

Business for Democracy: Small businesses call for passage of Senate Bill 528 to democratize Congressional elections

Posted on Monday, Dec 11, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Madison, WI—The Wisconsin Business for Democracy (BfD-WI) collaborative, formed in 2022, represents the voice of small business on issues related to protecting democracy. Leaders of the collaborative are calling for the Wisconsin state Senate to pass a bill that would give more power to everyday people and small businesses to elect consensus US House and Senate candidates.

Senate Bill 528 is on the agenda of a Senate Committee for consideration on Tuesday, December 12. This bi-partisan bill is co-sponsored by two dozen legislators.

“Small businesses would benefit from passage of this bill which would institute an election system referred to as ‘Final Five’,” said **Daniel G. Gurerra Jr., CEO of Altus and a leader of BfD-WI.**

Under a “Final Five” voting system, all candidates would be listed on a single primary ballot with the top five vote-getters advancing to the general election in which ranked choice voting would be used to determine a consensus, majority winner.

“This increasingly popular voting reform using ranked choice voting, also called instant runoff voting, would focus candidates on problem-solving instead of negative attacks, exactly what small-business owners and all voters want,” said **Guerra.**

Ranked choice voting/instant runoff voting is a simple improvement to elections that gives voters more choices and the power to cast their ballots for the candidates they prefer.

“Democracy has given us a vibrant entrepreneurial economy, including nearly 13,000 Latinx/Hispanic small businesses. Senate Bill 528 would strengthen our democracy and encourage more candidates to run without fear of being spoilers,” said **Mathias Lemos Castillo of the Madison Latino Professionals Association**. “The result will be more candidate options and a healthy marketplace of competing ideas.”

“Giving voters more choices for these offices would also greatly benefit the over 17,000 black small business owners in Wisconsin,” said **Guerra**. “They want their voices to be heard by elected officials not ignored because politicians have a lock on being elected under our current election system. Senate Bill 528 would encourage candidates to listen to diverse opinion to find common ground instead of catering to a small, vocal base.”

“While there have been recent efforts by some in the state legislature to weaken democracy, Senate Bill 528 would strengthen it and result in a more sustainable economy and environment,” said **John Imes, Village President of Shorewood Hills and a former small business owner**. “Final Five and ranked choice voting have been adopted by other states, counties and cities across the county to great success.”

“Election reform as called for in Senate Bill 528 is not more costly than the current system, voters like it according to surveys,” said **Frank Knapp Jr., National Director of Business for Democracy**. “Opponents are more concerned with keeping their power to determine winning candidates, not giving the people of Wisconsin a voting system that consistently delivers the most fair and accurate representation of all voters as possible.”

[Business for Democracy](#) is a campaign of the [American Sustainable Business Network](#). There are Business for Democracy collaboratives in 8 states that are raising the voice of small businesses for the need to protect democracy, which is vital for a vibrant entrepreneurial economy.