



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 26, 2026

Election Rigging? You Just Won't Believe the Dems' Scam in Alaska

In 2000, candidate John Loew pursued a novel way to gain an advantage in his Los Angeles County assessor's race. He legally changed his name to John Lower Taxes Loew so that it would thus appear on the ballot. He ultimately wasn't the winner, though.

But he was something else: a piker in the name-game business compared to Alaska Democrats. The scheme?

The Democrats are running a man with a name almost identical to the incumbent GOP senator up for reelection. The idea is to fool enough voters and split GOP support so that, in mainly red Alaska, the Democrat will win.



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"Oh, how is this possible in a general election?" you may ask. The answer: It's enabled by the ranked-choice-voting/open-primary system (RCV/OPS) Alaskans approved in 2020 (and have tried to rescind ever since).

Opening Primaries — Shutting Real Choice

The open primary is the simple part of this. All candidates for an office — regardless of party affiliation — appear on a single ballot. Every registered voter — regardless of party affiliation — can participate and picks one candidate per race. And the top vote-getters (four in Alaska's case) advance to the general election — regardless of party affiliation. The problem?

This could very well result in having only one party represented in a general election. This happens, too. In California, for example, only the top *two* vote-getters advance and are both, sometimes, Democrats. The second problem?

Politicians vote with their party 90-plus percent of the time on average. So your choice in a single-party general election is then six of one, a half dozen of the other. You can vote for Candidate A, who'll support the _____ Party's agenda. Or you can choose Candidate B.

He'll also, by the way, support the _____ Party's agenda.

In Alaska, the result is different. Its August 18 primary might well have ensured that three Republicans will advance to the general along with Democrat Mary Peltola. And for sure, two of those Republicans will be Dan S. Sullivan, the incumbent, and Daniel J. Sullivan Jr.

The latter, dubbed "Decoy Dan," is "a fraudster propped up by Democrat Party operatives and support," [informs](#) John Daniel Davidson. Oh, it gets better (read: worse), too.

Decoy Dan tried at first to register with the Alaska Division of Elections as "Dan S. Sullivan" — the *exact* same name as the incumbent. He and his backers wanted the two men's names indistinguishable on the ballot. And it gets better still.



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Decoy Dan, writes Davidson, is

a retired teacher who has never before run for office and was not a registered Republican until two days before filing his candidate declaration.

So far the scheme has worked, too. Decoy Dan finished third in the open primary — with about 2.45 percent of the vote — guaranteeing him a general-election spot.

Ranked Choice's Rank Fruits

This RCV/OP system is what vaulted Peltola to power in the first place in 2022. In the race for Alaska's sole House seat, which had been held by a Republican for 49 years, relates Davidson:

The Republican vote split between Sarah Palin and Nick Begich (now a member of the House), and Peltola eked out a victory in the "second round" of vote-counting.

Under the standard system, only Palin *or* Begich would've been in the general. And what's this "second round" business? This brings us to RCV, which amounts to calculated confusion. As The Dispatch [put it](#) in January:

Ranked-choice voting is a Rube Goldberg machine — a contraption of levers and pulleys designed to do a simple job in the most convoluted way imaginable, while promising that the complexity itself is a virtue.

As to specifics, Ballotpedia [explains](#):

In instant-runoff voting, if a candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, they are the winner. If no candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated. Ballots that ranked a failed candidate as their first, or highest choice, depending on the round, are then reevaluated and counted as first-preference ballots for the next-highest-ranked candidate in that round. A new tally is conducted to determine whether any candidate has won a majority of ballots. The process is repeated until a candidate wins an outright majority. Elements of this process, such as the number of candidates eliminated in each round, may vary by jurisdiction.

Got it?

Or do you need a *48-page* RCV explainer of the kind mailed to New York City voters [some years back](#)?

What isn't hard to get is why RCV was visited on Alaska. The answer involves Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska). In brief, after losing the GOP primary to a Tea Party candidate in 2010 and then maneuvering her way to reelection, Murkowski never wanted to face a Republican primary again. So her staffers and allies supported the RCV/OPS, working with outside groups that spent heavily to pass it. (Davidson provides a more comprehensive history at [The Federalist](#).)

The result, too, is not just that Alaska Republicans now can't replace Murkowski with a more conservative choice. It's also that with the Decoy Dan sleight-of-hand, a conservative state may now be saddled with a left-wing Democratic senator.



The Heart of the Matter

All this said, the deeper reason why an RCV/OPS is disastrous is seldom explained. Now, its selling points can be compelling. The system, they say,

- reduces the “spoiler effect”;
- encourages more civil, coalition-building campaigns (you can’t win by capturing a passionate plurality); and
- consequently produces winners with broader support. “Radicals” are less likely to prevail.

This sounds good. But, first, is it really delivering more broadly supported candidates when it gives a conservative state a liberal legislator?

As to the deeper reason, remember that we have a *de facto* (not in law, but in reality) *two-party system*. After the next election, either the Democrats or Republicans *will* be controlling the government. (Even the odd Independent who occasionally wins usually caucuses with one party or the other.) Moreover, as mentioned earlier, despite some candidates’ campaign-trail promises to the contrary, they almost always vote *with* their party.

This means that a voter’s choice is simple.

Do I want to give the Democrats or Republicans another vote to advance their agenda?

That is, under normal circumstances. When an RCV/OPS delivers general-election candidates from only one party, there essentially is no choice. Both/all options would vote almost identically in Congress.

The second problem relates to Duke’s First Rule of Politics. To wit:

Under representative government, the people do not get what they want — they get what they vote for.

The point is that many voters are so ill- and/or misinformed that they often don’t *know* what they’re voting for. Now, question:

Does an RCV/OPS mitigate or exacerbate this situation?

Do we really need even more complexity?

How About Simplicity?

Besides, a two-party system is a *binary* system. This is only reflected when the general-election choices are also, essentially, binary. Having it otherwise is a bit like an adoption agency asking what sex child you want, but then throwing in a few other “genders” and requesting you rank them in order of preference. You still only have two real choices — you’ll still just get either a boy or a girl.

Only, with ranked-choice sex selection, this simple decision is obfuscated with illusory options.

Diminishing the political binary’s prominence in voting can only even begin to make sense if we eliminate it in governing. That would mean dissolving political parties.

This said, an RCV/OPS could help eliminate the two-party system — and move us toward a one-party system.



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