
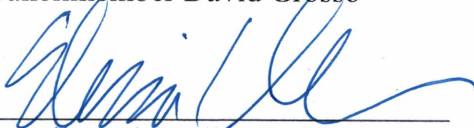


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2 Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau

  
Councilmember David Grosso

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6 Councilmember Mary M. Cheh

  
Councilmember Elissa Silverman

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11 A BILL  
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15 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
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20 To require that candidates to public office be elected using ranked choice voting, to require that  
21 District of Columbia voting systems be compatible with a ranked choice ballot system,  
22 and to set a date and conditions for implementation of ranked choice voting in the  
23 District.

24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this  
25 act may be cited as the "Ranked Choice Voting Act of 2019".  
26

27 Sec. 2. Definitions.

28 For the purposes of this act, the term:

29 (1) "Continuing ballot" means a ballot that is not deemed an exhausted ballot after  
30 a round of vote counting.

31 (2) "Continuing candidate" means a candidate who has not been eliminated after a  
32 round of vote counting.

33 (3) "Exhausted ballot" means a ballot that does not rank any continuing candidate,  
34 contains an overvote at the highest continuing ranking, or contains two or more sequential  
35 skipped rankings before its highest continuing ranking.

36 (4) "Ranked choice voting," means a method of casting and tabulating votes  
37 whereby the voters rank candidates according to the order of their choice and whereby vote  
38 counting proceeds in rounds in which candidates are eliminated. In every round, each ballot is  
39 counted as one vote for the highest ranked advancing candidate.

40 Sec. 3. Ranked Choice Voting.

41 (a) In each primary and general election for Mayor, Attorney General, Chairman of the  
42 Council, members of the Council, and members of the State Board of Education, candidates shall  
43 be elected using a ranked choice ballot in a manner consistent with ranked choice voting.

44 (b)(1) The ballot shall allow voters to rank candidates in order of preference equal to the  
45 total number of candidates for each office; provided, that if the voting system, vote tabulation  
46 system, or similar or related equipment used by the District cannot feasibly accommodate  
47 choices equal to the total number of candidates running for office, then the Board of Elections  
48 may limit the number of choices a voter may rank to no fewer than three.

49 (2) The ballot shall allow voters to rank a write-in candidate; provided, that a  
50 voter may include no more than one write-in candidate among that voter's ranked choices for  
51 each office.

52 (c) When only one candidate may be elected to the office, tabulation of ballots shall  
53 proceed in rounds according to the following procedure:

54 (1) In each round of vote counting, each continuing ballot must be counted as one  
55 vote for its highest ranked continuing candidate.

56 (2) If more than 2 continuing candidates receive votes in a round, the candidate  
57 with the fewest votes is eliminated, and a new round begins.

58 (3) If 2 or fewer continuing candidates receive votes in a round, the candidate  
59 with the most votes is elected.

60 (d) When more than one candidate may be elected to an office, tabulation proceeds of  
61 ballots shall proceed in rounds according to the following procedure:

62 (1) In each round, each continuing ballot must be counted as one vote for its  
63 highest ranked continuing candidate.

64 (2) If the number of continuing candidates is greater than one more than the  
65 number of offices to be elected, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and a new  
66 round begins.

67 (3) If the number of continuing candidates is equal to or less than one more than  
68 the number of offices to be elected, the candidates with the most votes are elected.

69 (e)(1) Optionally, where appropriate, during tabulation of results, two or more candidates  
70 may be eliminated simultaneously by batch elimination.

71 (2) Batch elimination may only occur if, in any vote counting round, there is a  
72 candidate whose vote total plus the vote totals of all candidates with an equal number or fewer  
73 votes is less than the vote total of the candidate with the next higher vote total. Under those  
74 conditions, then that candidate and all candidates with an equal number or fewer votes in the  
75 current round may be simultaneously eliminated.

76 (f) If the ranked choices for candidates indicated on a voter's ballot have been eliminated,  
77 that ballot shall be deemed an exhausted ballot.

78 (g) If a ranked-choice ballot gives equal rank to two or more candidates, the ballot shall  
79 be declared an exhausted ballot when such multiple rankings are reached.

80 (h) A tie between two or more candidates shall be resolved pursuant to The District of  
81 Columbia Election Code of 1955, approved August 12, 1955 (69 Stat. 702; D.C. Official Code §  
82 1-1001.01 et seq.).

83 Sec. 4. Ranked choice voting ballot design.

84 (a) The ballot must be simple and easy to understand and allow a voter to rank candidates  
85 for an office in order of choice.

86 (b) If feasible, ballots must be designed so that a voter may mark that voter's first choices  
87 in the same manner as that for offices not elected by ranked choice voting.

88 (c) Instructions on the ballot must conform substantially to the following specifications,  
89 subject to usability testing and modification based on ballot design and voting machine:

90 "Vote by indicating your first choice candidate and ranking additional candidates in order of  
91 preference. Indicate your first choice by marking the number "1" beside a candidate's name,  
92 your 2nd choice by marking the number "2" beside a candidate's name, your 3rd choice by  
93 marking the number "3" beside a candidate's name and so on. Rank as many choices as you  
94 wish. Indicating 2nd and later preferences will not count against your first choice. Do not skip  
95 numbers, and do not mark the same number beside more than one candidate."

96 Sec 5. Ranked choice voting implementation.

97 (a) Ranked choice voting shall be used for elections beginning in 2022 and all subsequent  
98 elections. If the Board of Elections certifies to the Mayor and the Council no later than  
99 November 1, 2021 that the Board will not be ready to implement ranked-choice balloting in  
100 2022, then the District shall begin using ranked-choice balloting at the immediate next election,  
101 including special elections.

102 (b)(1) The Board of Elections shall conduct a voter education campaign to familiarize  
103 voters with Ranked choice voting starting one year prior to the 2022 general election.

104 (2) Sample ballots illustrating ranked choice voting procedures shall be posted in  
105 or near the voting booth, and shall be included in the instruction packed for absentee ballots.

106 (c) Any voting system, vote tabulation system, or similar or related equipment acquired  
107 by the District shall be capable of administering ranked choice voting by the 2022 primary  
108 election.

109 Sec. 7. Fiscal impact statement.

110 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal  
111 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,  
112 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a)..

113 Sec. 8. Effective date.

114 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the  
115 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of Congressional review as  
116 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December  
117 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of  
118 Columbia Register.