



Testimony of Jared Milfred
Yale University, Class of 2016
Executive Director, Democracy United
Support for H.B. No. 5126

PO Box 205611
New Haven, CT 06520
(503) 901-4859
www.democracyunited.org

Chairman Musto, Chairman Jutila, and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify. My name is Jared Milfred. I am a student at Yale University and the Executive Director of Democracy United, an organization working for fairness, transparency, and accessibility in government. As a firm believer in the equal worth of all persons, I am proud to support H.B. No. 5126 An Act Concerning An Agreement Among The States To Elect The President Of The United States By National Popular Vote.

Every vote should be equal. This statement is uncompromising and without exception—there can be no buts, no asterisks, and no qualifications to equality. The people of Connecticut affirmed this in 1869 when we ratified the Fifteenth Amendment and guaranteed that no person would be disenfranchised based on his race or color. The people of Connecticut affirmed this in 1920 when we ratified the Nineteenth Amendment and guaranteed that no person would be disenfranchised because of his or her gender. Today, I ask you to affirm equality once again, and guarantee that no persons be disenfranchised, even partially, on account of where they live.

The current electoral system makes a vote in Connecticut worth less than half of a vote in Wyoming. Winner-take-all depresses voter turnout, divides us on regional lines, and emphasizes a handful of swing states whose interests are paramount. Meanwhile, the majority of states are overlooked as foregone conclusions—not worth a candidate's time, money, or attention. Since the 2004 presidential election, Ohio has received 153 campaign visits and Florida, 147. Connecticut has not received one.

The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact ingeniously repairs our broken system. The compact would guarantee that every vote matters and that every state is relevant. All states would be battleground states.

Naysayers will argue that the compact subjects Connecticut to the will of outsiders or that Connecticut may have to cede our electoral votes to the loser of our in-state popular vote. These objections miss the meaning of a national office. In 2016, we will not elect the President of Connecticut, we will elect the President of the United States. It is only sensible that the winner among the all of the United States should win the presidency.

Co-chairs, I am proud to join 74% of the voters of Connecticut in agreeing that the president should be elected by a fair and equal national popular vote. I urge you to do the same.

Jared Milfred
Executive Director, Democracy United