

Steven Sepe

From: Evelyn Sterne <sterne@uri.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 8:06 PM
To: House State Government and Elections Committee
Subject: Support H-2575 and H-2576

Dear Chairman Shanley,

My name is Evelyn Sterne and I am a resident of Newport. I am writing to you as a member of the House State Government and Elections Committee to express my strong support of H-2575 and H-2576.

I am in support of H-2575 and H-2576 because I have read extensively about ranked choice voting over the last few years and am convinced it is a **nonpartisan reform that would increase voter choice and engagement**. Specifically:

Because both major parties will have competitive, wide-open presidential primary fields in 2028, using ranked choice voting will help them nominate consensus candidates and head into the general election united instead of divided after a contentious primary.

Ranked choice voting prevents wasted votes. According to FairVote research, 9,273 Rhode Islanders cast “zombie votes” – votes for candidates who dropped out between when they turned in their mail ballots and the day of the primary – in the 2016 and 2020 presidential primaries. (This is also what happened with Don Carlson’s supporters in the 2023 CD-1 special primary.) With RCV, those voters would have had their votes counted for their next choices instead of thrown out.

Switching to ranked choice voting is associated with increases in voter turnout and representation for women and people of color. Building a stronger democracy means making sure that all voices are fairly represented. And polls consistently show that over 90% of voters of all demographics find it easy to understand how the system works – it helps reduce inequities instead of reinforcing them.

Using RCV in the 2028 presidential primary, which is on its own ballot, gives us an opportunity to test it out without the complications of designing ballots featuring a mix of ranked-choice elections and pick-one races. Passing the bill this year also gives us three years to prepare for our first implementation of the system!

I hope the House State Government and Elections Committee will advance H-2575 and H-2576.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Sterne
Newport, RI

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