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Reader's view: Ranked-choice voting will not improve democracy

By Walter F. Mondale from Minneapolis Today at 12:10 a.m.

I hope Duluth voters reject the effort to change their city's charter. Please vote "no" on the ranked-choice voting amendment.

Voting in America should be plain and simple. Ranked-choice voting is neither. It is confusing and complex.

Academic study after academic study shows that while affluent and well-educated voters do well with ranked-choice voting, it often disadvantages others, particularly older voters. If you think our American voting system should be transparent for all, then vote "no" on ranked-choice voting.

Mayor Don Ness has said that when he first ran with 11 opponents, a ranked-choice voting format would not have allowed a real debate to take place about Duluth's future. He is absolutely right.

In the 2013 Minneapolis city election, 20 percent of the voters who came out and voted did not get their vote counted in the final round of counting in the mayor's race. That's the very definition of disenfranchisement.

Supporters of ranked-choice voting say their system guarantees a majority winner. But there was no majority winner under ranked-choice voting in the Minneapolis mayor's race, and there was no majority winner in two City Council races.

Ranked-choice voting will not bring us more democracy. It favors elites who know how to work the new and complex system.

Finally, you should know that nearly a third of the cities that have adopted ranked-choice voting have repealed it.

Duluthians always have been common-sense people. I hope you demonstrate that same common sense Tuesday and vote "no" on ranked-choice voting.

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The writer is the former vice president of the United States.