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Testimony on behalf of: House Bill No. 7788: AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- PRIMARIES FOR ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO NATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND FOR PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE (Establishes the Ranked Choice Voting for Rhode Island Presidential Primaries and provides for new sections on ranked choice voting tabulation and results reporting.)

Why I support this bill:

To the Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Alexandra Curtis, and I am a U.S. Army veteran from Cranston. As someone who took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, I believe deeply in fairness, representation, and the voice of the people. That is why I support the bills that would bring ranked choice voting to Rhode Island's 2028 presidential primary and allow municipalities to use it locally, and why I oppose the bill that would ban ranked choice voting in our state.

During my service, I worked alongside Americans from every background and political point of view. We succeeded by working toward a common goal, even when we disagreed. Our strength as a nation lies in that diversity, and our democracy should reflect it.

Ranked choice voting gives voters a more honest and meaningful say. It allows people to support the candidate they truly believe in without fear that their vote will be wasted. In crowded elections, especially presidential primaries, that matters. No voter should feel forced into choosing the "lesser of two evils" just to guard against a spoiler effect.

RCV also encourages candidates to appeal to a broader base and build trust beyond their most loyal supporters. That leads to more respectful campaigns, broader coalitions, and winners with stronger support. Those are values that matter in public service and in a healthy democracy.

I also strongly support giving Rhode Island communities the freedom to adopt RCV locally if they choose. Local voters should be able to decide how to improve their own elections. A statewide ban would do the opposite. It would take choice away from Rhode Islanders and block communities from pursuing a reform that can make elections more inclusive and representative.

As a veteran, I know every person's contribution matters. Our election system should honor that same principle. Ranked choice voting is a practical step toward a more representative democracy where every voter has a stronger voice.

I respectfully urge you to advance the pro-RCV bills and reject any effort to ban ranked choice voting in Rhode Island.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alexandra Curtis

U.S. Army Veteran