


COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

FROM: Phil Mendelson, Chairman 

DATE: July 9, 2026

RE: **Request to Place Emergency Measures on the Agenda for the July 14, 2026
Additional Legislative Meeting**

This memorandum is to request that the following measures be placed on the agenda for the July 14, 2026 Additional Legislative Meeting:

- **Ranked Choice Voting Implementation Clarification Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2026**
- **Ranked Choice Voting Implementation Clarification Emergency Amendment Act of 2026**
- **Ranked Choice Voting Implementation Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2026**

Under current law, each ballot shall count as one vote for the highest-ranked active candidate on that ballot. For the At-Large general election, candidates are eliminated through successive rounds until only two active candidates remain, and those two candidates are elected. In practice, this means that a voter who ranks a candidate who remains active through the final round, such as a candidate who receives a majority of first-choice votes, will not have the voter's lower ranked choices considered in the tabulation for the second At-Large seat. Because the current structure does not separately tabulate the first and second At-Large seats, voters may not meaningfully participate in the selection of both At-Large members. Instead, the current tabulation process treats the two At-Large races as a single contest in which the final two active candidates are elected from one tabulation.

This emergency measure establishes a multi-pass ranked choice voting tabulation process for the general election for the two At-Large Councilmember seats. Under this process, all ballots are first tabulated using ranked choice voting to elect the first At-Large member. Once the first winner is determined, that candidate is removed from further consideration and the same ballots are tabulated a second time to elect the remaining seat. During the second tabulation, each ballot counts for the highest-ranked candidate who has not already been elected, with eliminations and vote transfers continuing until a winner is determined.

This measure will not alter the manner in which voters rank candidates, require changes to ballot design, or change the voter experience. Rather, the multi-pass tabulation process allows voters two distinct opportunities to elect candidates from the same ranked ballot, while requiring voters to rank candidates only once.

It is necessary to move this on an emergency basis because the July 14, 2026, Legislative Meeting is the last opportunity for the Council to act prior to recess and allows the Board of Elections to implement these changes for the November 2026 At-Large general election.

Draft copies of the measures are attached. Please call me or Blaine Stum, Deputy Committee Director, if you have any questions at (202) 724-8092.