



February 12, 2025

Chair & Senator Jim Carlson
Senate Elections Committee
c/o Beth Fraser, Committee Administrator
Room 1200, Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55103

Re: Testimony in Support of SF 1071

Dear Chair Carlson and Members of the Senate Elections Committee,

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public. We support creation of governmental systems that are representative, accountable, and responsive to voters, and where voters can see themselves reflected in their local governments.

LWV Minnesota supports SF 1071, Ranked Choice Voting for Local Offices:

The League of Women Voters supports policies that promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive. We encourage the adoption of electoral methods that provide the broadest voter representation possible and are expressive of voter choices. Local governments are frequently a place where electoral innovation takes place that can inform decisions at a broader level about the conduct of elections.

We specifically support providing local governments the option to adopt ranked choice voting for use in local elections. We believe that ranked choice voting, as with other forms of election for public office, should have state-wide standards for implementation that adopt the best practices for the processes and equipment to conduct elections, assuring consistency, accuracy, and integrity of elections.

While current state law does not prohibit the use of ranked choice voting in local elections, ranked choice voting is not specifically supported in Minnesota statutes for conduct of elections. This significantly limits the number of local governments that could adopt ranked choice voting. Additionally, the lack of consistent standards for the conduct of elections also allows for variation in the conduct of elections between jurisdictions that could create questions among voters about the conduct of the elections. Providing definitions and requirements for the use of ranked choice voting within Minnesota Statute will provide a framework for the

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consistent performance of ranked choice voting by those local governments choosing to implement it. Including standards for ranked choice voting in statute will enable local governments to consider whether ranked choice voting is a good option for them. Establishment of state-wide standards will provide both voters and candidates assurances that elections are conducted properly and fairly, and that the results of elections using ranked choice voting can be trusted.

SF 1071 provides the framework for local governments to choose the electoral process that works best for them to assure proportional representation in their community, and provides requirements and support to do this in a consistent, efficient manner. Experience both within Minnesota and nationally has shown that ranked choice voting for local elections can be implemented effectively and be valuable to assuring election results that reflect the preferences of voters.

LWV Minnesota urges you to vote YES on SF 1071.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Huffman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Huffman, Election and Redistricting Policy Coordinator
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