Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	CB 120369 **Version:** 2	**Name:**	CB 120369
Type:	Ordinance (Ord)	**Status:**	Passed
		In control:	City Clerk
On agenda:	7/14/2022		
Final Action:	7/19/2022	**Ord. No.**	Ord 126625

Title: AN ORDINANCE relating to ranked choice voting; requesting that a special election be held concurrent with the November 8, 2022 general election for submission to the qualified electors of the City of a proposition to institute ranked choice voting for primary elections for City of Seattle elected offices; adding a new Chapter 2.18 to the Seattle Municipal Code; proposing a ballot title; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

Sponsors: Andrew Lewis

Indexes:

Attachments: 1. Summary and Fiscal Note, 2. Proposed Amendment 1 version 2, 3. Signed Ordinance 126625

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
7/19/2022	2	City Clerk	attested by City Clerk	
7/19/2022	2	Mayor	returned	
7/19/2022	2	Mayor	Signed	
7/15/2022	2	City Clerk	submitted for Mayor's signature	
7/14/2022	1	City Council	passed as amended	Pass
7/12/2022	1	City Council	referred	
7/8/2022	1	Council President's Office	sent for review	
7/8/2022	1	City Clerk	sent for review	

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

AN ORDINANCE relating to ranked choice voting; requesting that a special election be held concurrent with the November 8, 2022 general election for submission to the qualified electors of the City of a proposition to institute ranked choice voting for primary elections for City of Seattle elected offices; adding a new Chapter 2.18 to the Seattle Municipal Code; proposing a ballot title; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. A new Chapter 2.18 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

Chapter 2.18 PRIMARY ELECTIONS

2.18.010 Findings

The City Council makes the following findings of fact and declarations:

A. A healthy and strong representative democracy depends on voting that allows the people to fully express their will.

B. The City is empowered to provide for its own election of officers consistent with general election laws, which includes the use of a primary election to winnow candidates to a final list of two for the general election based on the number of votes cast for each candidate.

C. Ranked choice voting allows voters to indicate their order of preference for the candidates running in each race and allows for the election of candidates with the greatest support from voters, better reflecting the voters' will.

D. Ranked choice voting has been used successfully in elections in states and cities across the United States.

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 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 top rankings shall be eliminated. When a candidate is eliminated, a vote cast for 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 candidate with the fewest top rankings shall continue until two candidates remain. The final

two remaining candidates shall be certified as qualified to appear on the general election ballot.

B. Only the two candidates nominated in the primary shall appear on the ballot of the general election, which shall be conducted in accordance with general law governing the election.

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 if at least five candidates have filed.

D. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section 2.18.020, if at the end of the candidate filing period two or fewer candidates have filed for an office subject to this Chapter 2.18, the election for that office may be conducted according to general law.

E. For any election subject to this Chapter 2.18, King County Elections will ensure that the ballot includes appropriate instructions to voters to effectuate the purposes of this Chapter 2.18, such as: "Rank candidates in the order of your choice."

Section 2. The City Council and Mayor find that this ordinance is on the same subject as proposed in Initiative 134 - Seattle Approves. The City Council has rejected Initiative 134 and proposes this ordinance as an alternative measure on the same subject pursuant to City Charter Article IV, Section 1. The City Council directs that the City Clerk file this ordinance with the Director of Elections of King County, Washington, as ex officio supervisor of elections, requesting that the Director of Elections call and conduct a special election in the City in conjunction with the state general election to be held on November 8, 2022, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the City the proposition set forth in this ordinance pursuant to City Charter Article IV, Section 1 and applicable law as an alternative measure different from Initiative 134 but dealing with the same subject. The City Clerk is directed to certify to the King County Director of Elections the ballot title approved by the City Attorney in accordance with responsibilities under RCW 29A.36.071 and RCW 29A.72.050. The following ballot title statement of subject and concise description are submitted to the City Attorney for consideration:

City of Seattle Proposition No. __ concerns allowing voters to rank candidates in primary elections.

This measure would allow voters in primary elections for Mayor, City Attorney, and City Councilmembers to rank candidates in the voter's order of preference. Each voter's top-ranked vote would be counted first, and the candidate receiving the fewest votes would be eliminated. If a voter's first choice received the fewest votes, then that voter's second choice would be counted in the next round, and so on until two candidates remain to proceed to the general election.

Section 3. Certification of such proposition by the City Clerk to the King County Director of Elections in accordance with law prior to the date of such election on November 8, 2022, and any other act consistent with the authority and prior to the effective date of this ordinance, are ratified and confirmed.

Section 4. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this ordinance, or the invalidity of its application to any person or circumstance, does not affect the validity of the remainder of this ordinance or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

Section 5. To the extent necessary to submit this ordinance to the vote of the people pursuant to Charter Article IV, subsection 1.D: this ordinance shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Section 1.04.020. If approved by the people, this ordinance shall take full effect pursuant to Charter Article IV, subsections 1.F and 1.G.

Passed by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2022, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this _____ day of _____, 2022.

_____

President _____ of the City Council

Approved /   returned unsigned /   vetoed this _____ day of _____, 2022.

_____

Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2022.

_____

_____, City Clerk

(Seal)