

Sen. Spreitzer, Rep. Anderson: Propose ranked choice voting in Wisconsin

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BELOIT – Today, State Senator Mark Spreitzer and Representative Clinton Anderson introduced LRB-5709, which would implement ranked choice voting for state, federal, and local elections in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin currently uses a plurality-winner election system. In a plurality-winner system, the winning candidate just needs to get more votes than any other candidate. Ranked choice voting is a majority-winner election system, meaning the winning candidate needs to get an absolute majority (50% plus one vote) in order to be elected.

In a ranked choice election, voters rank the candidates on their ballot and, if no candidate has a majority of the votes, the last place candidate is eliminated and the votes for that candidate are reassigned to voters' next choice. This process repeats until a candidate receives a majority of the vote and is elected. Ranked choice voting has been used across the country and would offer voters more candidate choice in elections, while eliminating the need for a February primary in nonpartisan elections.

Senator Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit)

“I am proud to be reintroducing this legislation to implement ranked choice voting in Wisconsin. Under ranked choice voting, voters can vote for the candidate they like the most instead of having to strategically vote against the candidate they like the least. It is a system that encourages positive campaigns, ensures that winners have the support of a majority of voters, and allows more candidates to run without

being seen as a waste of a vote or a spoiler. We should always be working to improve elections in our state, and ranked choice voting would be a meaningful step forward.”

Representative Clinton Anderson (D-Beloit)

“Ranked choice voting is not a new idea. It’s already working in states like Maine and Alaska, and in cities like New York City,” said Rep. Anderson. “Our current system rewards candidates for tearing each other down instead of building broad support. Ranked choice voting changes that. It encourages campaigns focused on issues and coalition-building, ensures nominees win with a true majority, and creates space for more voices beyond the two-party system.”