



March 24, 2026

Rhode Island State Legislature
House Committee on State Government and Elections
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

House Bills 7788 & 7981, Ranked Choice Voting

Dear State Government and Election Committee Members:

I am testifying on behalf of [RepresentWomen](#) in support of HB 7788 and HB 7981, authorizing the use of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) for Presidential Primaries and municipal elections through a local option approved by voters.

RepresentWomen tracks electoral outcomes for women in jurisdictions with ranked choice voting (RCV). Our overall mission is to increase gender balance in elected office and address the barriers women face in politics. **RCV is a proven strategy that enables more women to seek and win elected office. Women hold 55% of city council seats in jurisdictions with ranked choice voting – almost twice the norm in places without RCV.**

Our research shows that RCV reduces many of the barriers in winner-take-all elections, creating more opportunities for women to run and win. It also encourages more constructive campaigning by incentivizing candidates to seek “rank-me-second” votes from their opponents’ voters, reducing negative attacks and increasing coalition-building. When voters can express their true preferences rather than vote strategically, more women are elected.

Every year, RepresentWomen creates an annual [Gender Parity Index](#) (GPI) where we give each state a grade in accordance with how it is faring in gender parity. In 2025, **Rhode Island received a grade of C** relative to representation. The implementation of RCV can help to move the needle towards a more representative government.



Supporting HB 7788 and HB 7981 affirms Rhode Island's commitment to increasing gender parity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Tamaya Dennard
Programs and Partnerships Manager, RepresentWomen