Reasons for Placing the Ranked Voting Question on November 2017 Ballot

1. In 2009, the three judge panel of the Office of Administrative Hearings ruling stated "Accordingly, the panel has concluded that the Respondent made knowingly false claims that the Minnesota DFL and the League of Women Voters "endorsed" the St Paul ballot question and that it failed to obtain written permission from national political figures before using their names as supporters of the ballot question, in violation of Minn. Stat. § 211B.02. The panel has concluded that these violations, which were reflected in 40,000 pieces of campaign literature, were multiple and deliberate. They were made despite the clarity of the statutory prohibitions, and the Respondent remains completely unapologetic. The timing of these mailings made it difficult for opponents to respond before the election and created an unfair advantage. These false claims of support cannot be quantified on this record. Under all circumstances, the panel believes a fine in the amount of $5,000 is the appropriate penalty.

   The problem is there was no remedy. We believe the only true remedy is another election before a more informed electorate.

2. A better discussion is already underway in 2017 compared to the lack of information available for the electorate in 2009. The fact, we have had three different elections decided by Ranked Voting in St Paul, and the electorate will be faced with a Ranked Voting Ballot in an open contest for mayor in 2017, and hopefully, followed by a question put directly to the voters asking their affirmation or rejection of said system. This is the clearest way to answer this question.

   Here are a series of articles on the subject on our website http://stpaulvotessmarter.com

   http://www.stpaulvotessmarter.com/in-the-news/ (Note the Highland Villager is only available in a printed version.)

3. In their initial claims, the Better Ballots Campaign--a Trojan horse for FairVoteMN--claims a single Ranked Choice election is cheaper than a Primary/General Election, is false. Refer to Ramsey County Election Director Joe Mansky.
4. The Better Ballots/FairVoteMN claims Ranked Voting will increase turnout in elections, again false. Refer to Ramsey County Election Director Joe Mansky.
5. The Better Ballots/FairVoteMN claims elections will result in majorities. In St Paul, out of three elections (Ward 2 2011, Special Election Ward 1 2013 and Ward 2 2015) a majority occurred only once Ward 2 2011. In Minneapolis, out of four election (Mayor 2013, and Wards 5, 9 and 13 in 2013) again a majority only occurred once in Ward 5.

   Meaning a majority only occurred 28.57% of the time.

6. The Better Ballots/FairVoteMN claims contentious elections between candidates will be diminished, again false. In her own statement, Ellen Brown notes the opponent or the opponent's supporters, who tried this tactic in Ward 2 2015, were punished and finished in second place.

   Meaning negative campaigning tactics were still used.

7. The Better Ballots/FairVoteMN claims Ranked Voting is better than a Primary/General Election system because the turnout in the Primary is low and we argue the same is the case in a Ranked Voting system, only it is turned on its head. The lower participation is found by the voters who select a 2nd choice in Ranked Voting. This is a default same-day Primary.

   We argue having a 2nd event on a different day is the key factor, because if a bad choice is made in the September election it can be fixed in the November election. This is not available in a Ranked Choice election.

8. A simple voting system is better for full participation by the electorate. The more complicated the system the lower the participation rate. Ranked Voting complicates a simple system, because voters must be concerned with understanding the full implications of their votes. This system can be used to political advantage when candidates/campaigns try to construct a wave effect of the votes. If candidates/campaigns can coordinate their votes and orchestrate the order in which other candidates are removed from the ballot a momentum can be artificially created. If candidate Y & Z agree and communicate to their supporters, if they fail, they would like their supporters to vote for candidate X and commitments are made up the ballot then a diminishing slate can be constructed.

   We argue only a statistical genius or calculating campaign could work out all the machinations of a diminishing slate, not the average voter. We claim this to be a modern-day poll test.

9. High Loss Rate. As we have already seen if voters reject the use of Ranked Voting, their votes are ultimately lost in the outcome. Selection of a single candidate who fails to prevail in either the first or second place is labeled Unassigned in the final tally. This means if someone feels their candidate is the only one worthy of the office, but doesn't make the final cut, they need not have voted in the first place.

   This is the purest form of disenfranchisement.

10. The Better Ballots/FairVoteMN seeks to count ballots two ways initially with those who voted overall and then the participation percentage of those who chose to Rank Vote and then declare a percentage of a percentage as some sort of a result.

    This is selective mathematics and an example of mashing mutually exclusive ideas together, which is a statistical fallacy.