

**SB0383 - Elections - Ranked-Choice Voting in Contests for Presidential Nomination and Certification of  
Election-Supporting Technology  
Hearing before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment  
February 26, 2025  
Position: FAVORABLE**

My name is Michael Lent, I am a resident Parkville, MD and a constituent of District 08. I urge the committee's support for SB 383 to allow for the use of ranked choice voting in presidential primary contests and give the State Board of Elections (SBE) the ability to regulate election-supporting technology.

The benefits of ranked choice voting are clear:

- No "Wasted" Votes on dropped out or ineligible candidates
- Stronger Voices with more expression of voter preferences
- Greater Diversity of candidates running and winning elections
- Clear Winners who have a majority based on broad support
- Civil Campaigns instead of toxic campaigns

Here is how ranked choice voting works:

- Voters rank the candidates in their order of preference (first, second, third, etc.).
- Every voter's first choice is counted to see if there is a winner. If a candidate gets a majority, they win and the election is complete.
- If no candidate reaches a majority of the vote, a series of elimination rounds begin (e.g. instant runoffs). The candidate in last place is eliminated but voters who had that candidate as their first choice now have their next choice counted.

No one wants their vote to be "wasted" but for millions of voters across the United States this situation is possible in our current presidential elections process. Allowing ranked choice voting in presidential primaries gives voters the ability to express one or more preferences for candidates by ranking them. There are over 50 jurisdictions using ranked choice voting for local, state, and federal elections. Our state's current election equipment can produce and scan a ranked ballot, along with collecting the data from ranked ballots.

It is very likely that we will have multiple individuals vying to be the standard bearer in the political parties in 2028, and Maryland voters deserve a strong voice in the decision. We need to make sure every vote counts in Maryland whether you vote early or on election day.

**I urge a favorable report for SB 383.**