



Ranked Choice Voting for Texas Primary Elections

Background:

As we increasingly see primary elections with many candidates on the ballot, our current method of voting often produces a nominee without broad support. Where used, Ranked Choice Voting (also known as Instant Runoff Voting) allows voters to cast meaningful votes that produce a broadly supported nominee worthy of representing the party in the general election. It also avoids the time and expense of runoff elections.

Ranked Choice Voting eliminates the possibility of wasted votes for Early or Mail-in voters if candidates drop out before Election Day as was seen in the Democratic primary on Super Tuesday in 2020.

Ranked Choice Voting was used successfully in four state Democratic primaries and in Nevada's Democratic Party caucuses for the 2020 presidential race. It has been used both for Republican Party (e.g. Utah, Virginia) and Democratic Party (e.g. Texas) conventions for their internal elections.

Solution:

Adopt Ranked Choice Voting for all state and federal primary elections.

Instant runoff voting solves several problems:

- **Reduces costs** for election administrators and for candidates by eliminating the need for runoff elections.
- **Political parties learn more** about multiple issues important to voters since politics is multidimensional.
- Ensures that **participation does not drop off** between the general election and the runoff.
- **Provides more choice** as more candidates can compete without fear of splitting the vote among similar candidates resulting in the election of someone who the majority does not support.
- **Candidates win with broader support** as they work to attract voters for whom they may not be their first choice.
- **Frees voters to vote their true preference** without fear of wasting their vote in order to keep a candidate they like least from winning.
- **Increases turnout** as more voters cast ballots because they feel their vote is more effective.
- **Reduces negative campaigning** since candidates have reason to be more civil and issue focused as they seek to gain second or third place votes.
- **Ensures that votes count** if people vote early or by mail even if some candidates drop out before election day.

Instant Runoff Voting for Texas primary elections can be implemented by a legislative change to the Texas Election Code.