

# RANKED CHOICE VOTING ON THE BALLOT IN BENTON COUNTY

A measure advocating for ranked choice voting in Benton County may just breathe new life into the Democratic process for the county's elections. Measure 2-100 moves to bring ranked choice voting, also known as instant-run-off voting, to local elections for the positions of sheriff and county commissioner. Blair Bobier, a Benton County commissioner and member of the Green Party, is heading the Yes on 2-100 campaign alongside Dan Rayfield (D), the state representative for Corvallis.

**'It strips the power from the politicians [and gives it] to the voters.'**

— BLAIR BOBIER, GREEN PARTY

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"The way it works is that instead of just voting for one candidate, the voters get to rank their candidates in order of preference. You get your first preference, second preference, third preference," Bobier says. "If a candidate gets a majority of the first choice votes, they win. If not, the lowest voted candidate is eliminated," and the votes are recounted.

This process goes on until a majority is attained by one of the candidates.

"It strips the power from the politicians [and gives it] to the voters," Bobier says.

The measure is endorsed by the Libertarian Party, the Green Party, the Independent Party and the Democratic Party of Benton County. It faces no organized opposition.

Janet Wolf-Eshe, the chair for the Democratic Party of Benton County, says the party's central committee voted to endorse the measure because "it will give more opportunities for various groups to run for office. We like that voters would have various options to vote for, not just one."

Bobier, who says he has been advocating for the ranked voting system for the past 20 years, says the shift would allow for a wider range of options for voters without the risk of their votes going to waste.

"It gives people more choices, and I really think democracy is about choices," Bobier says. "We live in a country where we can get hundreds of channels on TV and hundreds of brands of breakfast cereal, but there are some who think when it comes to elections you should only get two choices."

Benton County in particular is in need of a change, Bobier says, because the current system doesn't allow for a runoff if no candidate achieves a majority of the vote. Instead, the candidate with the highest percentage of votes wins automatically, even if it's not over 50 percent.

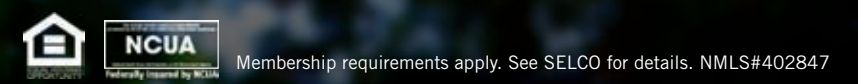
"This sets off red flags," Bobier says.

The issue goes to vote on Nov. 8 in Benton County. More information can be found at [betterballotbenton.com](http://betterballotbenton.com).



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