

ANC 1C Resolution on Ranked Choice Voting

Whereas, ANC1C believes it is in the best interest in the community to support Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) throughout the District, for primary and general elections; and

Whereas, this bill aligns our local voting method with our values of freedom, cultural innovation, meaningful representation, and racial equity; and

Whereas, Ranked choice voting (RCV) is currently used in more than 15 cities, the state of Maine, and many university and organization elections. It is also used in numerous national, state and local governmental elections around the world; and

Whereas, residents deserve a voting system where candidates for office are encouraged to build coalitions and strengthen communities instead of sowing division; and

Whereas, [A 2019 study by Eamon McGinn of the University of Technology Sydney](#) finds that ranked choice voting caused a 9.6 percentage point increase in voter turnout in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. The effect on turnout is higher for precincts with higher poverty rates; and

Whereas, moving away from empty speculation about “electability” allows voters to vote based on candidate values, platform, and character and voters are free to vote for whom they really want; and

Whereas, it is absolutely crucial that voters understand how to interact with a ranked ballot, understand their electoral system, and are able to cast a meaningful vote for a candidate of their choice; and

Whereas, [A 2020 study by Jason Maloy of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette](#) finds that ranked ballots and score ballots produced more valid votes than traditional choose-one ballots. Additionally, ranked ballots were associated with smaller discrepancies in error-proneness according to race and gender; and

Whereas, studies also show no adverse effects on low-information voters or voter turnout. People understand and appreciate the option to rank their preferences, a natural way of increasing choice in our politics; and

Whereas, Maine used RCV for the first time for statewide elections in 2018. An exit poll after their November 2018 general election showed 60.9% of respondents in favor of keeping RCV or expanding use of RCV.

Whereas, we should be encouraging candidates of all backgrounds to run with integrity and to build broad coalitions; and

Whereas, [A 2018 paper by Sarah John, Haley Smith, and Elizabeth Zack](#) shows that California cities which adopted RCV saw an increase in the percentage of candidates of color running for office, and increases in the probability of female candidates and female candidates of color winning office; and

Whereas, a key reason we need RCV is that our current system often elects winners with less than majority support, or less than 50% of the votes, especially in our DC at-large elections; and

Whereas, the re-election of Councilmember Robert White and election of Councilmember-elect Christina Henderson was won by 25.82% and 15.07% respectively, with 273,668 votes; and

Whereas, RCV makes sure that every voice gets represented in our elections, and that the winner has majority support from their constituents; and

Therefore, be it resolved, ANC 1C request that the DC Councilmembers re-introduce the Ranked Choice Voting Act and hold public hearings; and

Be it further resolved, ANC 1C requests that Mayor Muriel Bowser support the Ranked Choice Voting Act and work with the DC Board of Elections to inform the general public on this potential voting change.