



Local Leaders,

This is our second in a series of emails to elevate some core issues we've been working on. Let us know what you think or if there are any other issues spotlights you'd be interested in.

Let's talk about ranked choice voting. The voting systems we use to elect candidates at the local level can have a huge impact on our democracy and community engagement at the local level. As you all know, it can difficult to turn communities out to vote for local elections.

One way that we are supporting the evolvement of our voting systems at the local level is through ranked choice voting. There is currently a bill moving through the legislature ([HB 1156](#)) that would provide municipalities with the option to enact ranked choice voting in their community.

What is Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)?

If a jurisdiction adopts RCV for their local elections, it means that instead of just picking their top choice candidate, voters could rank their top choices.

For a candidate to win under a RCV system, they must get over 50% of the vote. If no candidate gets over 50% of the vote, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated and their votes are redistributed to the voters' second choice candidates. This ensures a system that more accurately reflects the opinions of the majority of voters.

[Check out this explainer video that also does a great job laying out the process of RCV.](#)

[OR this article published in Crosscut just yesterday that discusses RCV.](#)

Why this matters for your community?

1. *Deeper Voter Engagement* – One of the reasons people don't turn out to vote is because they feel their vote does not matter. With RCV, voters are more likely to see a candidate in office who was among one of their top choices.

2. *More Opportunities for Candidates* – This system also encourages more people to run for office and run on the issues that truly matter to them, like the environment or public health because there is less of a concern of vote splitting.
3. *Better Representation* – RCV increases the chances that candidates whose identities are underrepresented in elected offices can actually win. Even as more womxn, BIPOC candidates, or young people step up to run for office, they are still battling barriers to winning when voters see them as an ideologically good option but not someone who can actually win.

Local Leadership Opportunities

- If [HB 1156 \(championed by Rep. Harris-Talley of the 37th LD\)](#) passes and we are able to see some of you explore the option of RCV in your community. As always, we would love to hear from you on this issue. What would RCV look like in your community or what concerns would you have about enacting it?
- If you would like to voice your support for HB 1156, we encourage you to submit comments [here](#). If you'd like support with your comments we would be happy to work with you.

Coalition Spotlight: Washington For Equitable Representative

Washington Conservation Voters is proud to be a part of the Washington For Equitable Representation Coalition that is advocating hard for the passage of [HB 1156](#) this legislative session.

[Check out the Washington for Equitable Representation website for more resources!](#)



Washington for Equitable Representations Vision is for a just and equitable society where historically marginalized communities have equal opportunity to elect their candidates of choice and achieve equitable representation in government.

We'll continue to share information and resources on critical issues. Let us know what else we can do to be a resource for environmental progress in your community.

Best,
Emily & Danielle

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