Multi-candidate primaries, races with three or more candidates that account for the majority of our primaries, have an abysmal track record of producing winners with majority support. Research shows:

- **A mere 36% of multi-candidate primaries were won with more than 50% of the vote during the last three election cycles.** Worse, still, 29.8% of multi-candidate primaries were won with less than 40%, and 7.7% were won with less than 30% of the vote.

- In fact, even more startling—there's a clear tipping point, **once a primary election fields 4 or more candidates there is a precipitous decline in majority support winners.** Just 13.7% of multi-candidate primaries with 4 or more candidates produced majority support winners.

- Too often the majority of our elected officials win their primaries—which virtually guarantees election in November—without majority support in their districts from the primaries. **That's not really democratic representation.**

- **As we saw in February's Special Election for Public Advocate,** the winner won with 33% of the vote. That's not a consensus winner.

- **The trend of non-consensus winners rarely persists in a general election.**

- **Since 2009, there have been three runoff elections for citywide offices.** Under current election law, runoff elections are triggered when a candidate for citywide office fails to secure 40% of the vote. If no candidate reaches the 40% threshold, the top two vote earners proceed
Bringing Communities Together to the runoff election. Runoff elections are low turnout, high expense elections, far exceeding the per-vote costs of a primary or general election.

ABOUT US

Who we are: RCV:NYC is a nonpartisan, citywide network of voting rights and election reform advocates, good government groups, and everyday New Yorkers. Our theory of change is simple: give New Yorkers a meaningful say in their local elections, and our elected officials will truly represent and serve all of our communities.

RCV:NYC is running a citywide campaign to bring Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) to New York City. We are specifically championing a top five candidate Ranked Choice Voting system for all city offices in primary and special elections in place for the 2021 election cycle.

What is Ranked Choice Voting? Instead of voting for a single candidate in our sprawling primary or special elections, voters will rank their top 5 candidates from first to last choice on the ballot. A candidate who collects a majority of the vote, fifty percent plus one, wins. If there’s no majority, then the last place candidate will be eliminated and votes reallocated. The process is repeated until there’s a majority winner.

Where did you get your data? Common Cause/NY analyzed election data from 2009-2017 election cycles. Their full reports can be found here.

RCV:NYC is a campaign initiated by Common Cause/NY to bring Ranked Choice Voting to New York City. Visit rcv.nyc to learn more!