

March 01, 2024

Dear Maryland General Assembly,

I am writing to express my support of HB1353 / SB1129, Howard County - Board of Education Elections - Ranked-Choice Voting. The organization I direct, [RepresentWomen](#), tracks outcomes for women in jurisdictions with ranked choice voting as part of our mission to support solutions to address the barriers women face in politics.

Our research finds that women have better opportunities to run in and win RCV elections. More women can run for office in RCV elections because, without fear of splitting the vote, there is greater support for women candidates to run. Additionally, campaigns tend to be more civil and more issue-focused, which appeals to women candidates and provides greater incentive for them to run. We also find that when voters have the ability to express their true preferences rather than vote strategically, more women win as a result.

Women hold 53% of city council seats in jurisdictions with ranked choice voting and 12 out of the 32 mayoral seats elected with RCV. Janet Mills, governor of Maine, won the primary with RCV, and of course, Senator Lisa Murkowski and Representative Mary Peltola were elected using RCV in Alaska.

Here are a few of our resources that may be of interest:

- a [memo](#) on ranked choice voting & women's representation
- a [dashboard](#) on ranked choice voting stats
- a [toolkit](#) with additional RCV materials

We also released a report in February 2024, [Breaking Barriers for Black Women Candidates](#), that discusses how ranked choice voting creates more opportunities for Black women to run and win.

Please support HB1353 / SB1129 to authorize the Howard County Council to adopt a ranked choice voting method for elections for the Howard County Board of Education.

Many thanks,



Cynthia Richie Terrell
Executive Director, RepresentWomen