

April 5, 2026

Dear Chairman LaMountain and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing today in support of Senate Bill 2951 because I believe it is my duty, as well as yours, to monitor our governmental systems and call for change when those systems can be improved to better serve the people of our state.

My top three reasons for allowing municipalities a choice to use RCV are as follows: 1. RCV increases voter turnout. 2. RCV saves municipalities money by eliminating costly run-off elections. 3. RCV is more fair and more reflective of the voting district, city or town than our current system.

In addition to the above, and because opponents often say RCV is too complicated for voters, I'd like to share a story with you. I taught 5th grade for 10 years. One year I decided to recycle juice pouches as a class project. At the end of every week, my students collected empty juice pouches from receptacles placed around the school, boxed them up and sent them off to Capri Sun for a return deposit. Capri Sun sent us a check at the end of the year, and we then had to decide where to donate the money. I asked every child to suggest a charity. I had 26 students, and we ended up with somewhere around 9 suggestions. I placed each suggestion on a ballot, and each child numbered them in order of preference. We then tallied the votes on the white board and began eliminating the lowest vote getters and reassigning the next choices and so on. My students made the suggestions as we eliminated the lowest ranked choices, assigned 2nd, 3rd choices and so on and tallied our votes to find the top winner. At the time, I didn't know that what I was doing was a form of Ranked Choice Voting. In the end, some of my students were sad that their top choice wasn't selected, however, there were no tears because everyone had a choice and a voice. If fifth graders can understand RCV, then public comprehension of RCV is an attainable goal.

Please support Senate Bill 2951 to improve our local elections.

Sincerely,

Sherri Simmons

Pawtucket

Cc: Senator Meghan Kallman