



# Rank the District

Grow Democracy DC  
Civic Education Fund

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Early Voting Kicks Off for DC's First Ranked Choice Voting Election

**June 8, 2026** – Today, a community coalition rallied at Columbia Heights Community Center to celebrate the first day of early voting, and make sure that DC voters from all eight wards are ready to rank their ballots. Footage of today's event is available upon request.

DC voters are using ranked choice voting for the first time. Ranked choice voting passed with 73% of the vote in 2024 as part of Initiative 83, which also included a provision to let independents vote in DC's primary elections.

"DC voters, it's time to rank the vote!," said **Lisa D. T. Rice, Project Lead of Grow Democracy DC Civic Education Fund and Proposer of Initiative 83**. "With ranked choice voting, candidates work harder for our votes, and they need over 50% to win. Voters have more power: if your first choice loses, your vote still has an impact. Remember: vote your favorite #1, and then rank your backup choices – 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th. Ranking backup choices never hurts your #1 choice, and only rank candidates you support!"

#### Here's what voters should know about ranked choice voting:

- Vote for your favorite candidate 1st.
- Rank your backup choices – 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th.
- You can rank as many candidates as you like, up to five – only rank candidates you support!
- Remember, ranking gives your vote more power. And there are no downsides to ranking more candidates – ranking backup choices never hurts your favorite.
- If your first choice loses, your vote simply moves to your next choice.
- The winner always gets over 50% support.

"I'm excited about our first elections with ranked choice voting, after voters overwhelmingly passed it in 2024," said **Councilmember Christina Henderson**. "With so many candidates running for office, ranked choice voting gives voters more power and ensures representative outcomes. RCV is intuitive, but it's a change – I'm grateful for the work of the Board of Elections and community groups across the city in educating our voters. We have eight more days to talk to voters in all eight wards, and make sure DC is ready to rank the vote!"

“Importantly, we in DC overwhelmingly voted to use ranked choice voting in our elections. And now you can vote for your favorite candidate, without worrying about throwing your vote away because you can rank other candidates too. At the League of Women Voters, we encourage voters to take advantage of this new voting power,” said **Anne Stauffer, Co-President of the League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia**. “We also thank the Board of Elections, Rank the District, the AARP, and other partners working hard to ensure DC voters are ready to rank their vote.”

[Rank the District](#) is a project of Grow Democracy DC Civic Education Fund, and blossomed from the Initiative 83 ballot measure. Rank the District has led over 125 voter education efforts across the District to ensure that DC voters are ready to rank their ballots. Rank the District’s work supplements the DC Board of Elections, which has produced a full implementation plan and has conducted 130 outreach events across the District.

Additional RCV video explainers are available at [RankTheDistrict.org](#) and from [FairVote](#). The DC Board of Elections has also posted its Media Guide at <https://www.dcboe.org/elections/2026-elections>.

**Here’s a full description of how votes are counted in a ranked choice voting election:**  
Voters can rank candidates in order of preference: first, second, third and so on.

If a candidate receives more than half of the first choices, that candidate wins, just like in any other election. If not, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated. Voters who ranked that candidate “number 1” will have their vote count for their next choice. This repeats until a candidate wins with more than 50% of the votes.

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