

Received 3.21.22

Hello!

My name is Mont Chris Hubbard, I use he/him pronouns, I live in NE Portland, and I am the Chair of the Oregon STAR Voting Chapter. I want to tell you why I support STAR Voting over Instant Runoff Voting, commonly known as Ranked Choice Voting.

I have been a voting adult for 21 years, and I would say that in the majority of elections I have voted in, I've been forced to vote for a candidate I didn't believe in, because I wanted to make sure that the worst candidate didn't win. I didn't vote for who I thought the best candidate was. It feels terrible to do this. AND when these good candidates don't get the votes that they should, it makes it seem like they are less popular than they are. It's a vicious cycle—people think they are unelectable, so they don't vote for them, so they seem unelectable. So I bite my lip and vote for the lesser evil. Other people faced with this problem decide not to vote at all. Why bother, when you know it doesn't make a difference? This problem led me to Ranked Choice Voting as a solution, but I learned that Ranked Choice Voting wouldn't solve those problems, and it comes with some new problems of its own. Sure, Ranked Choice Voting lets me vote for my favorite candidate without harm, but only when that candidate has no chance of winning. In a competitive three-way race using Ranked Choice Voting, voting for my preferred candidate can cause my least favorite candidate to win. With Ranked Choice Voting, I will still feel immense pressure to vote for the lesser of two evils. I never want to feel that again.

Moreover, Ranked Choice Voting results are incredibly complicated to understand and to tabulate. You can't start counting the ballots until you have every single ballot in the same location. It's time-consuming, very unsecure, and very difficult to audit. Last summer, New York City used Ranked Choice Voting for their mayoral primary—it took two weeks to get the results! Two weeks! STAR Voting can be tallied across precincts, which makes it more secure and easier to tabulate. The results show the exact level of support for every candidate, which counteracts the electability paradox. It counts my whole ballot, which lets me vote my conscience. And it's easy to use—I am a member of a couple of organizations that use STAR Voting; my union, Local 99 of the American Federation of Musicians, and the Portland chapter of the DSA. Anyone can use it.

I am so excited for Multnomah County to lead the way on this; I am ready to table, to canvas, to knock on as many doors and talk to as many people as possible about STAR Voting; we can be a model to the State of Oregon and to the whole country for improving our elections in a simple, non-partisan way that will make more people want to vote.

Sincerely,

Mont Chris Hubbard

P.S. It can be hard to imagine what this simple change would look like, so a friend and I wrote an imaginary news article to demonstrate what Portland election results could look like if we have STAR Voting in the future. You can read it here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NIFZqa7vPOH7IHkD-rEsC1ZaPp-wvNVw3G5QxFCIh2I/edit>