Ranked Choice Voting Resolution in Support of Local Control for Non-Partisan Races
Otter Tail County Resolution No. 2019 – 31
April 9, 2019

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner Wayne Johnson, who moved for Otter Tail County to recognize, support and adopt Ranked Choice Voting as a Local Option in ballot design:

WHEREAS, all townships and school districts, 86 of 87 counties, and 85 percent of cities fall under the statutory rule for the conduct of local elections and must ask permission of the Legislature to make changes to these rules; and

WHEREAS, local charter (or home rule) cities that hold elections in even years along with state and federal elections must comply with restrictive state partisan ballot design requirements; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) Local Options bills currently under consideration in the Minnesota Legislature (HF983/SF2424) aim to remove regulatory barriers and extend the authority to adopt Ranked Choice Voting to local statutory jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the RCV Local Options bills provide for the flexibility to efficiently include ranked and non-ranked elections on a single ballot; and

WHEREAS, the RCV local options bills contain no mandates, but simply provides local jurisdictions with the permission and tools they need to consider and implement RCV; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of local jurisdictions are exploring RCV because it potentially provides a range of benefits over our current elections, including:

- Making voting simpler for voters by eliminating the need for local nonpartisan primaries and consolidating two elections into one;
- Demonstrably increasing voter participation;
- Ensuring majority winners in a single election. Voters rank their preferences on the ballot, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and so on. If no candidate receives a majority of first choices, then the least popular candidate is defeated, and their ballots are reassigned to those voters' second choices; and this process is repeated until one candidate receives a majority of continuing ballots;
- Making voting easier for deployed military members and other citizens abroad by requiring one less election for them to receive and return their ballots on time;
- Potentially improving the civility of campaigning; and

WHEREAS, the potential to produce more civil, inclusive, participatory and representative outcomes has considerable merit; and
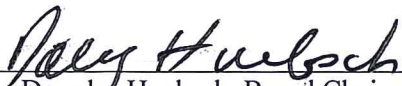
WHEREAS, the RCV Local Options measure is a significant opportunity to improve elections in cities, counties, townships, and school districts throughout the state.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE UNDERSIGNED, we support removing regulatory barriers and giving all local jurisdictions in Minnesota the option to use Ranked Choice Voting if they decide it is right for their communities.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was introduced by Commissioner Wayne Johnson, duly seconded by Commissioner John Lindquist, and, after discussion and commendation thereof and upon vote being taken thereon, the resolution was adopted unanimously.

Adopted at Fergus Falls, Minnesota, this 9th day of April 2019.

OTTER TAIL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: _____
Douglas Huebsch, Board Chair

Dated: _____04/09/19_____

Attest: _____
John Dinsmore, Board Clerk