MEMO OF SUPPORT

Intro 696 of 2022 (Ung)

Improves Ranked Choice Voting Ballot Design

September 30, 2022

TITLE OF BILL

A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to the design of the ballot and content of ballot instructions for ranked choice elections.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

Section 1 amends New York City Charter §1057-g, subdivision d, paragraph 2 to provide that in ranked choice voting ballots, each column shall be labeled with a consecutive numeral. Paragraph 3 is amended to provide a new set of specific ballot instructions for voters. The bill also adds three new paragraphs to provide that:

1. each RCV election shall be separated by a bold black line (paragraph 6);
2. text with multiple languages will be arranged so that the languages are clearly separated (paragraph 7); and
3. the text of any instructions shall be black against a white background (paragraph 8).

Section 2 states the bill takes effect immediately.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

Reinvent Albany supports this bill because we believe it will ensure ranked choice voting ballots continue to be easy to use in future NYC elections.

NYC's first RCV primary election was a huge success, with 90% of voters saying they found the new system easy to use, and 77% saying they want to see it in future elections.[1]

---

[1]http://readme.readmedia.com/RANK-THE-VOTE-NYC-RELEASES-EDISON-RESEARCH-EXIT-POLL-ON-THE-ELECTION/17989282

This election also preceded the most diverse NYC council in history: Two thirds of the new City Council are people of color, and 61% are women.[2]

While the original RCV legislation was a strong start, its lack of specificity could lead to poor ballot design in coming elections. This bill provides clearer language to keep the RCV ballot simple for voters, and also will help voters who do not speak English better navigate future RCV ballots.

We urge the Council to pass the bill.

---

[2]https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/small-donor-public-financing-plays-role-electing-most-diverse-new-york