

SS SJR 78 -- ELECTIONS

SPONSOR: Brown (226) (McGaugh)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 7 to 4. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative Oversight by a vote of 4 to 2.

Upon voter approval, this resolution specifies that only citizens of the United States are entitled to vote.

The resolution specifies that all elections be by paper ballot or by any mechanical method prescribed by law.

The resolution allows voters only one vote for each issue or seat to be filled at an election. The ranking of candidates for a particular office is prohibited. The candidate receiving the largest number of votes in a party primary shall be the only candidate for that party at the general election. The candidate receiving the largest number of votes at the general election will be the winner. These provisions do not apply to any nonpartisan municipal election held in a city that had an ordinance in effect as of November 5, 2024, that permits voters to cast more than a single vote for each issue or candidate on which the voter is eligible to vote.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that these measures are important to increasing public confidence in elections. There is a nationwide movement to allow non-citizens to vote, and this change to the Constitution is necessary to prevent that. Ranked choice voting is confusing to voters, cumbersome for election administrators, produces less-democratic outcomes, and undermines confidence in election results.

Testifying in person for the bill were Senator Brown; Warren County Republican Committee; Heritage Action for America/The Heritage Foundation; Becky Arps, Americans for Citizen Voting; Liberty Link Missouri; and the Opportunity Solutions Project.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that ranked choice voting is not confusing to voters, it produces more democratic outcomes, and increases public confidence in elections. A citizenship requirement in the Constitution is ballot candy that will fool voters into banning ranked choice voting when that measure might not pass if submitted to voters in isolation. The State's current electoral process has many antiquated flaws that would be solved by ranked choice voting.

Testifying in person against the bill were Larry R Bradley; Rachel Mary Macnair; Missouri Voter Protection Coalition; Advocates of Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region & Southwest Missouri; Marilyn McLeod, League of Women Voters of Missouri; Arnie C. Dienoff; ACLU of Missouri (American Civil Liberties Union); and Sierra Club Missouri Chapter.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say they broadly support ranked choice voting, but don't oppose the bill because any attempt to implement ranked choice voting would have to be submitted to voters as a Constitutional amendment anyway. They were available to answer questions about the process.

Testifying in person on the bill was David Edward Roland.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.