

SB 870- National Popular Vote Compact
Matthew Wurst Testimony
3 April 2019

Electoral reform and suffrage movements are essential to expanding democracy among Americans. While there are serious issues relating to voting in the United States that need to be addressed such as gerrymandering, allegations of voter suppression or fraud, and voter access, removing the Electoral College is not one of them. I believe the Founding Fathers created the Electoral College in the Constitution as a form of checks and balances within the Constitution.

The U.S. Constitution directly delegates the powers for designating how electors are chosen, along with the powers to set voting requirements and procedures, to the states. Congress has no power to dictate how electors can be allocated by states for presidential candidates. Unfortunately, a result of the division of states in the Electoral College has been determined by a "winner-take-all" system that gives all a state's electors to the candidate that wins the state popular vote, rather than proportionally allocating electors based on the percentage of the vote a candidate won. State legislative majorities have also engaged in tactics that will help reinforce the actions of politicians to ensure their party's success at the polls via voter suppression tactics, gerrymandering, intimidation, or the purging of voter rolls.

Nothing in the National Popular Vote Compact (NPVC) addresses the real issues plaguing our electoral system. Of the 58 presidential elections held in American history, only five have resulted in an upset in the electoral college, swearing in a President who had not won the popular vote. That is only 8%. The NPVC requires electoral votes from member states to go to the candidate who wins the national popular vote. This is problematic if Oregon joins because it would not matter how Oregonians voted, the seven electoral votes would only go to the winner. Additionally, members of the compact have the individual capabilities to change how they allocate their electors independently of the NPVC but have chosen to keep their current system until enough states have joined the NPVC.

Joining the NPVC would also remove Oregon's constitutional responsibility to organize and implement voting laws, which would further dilute the voice of Oregonians in the election process. It's imperative to stand strong by the constitutional institutions that were created by our founding fathers; this includes following the process to amend the Constitution to change the Electoral College, such as the 12th Amendment, rather than circumvent the Constitution with a compact between states.

To be abundantly clear, I believe election reform is an important issue, and one that needs to be addressed immediately. I believe there are plenty of other avenues in which to pursue this goal, and that the NPVC is a weak solution that is a result to assuage the hostility of the 2016 election's aftermath.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Wurst', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Matthew Wurst