

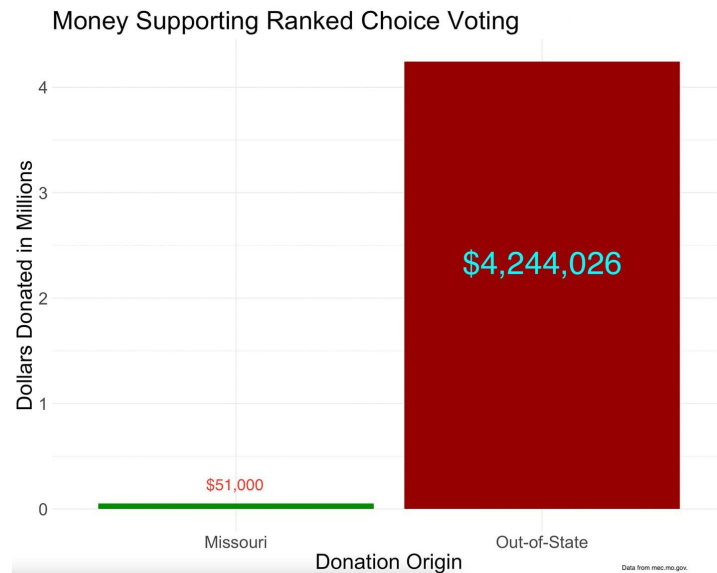
Ranked-Choice Voting Talking Points

About:

- Better Elections is pushing an initiative petition which will be on the November 2022 general election ballot
- The initiative petition seeks to amend Missouri's current populous voting system as laid out in the Missouri Constitution to that of a Top-Four Ranked-Choice Voting System
- To pass in November, the amendment only needs 51% of the total votes

Funding

- 99.9% of Better Elections' funding has come from an organization called Article IV, which is based out of Virginia and D.C.



What the petition does:

- Beginning at the August 2024 primary election, primaries will be made jungle primaries otherwise called open primaries, meaning voters would not have to identify themselves as Democrat or Republican to get a primary ballot, everyone gets the same ballot. This makes it VERY easy for members of opposing political parties to sabotage the nominating processes of those parties.
- In the primary, each voter is allowed to vote for one candidate for each office

- The four candidates for each office with the most votes move on to the general election
 - This allows for multiple candidates from the same party to be on the general election ballot
- In the general election, voters rank their candidate choices 1-4, the voter's favorite candidate is ranked as one, while the least-liked candidate is ranked as four.
- If a candidate receives a majority (50% + 1 vote) of the first choice votes, that candidate wins, just like in a single-choice election.
- If there is no majority winner after counting first choice votes, the race turns into an "instant runoff." The candidate with the fewest first choice votes is eliminated, and voters who picked that candidate as 'number 1' will have their second choice votes then count as their vote.
- Votes are reallocated until there's a majority winner, which can consist of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choice votes.

Offices that would be affected:

- This way of voting would apply to all
 - statewide offices,
 - members of the Missouri General Assembly,
 - and members of the United States Congress
- Ranked-Choice would not affect local elections

Talking Points

- Confusion and delay
 - Voters are expected to vote for multiple candidates and rank them. The current system which is the selection of one candidate, is much more simple, easier, and straightforward
 - Reallocation can take days. If there is no clear majority (50% + 1 vote) winner, the votes are reallocated until there is a majority winner. The election results won't be known the night of the election if this is the case
 - If after reallocation there still is no majority winner, runoff elections take place anyway costing the money which ranked-choice was seeking to prevent in the first place
- Exhaustion/disenfranchise

- Ranked choice destroys clarity of political debate and forces voters to cast ballots in hypothetical future runoff elections
- With so many candidates and options not all voters are going to rank all four candidates on their ballot. Many voters may only list their top two or three candidates, particularly when there are candidates on the ballot for whom they would never even consider voting.
- *Then this happens:* if a voter only ranks two of the four candidates and those two are eliminated in the first and second rounds of tabulation, the voter's choices will not be considered in the remaining rounds of tabulation (because they didn't vote for anyone else). These "unfinished" ballots get thrown out leading to the possibility of the victorious candidate only winning a majority of the ballots that made it to the final round. The winning candidate may not have gotten a majority of the votes at all.
 - This ballot exhaustion eliminates the influence of some of the voters who only voted for a couple candidates instead of all four.
 - This also enables a candidate to win a majority of redistributed votes EVEN if the majority of the ballots have been thrown out due to the lack of a 3rd or 4th choice listed
- On average, **10.92%** of ballots are "exhausted" in ranked-choice voting elections
- **Ranked-choice is a scheme to get a candidate with marginal support a chance to actually win an election**
 - This is possible because Ranked-Choice rigs the system to allow candidates with marginal support to win elections by essentially forcing voters to vote for candidates they would never consider voting for. Otherwise, if the voter does not list more than one or two candidates, it's very possible their ballot will be thrown out and their vote is a wash. To avoid that, the voter **MUST** rank four candidates.
 - Instead of running a desirable candidate, they seek to rig the whole electoral system to give their candidate a chance
- **Examples**
 - In Australia in the 2010 election: the liberal Labor Party initially received 38% of first-place votes while the more right choice, the

Liberal-National coalition received 43% of the first-choice votes. After reallocating votes, the Labor Party won the Australian House.

- Maine in 2018: Maine's Second Congressional District election. The Republican and incumbent, Bruce Poliquin won the most first-choice votes, though not a majority. After reallocation, the Maine Secretary of State threw out 14,076 exhausted ballots in which the voters had not ranked all the options, and the Democrat, Jared Golden was declared as having won the majority of the votes and won the election.
- San Francisco Board of Supervisors, 2010 Election: After multiple rounds of counting, a winner was declared with a majority of 4,321 votes — but, by that time, 9,608 ballots had been discarded due to “exhaustion.” The winner of that election clearly did not get the majority of votes.
- In 2016, Roy Blunt won his Senate seat with 49.2% of the vote. If Missouri was a ranked-choice state at the time, it's likely Jason Kander could have won, and we would have had a Democratic Senator representing Missouri