



OREGON ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY CLERKS

oacclerks.org

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Re: Financial Estimate for Rank Choice Voting

The cost of implementation for Rank Choice Voting (RCV), as worded in HB 2004, provided by the Oregon Association of County Clerk (OACC), includes the cost savings with coordination of purchasing software, equipment and printing services, based on our current contracts. We also worked closely with Benton and Multnomah County (the counties already using RCV) to understand costs they have incurred thus far with Rank Choice Voting. We've also received input & met with representatives from the Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center (who said that Oregon law is different than that of Alaska and Maine) and received training from the Center for Civic Design.

Here are some key cost driving differences we must keep at the forefront to insure any measure be accompanied with the appropriate level of funding. We believe the estimates provided are accurate and here is why.

- Alaska and Maine tabulate election results centrally at the State level using a single system. Oregon on the other hand has multiple systems and tabulates at the county level, the State of Oregon would need to develop a process and software needed to take the three different data formats and combine them into a single file for Ranked Choice Vote Tabulation for round-by-round processing. This will be expensive and time consuming, but critical to the success of the program implementation.
- Before any ballot is processed, each county will need to test their system to ensure that each system is accurately processing Ranked Choice Voted ballots (according to Oregon law), the number of ballots and staff time required for this process rises exponentially with the number of candidates, ballot styles and rankings in each RCV contest as reflected in the simplest manner possible in the attached PDF of Benton County's Test Plan spreadsheet (Three Rankings and 3 to 6 candidates).
- Currently, counties are pushing the boundaries of available ballot real estate. Quite a few counties moved to a four-column ballot, just to accommodate all of the races for the 2024 Primary Election (sample attached), other counties, if they were able to get the paper in time, moved from 8 ½ x 14" ballot to an 8 ½ x 17" ballot to accommodate all of their races. This is all before adding in RCV contests, which may lead to need for additional pages at a cost of \$0.30 to \$0.40 per page. With the addition of RCV contests, the need for more than one ballot page sent to voters becomes a real concern. Unique challenges present themselves in election audits when voters return only one of two ballot pages sent to them.

- Printing and staff time required for RCV ballot preparation, testing and auditing is significant and must be considered in the funding. We expect additional pages to be about \$0.30 to \$0.40 per page, using specialized printers at an added cost, cardstock paper and in-state printing (required by law).
- The cost of postage for mailing ballots may also be impacted. Not only are ballots included in the envelopes, but voters are also provided return envelopes, secrecy sleeves (where used), measure flyers and other informational inserts. With the possible addition of new ballot pages to include, potential increased postage should be evaluated.
- The highest and most important of all RCV related expense “VOTER EDUCATION” campaigns related to how to mark and RCV contest without disenfranchising yourself in the contest and also to educate the electorate on how the tabulation of RCV votes actually works is vital to supporting informed voters and government transparency. Some material that has already been written will be used and also materials provided from non-profit agencies.
- Please keep in mind that the state and counties are already under resourced and understaffed. Adding Rank Choice Voting will require additional staff. For instance, Multnomah County has two dedicated project managers to transition and execute RCV. More staff will be required to help to roll-out RCV statewide.

These are cost driving factors that are otherwise NOT incurred under Oregon’s current system. All of the above costs are key to the implementation of Rank Choice Voting only.

Thank you for taking this information into account as you move forward with your work. Please reach out if you have questions or follow-up.