SENATE FILE 561
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     ZIMMER, DONAHUE, DOTZLER,
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A BILL FOR

1 An Act allowing the use of ranked choice and instant runoff
2   voting in local government elections in this state.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 43.37, Code 2025, is amended to read as
2 follows:
3 **43.37 Number of votes permitted per office — authorized**
4 **methods.**
5 1. The elector shall be permitted to vote for no more
6 candidates for any office than there are persons to be elected
7 to the office. If an elector votes for more persons for any
8 office than the number permitted, the elector's ballot shall not
9 be counted for that office.
10 2. *a.* An election conducted for a local government office in
11 this state may be conducted using ranked choice voting or instant
12 runoff voting.
13 *b.* For purposes of this subsection:
14 (1) *"Local government"* means an incorporated city or town, an
15 unincorporated city or town, a county, a school, or any other
16 political subdivision of the state.
17 (2) *"Ranked choice voting"* or *"instant runoff voting"* means
18 a method of casting and tabulating votes in which a voter ranks
19 candidates in order of preference, tabulation of ballots proceeds
20 in rounds such that in each round either a candidate is elected
21 or the candidate receiving the fewest votes is defeated, votes
22 are transferred from elected or defeated candidates to a voter's
23 next-ranked candidate in order of preference, and tabulation ends
24 when a candidate receives the majority of votes cast or the
25 number of candidates elected equals the number of offices to be
26 filled, as applicable.
27 Sec. 2. Section 49.93, Code 2025, is amended to read as
28 follows:
29 **49.93 Number of votes for each office — authorized**
30 **methods.**
31 1. For an office to which one person is to be elected, a
32 voter shall not vote for more than one candidate. If two or more
33 persons are to be elected to an office, the voter shall vote for
34 no more than the number of persons to be elected. If a person
35 votes for more than the permitted number of candidates, the vote

1 for that office shall not count. Valid votes cast on the rest of
2 the ballot shall be counted.
3   2. *a.* An election conducted for a local government office in
4 this state may be conducted using ranked choice voting or instant
5 runoff voting.
6   *b.* For purposes of this subsection:
7   (1) *"Local government"* means an incorporated city or town, an
8 unincorporated city or town, a county, a school, or any other
9 political subdivision of the state.
10   (2) *"Ranked choice voting"* or *"instant runoff voting"* means
11 a method of casting and tabulating votes in which a voter ranks
12 candidates in order of preference, tabulation of ballots proceeds
13 in rounds such that in each round either a candidate is elected
14 or the candidate receiving the fewest votes is defeated, votes
15 are transferred from elected or defeated candidates to a voter's
16 next-ranked candidate in order of preference, and tabulation ends
17 when a candidate receives the majority of votes cast or the
18 number of candidates elected equals the number of offices to be
19 filled, as applicable.
20   EXPLANATION
21   The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
22   the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.
23   This bill allows ranked choice and instant runoff voting,
24 defined in the bill, to be used to cast or tabulate ballots in
25 elections for local government offices, defined in the bill.