

Name: Paul Klinkman

Email: psychware@yahoo.com

Residency: RI residents for 59 and 32 years, employed by Pawtucket School Department, politically active in RI on this issue

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:

Dear Committee Members,

The two of us just moved into Southern New England's first available senior housing apartment, which happened to be in Somerset. However, Paul has lived in Rhode Island for 59 years and Liberty for 32 years. Paul still works for the Pawtucket School Department and Liberty still collects signatures for Ocean State Ranked Choice Voting at the Hope Street Farmers Market.

Ranked choice voting has a long history. It has been shown to regularly improve the functioning of governments. It also has a long, constant history of being opposed by deep-pocketed grafters who would rather pay to loot any particular government for its easy money, versus going out in the marketplace with a better product at a better price. I'm perfectly willing to recognize this "flaw" in RCV. However, the vast majority of Americans on both parties object to unlimited campaign spending. The voters also usually object to gerrymandering and various vote suppression schemes.

We can change the way we select the presidents.

The single vote plurality system that we have used in Rhode Island and throughout the US is an outdated system. Its fatal flaw is that in a crowded field, a candidate can win the Rhode Island presidential primary with the support of only a small percentage of voters.

After Buddy Cianci's first felony conviction where he used an on-duty cop to help him torture a man for two hours, he ran for Providence mayor as an independent. He split the vote perfectly in a three-way race, 35% to 35% to 30%, and he won. He most likely wasn't anybody's second choice so he probably wouldn't have won in an RCV election. Then, Operation Plunderdome proved to a judge and jury that Cianci was looting the city again. This time Cianci got 64 months in prison for racketeering conspiracy and the city was left with a terrible credit rating. That's why we need to reduce the chances that potentially extremist candidates can sneak into office with less than 50% of the vote.

I admire the courage of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin and others in creating a brand new democratic system out of whole cloth 250 years ago. However, Britain itself and most British colonies have since moved on to more workable democratic systems. So have several other states. Why not us, now?

I ask you to please support House bills 5275 and 5276.

Thank you for your time and your public service.

Yours truly,

Paul Klinkman

J. Liberty Goodwin