

Seattle residents launch Approval Voting initiative to make city elections more representative



Simple update lets voters express their full opinions in primary elections, elect leaders which best reflect those opinions

Nov. 17, 2021 (SEATTLE) – Today, a group of Seattle volunteers announced an initiative to improve local elections. If adopted in November 2022, the initiative will let voters select as many candidates as they want on the primary ballot. Instead of reading “Vote for one,” the ballot instructs voters to “Vote for as many as you approve of.” Voters may support as many candidates as they wish. Just like today, the two candidates with the most votes advance to the general election. This is called Approval Voting.

"Seattle voters deserve the most representative elections and leaders," said Troy Davis, co-chair of [Seattle Approves](#). "Our goal is simple: make Seattle's elections as fair and representative as possible. We're thrilled to propose an easy, non-partisan, candidate-neutral change which does exactly that."

Approval voting is already used in St. Louis and Fargo. St. Louis adopted approval voting in 2020. The change was endorsed by The League of Women Voters, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, The Organization for Black Struggle, the City Treasurer and City Recorder, and elected officials of all viewpoints. The initiative passed with 68% support.

Studies show that the approval voting method elects [more representative leaders](#), eliminates vote-splitting, and provides accurate measurements of voter support for all candidates. It's easy to implement and simple to use and explain.

With this change, every election is an honest measurement of how many voters support each candidate. "That's how we think of elections, but that's not always the case," said Logan Bowers, campaign co-chair. "Too often, voters feel compelled to vote strategically based on who they think others might elect. When you've debated between voting for your actual favorite or a candidate you like less, you've experienced this. This small change empowers us to express our full opinions, without feeling like we're throwing away our votes," Bowers said.

Seattle Approves will launch its listening tour this month. The team will begin collecting signatures for the measure in 2022.

"Seattle Approves has been discussing this with residents from all walks of life. We're excited to work with everyone who is passionate about democracy to make Seattle's elections as inclusive as possible," Bowers added.

To learn more and get involved, visit [Seattle Approves](#) or email info@seattleapproves.org.

Attachment: Example 2021 Mayoral primary ballot. Just like today, the top two vote-getters advance to the general election.

City

City of Seattle
Mayor
nonpartisan office
vote for one

~~one~~ all you approve of

- Andrew Grant Houston
- Lance Randall
- M. Lorena González
- Casey Sixkiller
- Clinton Bliss
- Henry C. Dennison
- Bobby Tucker
- Omari Tahir-Garrett
- James Donaldson
- Arthur K. Langlie
- Colleen Echohawk
- Don L. Rivers
- Bruce Harrell
- Stan Lippmann
- Jessyn Farrell
- _____