



# HB171: Alternative Voting Methods Modifications

## ABOUT HB171

This bill will repeal the Municipal Alternate Voting Methods Pilot Project, which is set to sunset on Jan.1, 2026.

"Despite its recent popularity, some elected officials in jurisdictions where ranked-choice voting has been implemented worry it will make our political divide even worse as it upsets decades of precedent and leads to greater distrust in elections."  
*Brigham Tomco, Deseret News*

In the end, this bill is about restoring voter confidence in all of our elections in Utah.

## ISSUES WITH RANKED-CHOICE VOTING (RCV)

### NON-MONOTONICITY

- Putting your first choice in the top position can put them at a disadvantage.

### FALSE MAJORITY

- The total count typically reflects a false majority, and not the most wanted.

### AUDITING

- There are frequent issues with auditing and it is virtually impossible to do a hand count.

### THIRD PARTIES

- Third parties are usually voted off within the 1st round of RCV.

### BALLOT CONFUSION

- RCV can be very confusing for some. Sandy City had many ballots not able to be counted due to errors.

### VETTING MULTIPLE CANDIDATES

- Harder for voters to get to know candidates if there are too many.

### ELIMINATION OF PRIMARIES

- Primaries are a great way to build community involvement with candidates and the public, and the Elimination of Primaries with RCV—although saves money—costs in community support.



## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

MONICA ZOLTANSKI  
MAYOR

### **Mayor Monica Zoltanski's Statement on Ranked-Choice Voting February 3, 2023**

In 2021, the Sandy City Council entered the state's ranked-choice voting pilot program. However, the municipal election was already underway with candidates actively campaigning. There was concern that changing the rules of the election would create voter confusion and, indeed, it did.

In the mayoral race, candidates initially campaigned beginning in February anticipating a primary and a traditional election. Because of ranked-choice voting, all the candidates campaigned the entire year until the November 2<sup>nd</sup> election. It proved very difficult for voters to distinguish the platform and qualifications of one candidate over the next. With 8 candidates in the field, campaigning through election day created additional expense that would not have occurred had there been a primary.

One promise of ranked-choice voting was that it would create a cost savings for the city by avoiding a primary. Ultimately, due to voter confusion, we found it necessary to devote more resources to voter education.

Another promise of ranked choice voting was the eventual winner would have more than 50% of the vote, yet, in the mayoral race more than 4,000 ballots were eliminated because the voter failed to complete the ballot rankings.

In a city survey following the election, 60% of Sandy residents said they disliked the system and preferred not to use ranked-choice voting in future elections. The process does not create voter confidence. In the end, the city council even struggled to certify the results.

With so much discussion about the need for reliability and transparency in our elections, the promoted benefits of ranked-choice voting do not outweigh the certainty and predictability of our traditional election process. No election system is 100 % perfect, but the cost of confusion and disenfranchising voters by changing the election method in Sandy City did not deliver. For these reasons I continue to oppose ranked-choice voting in future municipal elections.