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Fact Sheet:

Ranked Choice Voting

Ranked Choice Voting (Instant Runoff) Defined

Instead of choosing one candidate, voters rank all candidates from favorite to least favorite. If no candidate gets more than 50% of votes based on voters' first choice, an "instant runoff" takes place. That means the candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated. People who voted for that candidate automatically recast their vote for their second choice. The process repeats with runoff after runoff until a candidate gets more than 50% on a single round of voting.

Unlike regular runoff elections, instant runoff elections **take away the right of voters to make an informed choice.**

Regular runoffs happen when a second election day is chosen to pick among top candidates if no one candidate was the clear winner on the first round. That time between elections allows voters to become informed about the top candidates before casting another vote.

Ranked choice voting forces voters to strategize through hypothetical third, fourth, or fifth rounds of elimination rather than focusing on their first choice among top tier candidates.

Proponents claim ranked choice voting will decrease bickering and attack ads during campaigning, but that is all based on fantasy. From countries like Australia to states like Maine, it is clear to see ranked choice voting doesn't get rid of negative ads.

Ballot exhaustion is a real problem. In a race of many candidates, many will only rank their top few, leaving blank spaces after that. If all their top choices are eliminated, their vote is no longer counted. In the 2011 San Francisco mayoral race, ballot exhaustion in ranked choice voting silenced 27% of voters.



Ranked choice voting can lead to winners that are the third or fourth choice of many, but the first choice of few.

In Australia's 2010 House of Reps elections, the Labor Party won the House with 38% of first-place votes even though the Liberal-National coalition received 43% of first-place votes.

Recognizing the dangers of ranked choice voting is not a partisan issue. *Former California Governor Jerry Brown vetoed a ranked choice voting bill because he thought the practice is "overly complicated and confusing" and "deprives voters of genuinely informed choice."*