

May 01, 2024

The Honorable Noah Sanford
Chairman
House Apportionment and Elections Committee
Mississippi State Capitol
400 High Street
Jackson, MS 39201

Dear Chairman Sanford,

In recent years, Mississippi has been at the forefront of the fight to preserve election integrity with the passage of legislation to prevent ballot harvesting, prevent the private funding of elections, and ensure that only U.S. citizens can vote in Mississippi. We write today to urge you to take action to address the next big threat to election integrity and voter confidence: **ranked-choice voting**.

Ranked-choice voting threatens the one-person, one-vote principle on which our elections are based. Under this scheme, voters are expected to rank every candidate on the ballot. If no candidate wins a majority in the first round, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and the people who ranked that candidate first have their second-choice votes redistributed in the next round. This process of elimination and retabulation continues until a candidate is left with a majority of the remaining votes. Wherever it's been tried, this confusing voting scheme has led to thousands of ballots being thrown in the trash, diminished voter confidence, and increased irregularities.

With ranked-choice voting, every vote does not count

In elections with ranked-choice voting, thousands of ballots are trashed to reach a majority. During Alaska's 2022 congressional special election to fill its At-Large District, 15,000 ballots were trashed. During New York City's 2021 Democratic Mayoral Primary, roughly 140,000 ballots were trashed. After this debacle, the head of the New York NAACP referred to ranked-choice voting as "voter suppression."

Ranked-choice voting diminishes voter confidence

Under ranked-choice voting, there is no guarantee that your ballot will be counted in the final round of tabulation unless you rank every candidate on the ballot. Not only is this confusing for the average voter, but it also presents a moral dilemma. To ensure their ballot is counted, voters may be required to cast a vote for a candidate who violates their deeply held beliefs or even cast a vote for their opponent.

Ranked-choice voting threatens fast and accurate ballot counting

Ranked-choice voting requires the central counting of votes and involves a complicated counting process, which leads to slower election results and increased irregularities. The same

2021 Democratic Mayoral Primary in New York City took 15 days to announce a winner, and the 2022 Second Congressional District election in Maine took eight days to announce a winner.

Fifty jurisdictions in the U.S., including Alaska and Maine, currently use ranked-choice voting, and billionaire-funded special interest groups are pushing to implement ranked-choice voting in Mississippi and in other states. Five states, including Tennessee and Florida, have taken proactive steps to protect their elections from ranked-choice voting by legislatively prohibiting it for local, state, and federal elections. We urge you to work to prohibit ranked-choice voting this session to protect Mississippi from this special-interest election scheme that seeks to undermine election integrity.

Sincerely,

Tarren Bragdon
President and CEO
Foundation for Government Accountability

Ken Blackwell
Chairman, Center for Election Integrity
America First Policy Institute

Ashley Hayek
Executive Director
America First Works

Bob Carlstrom
President
AMAC Action

Gina Swoboda
Executive Director
Voter Reference Foundation

Hon. Kenneth T. Cuccinelli, II
National Chairman
Election Transparency Initiative

Cleta Mitchell
Founder
Election Integrity Network

Lynn Taylor
President
Election Integrity Network

Kerri Toloczko
Executive Director
Election Integrity Network

Lisa L. Dixon
Executive Director
Center for Election Confidence

Jason Snead
Executive Director
Honest Elections Project Action

Trent England
Executive Director
Save Our States Action

Jim Womack
President
North Carolina Election Integrity Teams

Carol Davis
Chairman
Illinois Conservative Union

Robyn Sachs
Chair
Maryland Voter Integrity Group

Marc Gitlitz
President
Colorado Institute for Fair Elections

Sara Vieira

Founder

RI Fair Elections and Education

Kathy Harms

Co-Chair

Tennessee Fair Elections

Ellen Gifford

Leadership Team

Volunteer Nevada