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Contact: Melodie Wilterdink
(410) 725-9079
Melodie@AlaskaPolicyForum.org

NEW STUDY EXPOSES ALARMING RAMIFICATIONS TO RANKED-CHOICE VOTING

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Alaska Policy Forum has released a new report detailing the findings of an extensive study that exposes many flaws in ranked-choice voting (RCV), particularly how the method of determining a winner results in discarded ballots, how RCV elections do not result in a majority winner, and how it can completely change the outcome of an election.

The study analyzed data from 96 elections in which RCV necessitated additional rounds of tabulation, and the results were disturbing. In some races, nearly 18 percent of votes were not counted in the winner-determining round of tabulation. Known as ballot exhaustion, the discarding of ballots is inherent to the ranked-choice voting process.

“A voting system that frequently results in the discarding of legally submitted ballots has no place in Alaska or anywhere else in the United States. After researching candidates, going to the polls, and voting, no Alaskan should have to worry that their ballot won’t be counted in the final tally.”

— Melodie Wilterdink, VP of Operations & Communications at Alaska Policy Forum

The study, completed in conjunction with Maine Policy Institute, also found that RCV frequently does not result in majority winners, as proponents claim. In fact, in nearly 40 percent of the elections analyzed, the “winner” received less than 50 percent of the total votes cast.

Perhaps most importantly, the study examined how often RCV would produce a different electoral outcome, and found that in 17 percent of the elections analyzed, RCV resulted in a different outcome than a traditional plurality election would have.

The full report is available at <http://alaskapolicyforum.org/2020/10/failed-experiment-rcv/>.

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