

Nathan Karnes

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Friday, March 11, 2011

SUBJECT MATTER: Elections Bills

Proposed H.B. No. 6163 AN ACT CONCERNING AN AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATES TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE.

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I shook Barack Obama's hand and greeted him. But I shook Barack Obama's hand in Scranton Pennsylvania, not Hartford Connecticut. During 2008 I made three trips to Scranton as a field volunteer for Obama for America, an organization for which much of my volunteer time here in Connecticut was spent coordinating other volunteers to make similar out of state trips. While I like living in a state that is regarded as staunchly Blue, I do wish I could feel that our state's issues mattered in the Presidential race because our vote mattered on Election Day. I support a reformed electoral system where in 2008 Obama and McCain and Clinton and Kucinich and Paul would have made many trips to Connecticut, like they did to Pennsylvania. By my calculation, candidate Obama made two visits to the State of Connecticut, and three to the City of Scranton. I support this Bill because I want it to be knocking on Connecticut doors that the National campaigns tell me are important for me to volunteer my time on, not Pennsylvania.

Through the National Popular Vote, Connecticut, and the decisions of its voters, could matter in future Presidential elections. To quote from a recent Hartford Courant editorial endorsing this system: 1:30

There is a simple and legal way to change the system that is allowed by the Constitution — a compact between the states — called National Popular Vote.

All of the states that join the compact agree to give their electoral votes to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The result would be a democratic election. [...] A million votes in Connecticut would be as valuable as a million votes in Ohio or Florida. We would be in on the action.

[...] The bill was passed last year by the Connecticut House of Representatives, but didn't make it to the Senate calendar. 2:00

And continuing, from the Hartford Courant:

Indirect elections are a vestige of the country's past. A national office ought to be decided by the national vote. The bill is being reintroduced in the General Assembly this year. Let's pass it and get in the game.

I feel that from Education Funding through Mass Transportation to Energy Policy, there is no end to the issues where Connecticut's voice needs to be heard and Connecticut's needs should be respected, and Federally funded. The election of the President of the United States should be reformed through the Compact among states for a National Popular Vote, allowed under the Constitution. Only then will a thousand votes in Connecticut towns like Danbury and Stafford be as valuable as a thousand votes at the other end of Interstate 84, in Scranton.

I support Proposed H.B. No. 6163 AN ACT CONCERNING AN AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATES TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE.

Thank you.

3:00