

# RANK THE VOTE

## Letter to the Editor Action Kit

### Take Action

Write a Letter to the Editor (LTE) telling readers about Ranked Choice Voting and urging them to go to your website and join you in spreading the word.

1. **Find the media outlet you will write to.** [Rank the Vote's list of publications and their LTE guidelines](#) in our [Training Portal](#) to see publications by state that run letters, and their guidelines. If you don't see your local outlet there, Google the following: "[Name of the paper] letters to the editor guidelines." Note the number of words allowed and how a letter is submitted: Do you submit it on the newspaper's website, or do they provide an email address to use?

Got another publication to add? Send it to [letterstotheeditor@rankthevote.us](mailto:letterstotheeditor@rankthevote.us) !

If you're skilled with writing LTEs but nothing in particular is happening in your state, you can write letters to national publications! If trying this, craft the message with a national audience in mind.



Do NOT send your LTE to multiple publications at once. If your letter hasn't run after 5 days, see [What if my letter is not published?](#) below.

2. **Read a few letters to the editor in the newspaper you are writing to** in order to see how they are started and the general tone. You can read examples from all over the country in [Rank the Vote's letter list of fame](#) (maybe, soon to include yours!).

3. Think about the “hook” that connects RCV to a recent opinion piece, or news. This may be an article or editorial (or other letter to the editor!) that ran recently that provides a good angle for discussing elections reform and/or democracy strengthening as a response. Or, just make clear how the reform is topical, and local readers have reason to care about this issue e.g. a local campaign or event, or headline news locally, statewide, or nationally.
4. **Consider calls to action.** If possible, include ways that readers can take action based on your letter. This can be as simple as including the name and website for your [state organization](#), information on an upcoming event, or giving a bill number and description of how to contact legislators and ask them to support or oppose it.

**!If you are referencing anything that requires action from elected officials, include their name in the letter. This could be the most important person (mayor, speaker of house, etc.) for the initiative, or you might just call out your specific representative to urge their support for the ask. Doing this will get the attention of the elected official.**

5. **Write your letter:** Use the guidelines the newspaper has provided and share why you believe ranked choice voting is critical to giving voters more choice, reducing negative ads, and improving government. Keep your message non-partisan and avoid attacking the major parties.
6. **Make sure to include the ask:** Urge readers to go to your website and join you in spreading the word on ranked choice voting.

## What if my letter is published?

Report back and share!

- Let your [state organization](#) know. They can amplify it in meaningful ways.
- Let Rank the Vote know at [letterstotheeditor@rankthevote.us](mailto:letterstotheeditor@rankthevote.us) so that we can add it to our [letter list of fame](#)!

- Share the published letter on social media.
- Send it to your elected officials and call their aides to make sure they saw it.

## What if my letter is not published?

If it's not published after a week (for a daily newspaper) or a few issues, contact them to check they received it, and ask to publish it.

If it still is not published following that, consider editing it, as appropriate, and sending to another newspaper.



Remember to revise word count if necessary.

## Increase your impact

**Make this a mass action!** If you have several people in your group who want to write a letter and you're in the same area, try submitting them all to one publication. Receiving multiple letters on the same topic will increase the chances that one of them is published.

## The Foundation: Ranked Choice Voting Laser Talk (Elevator Pitch)

How we elect our leaders is **deeply flawed**, giving us scorched-earth politics and gridlocked government. Congressional approval ratings are **in the toilet**, hovering between ten and thirty percent.

Currently you can **choose only one** candidate. If your favorite isn't a clear front-runner, you could **waste your vote** by picking them, helping elect someone you really disagree with.

**One simple change** called **ranked choice voting** gives power to voters. You rank the candidates: your favorite is your first choice, next preference your second choice, etc.. If

your favorite doesn't have enough support to win, your ballot counts for your next choice. You **never throw your vote away**.

With ranked choice voting:

1. Multiple candidates can run **without being “spoilers”**, who split votes away from similar candidates, causing both to lose.
2. People get **more choices**.
3. Politicians get **more healthy competition**.
4. Candidates need to win the **broad support of a majority** of voters, not just a narrow passionate base. To do this they must earn second or third rankings from their **opponents' supporters** and **avoid toxic mudslinging** which would alienate them.

Go to [RankTheVote.us](https://RankTheVote.us) and join us in spreading the word about ranked choice voting in your state so politics and government start working for all of us.