

Amendment 1 Version 2 to Council Bill 120369 AN ORDINANCE relating to ranked choice voting

Sponsor: Councilmember Lewis

Clarify language in Council Bill 120369

Effect: This amendment would make clarify language in Council Bill 120369 regarding ranked choice voting.

1) Under the proposed bill, each voter would be able to rank their choices of five candidates to move on to the general election. Counting would occur in rounds. The lowest-ranked candidate would be eliminated in each round. If a candidate's first choice is eliminated, their next highest-ranked choice counts as their vote for the next rounds.

The proposed amendments to section 2.18.020 A clarify that each voter's ballot counts as a single vote for whichever candidate the voter has ranked highest in all rounds, not just the final round where there are two candidates left and makes other changes to clarify how ranked choice voting would work.

2) Under the proposed bill King County Elections must allow voters to rank at least five candidates. As drafted, the bill would exclude write-in candidates from that total. The proposed change to section 2.18.020 C would count a write-in candidate as among those five candidates that a voter could rank. State law (RCW 29A.60.021) provides for voters to write-in candidates and specifies when write-in votes should be counted. This amendment removes potential confusion regarding those write-in votes.

Amend proposed Section 2.18.020 in Section 1 of Council Bill 120369, as follows:

2.18.020 Ranked choice voting

Ranked choice voting shall be used in City of Seattle primary elections as soon as practicable for King County Elections. The City Council requests that King County Elections implement the provisions of this Chapter 2.18 no later than 2027 to select the top two candidates for elective offices of The City of Seattle as those offices are designated in City Charter Article XIX.

A. Nominating primaries shall be conducted using the bottoms-up method of ranked choice voting. Voters shall receive ballots that enable them to rank candidates in order of

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preference. Each voter's ballot shall count as a single vote for whichever candidate the voter has ranked the highest. King County Elections shall count votes in rounds. In each round, the candidate who received the fewest ~~((first choices))~~ top rankings shall be eliminated. ~~((and the ballot with each))~~ When a candidate is eliminated, a vote cast for ~~((the eliminated))~~ that candidate shall be transferred to that ballot's next-highest ranked remaining candidate and a new round of counting shall begin. Counting of top-ranked candidates and elimination of the ~~((lowest ranked))~~ candidate with the fewest top rankings shall continue until two candidates remain. ~~((Each voter's ballot shall count as a single vote for whichever of the two remaining candidates the voter has ranked higher.))~~ The final two remaining candidates shall be certified as qualified to appear on the general election ballot.

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C. The King County Director of Elections may limit the number of candidates that voters are able to rank, provided that voters are allowed to rank at least five candidates, ~~((excluding any write-in candidates,))~~ if at least five candidates have filed.

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