Way, Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice and the United Church of Christ.

State and Local Organizations – Better Ballot Arizona, Better Ballot Georgia, Better Ballot North Carolina, Better Ballot SC, Cal RCV, Clean Elections Texas, Connecticut Voters First, Electoral Innovation Lab, Equal Justice Society, FairVote Illinois, Fair Vote Washington, Fix Democracy First, Get Money Out – Maryland, MassVOTE, NH Ranked Choice Voting, Ocean State RCV, Rank My Vote Florida, Rank the Vote Kentucky, Rank the Vote Ohio, Ranked Choice Boston, Ranked Choice Voting Maryland, Represent.Us of New Jersey, RoxVOTE Coalition, SC Small Business Chamber of Commerce, UpVote Virginia, Vote Nevada, Voter Choice Arizona, Voter Choice MA and Voter Choice New Jersey.

[Learn more](#) about the *Ranked Choice Voting Act*.

Read a [section-by-section summary](#) of the bill.

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