

Jourdain, Brenda

From: Rick Riley <69bertha69@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2019 3:14 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment on SB 212 for April 22 City Council Meeting

Rick Riley, Fort Bragg

Mayor, Council, Staff, People of Fort Bragg:

Please refrain from action on SB212 pending further critical review of the bill, the ranked-choice method, and views on the CVRA held by proponents of ranked-choice.

Section 1, Paragraph C of SB212 states that: "ranked-choice voting has led to greater voter participation in multiple cities, and voters using ranked-choice voting have been more satisfied with candidates conduct and have generally viewed those campaigns as less negative." However, in San Francisco and St. Paul former supporters of ranked-choice want its repeal, negative campaigning is rampant, and voters now admit they really don't understand. Maine's 2018 2nd US District election was a ranked-choice success say its supporters despite confusion over the outcome, a lawsuit over the election's legality, and the words "stolen election" written by the governor next to his signature on the election certification. Ranked-choice is the only election system which often becomes more a matter of contention than ballot measures or candidate races. One state and 10 cities currently use ranked-choice. Six states and four local governments have repealed it.

The method is not grounded in social choice theory, game theory, mathematics. Ranked-choice proponents conflate on the damning math saying "there are no perfect systems" followed by dissembling and the conclusion that "ranked-choice voting is the perfect choice" in their comparison. The system actually contains disqualifying flaws described in Arrow's Impossibility Theorem published in 1951, among which a fatal flaw is the possibility of choosing a wrong winner. Whoops!

No other voting system has a \$3+million budget to buy ads and flood the internet with favorable copy. The critique has been buried under propaganda. So, only the benefits are highlighted against the supposed poverty of other voting systems to make the case for ranked-choice, always their conclusion.

The propaganda and moneyed-interests aside, the view of the CVRA by ranked-choice proponents is disconcerting to the fair-minded. CVRA's aim is to assist the franchise of polarized and under-represented portions of the populous but its method is untenable. In 2014, Californians for Electoral Reform (CFER) gave its high honor the Wilma Rule Award to attorney Kevin Shenkman for serving CVRA process to the city of Santa Clarita which eventually changed its voting system. Where some might feel victimization in this process, CFER sees martyrdom for their cause. FairVote flatly states that "the CVRA is an important tool and its defeat in court would be a setback for voting rights". Also, FairVote says "bringing a claim under CVRA remains the best way to bridge California's representation gap".

I'm not saying CFER and FairVote are the unnamed plaintiff in our CVRA matter but they definitely like our compromised situation. While they agree that it's good for Fort Bragg to have to pay huge money to extricate ourselves from this, they believe in the CVRA to advance their mission and they don't believe in us. Please don't carry their water.

Rick Riley