

Dear Chairman Holvey and Members of the Committee;

I write in support of SB870, the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. The Interstate Compact does not contest existence or function of the Electoral College. As with most changes to our voting standards, it continues in the tradition of being initiated at the state level. Reforms like suffrage for women and African Americans were initiated in states before they were adopted at the national level, as were the change to an 18-year-old voting age, abolition of the property ownership requirement as a qualification for voting, and even the winner-take-all standard for distribution of state electors that is currently used by most states. This last standard is what the NPVIC proposes to change.

The Constitution stipulates only that, "Each State shall appoint, in such manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a number of Electors, equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress." No process is described or favored and change does not require a constitutional amendment.

Today we have a system that has twice elected a President chosen by a minority of voters in less than 2 decades. No one who loses the popular vote should be president of this country. This is not a partisan issue; it is one of common sense and fairness. Not only does it de-legitimize that person in the eyes of many here and around the world, it undermines basic concepts of our democracy, that a person's vote matters and that we are all equal.

The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, if passed by enough states to reach the threshold of 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency, can enfranchise all Americans because it requires that a state's electoral votes go to the winner of the national popular vote. It will mean that every vote counts equally and that the person who wins the popular vote will be the President. No longer will the votes of a few people in swing states be more powerful than the voice of the majority. No longer will voters in the minority in their states have their votes negated, whether they are in a red, blue or swing states.

Currently enough states have passed the compact to reach 189 electoral votes and it is moving through other state legislatures, which puts it within striking distance of attaining its goal. I hope that the Oregon Legislature will vote in favor of this bill and continue the momentum that will help ensure this outcome.

Sincerely yours,
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