

HB 381 -- Ranked-Choice Voting

Sponsor: Zimmerman

This bill allows any political subdivision to conduct ranked-choice voting for single-winner elections or multiple-candidate elections. Ranked-choice voting provisions must be specified by an order, ordinance, or charter amendment of the political subdivision. Charter amendments must be used to enact ranked-choice voting in any home rule city in which the charter prohibits the adoption of election procedures by order or ordinance. The method of calculating winning thresholds, how candidates with the fewest votes are eliminated, how votes for eliminated candidates are transferred to the voter's next valid choice, how ties must be resolved, and how ballots are counted must be specified in the enacting order, ordinance, or charter amendment. Ranked-choice voting ballots must allow voters to rank as many choices as there are candidates; however, a local election authority may limit the number of candidates appearing on the ballot under certain specified conditions but must allow at least three choices per position if there are three or more candidates for the position.

Any election contest resulting from a ranked-choice voting process must be decided by the appropriate circuit court which will give effect to the order, ordinance, or charter amendment used to implement the process. General state election laws will govern all other aspects of the election to the extent that they are not inconsistent with the adopted order, ordinance, and charter amendment.

A political subdivision adopting ranked-choice voting must conduct a voter education and outreach campaign to familiarize voters with ranked voting. The outreach program must be funded from general revenue and cannot be construed as a state mandate.