

February 20, 2017

To the Connecticut General Assembly,

I'm writing to express my support for HB5434. I believe Connecticut has an opportunity here to show leadership in an effort to ultimately empower Connecticut's citizens and give their voice full and equal effect in electing those who would aspire to our nation's highest office.

Several arguments support voting for HBR5434 and a national popular vote more generally. First, recent macroeconomic trends show that more and more Americans are living in urban centers near the coasts. Your "average American" is now someone who lives in a city the size of New Haven. But our Electoral College—conceived of several centuries ago when the notion of an "agrarian Republic" still seemed plausible—now is grossly out of date, and skews actual representation. Those who would cite the Great Compromise here as a counter-argument are mistaken, since the Electoral College at this point does not protect "small states" against big states in the same way that the Senate does against the House. In fact, small and big states alike are disadvantaged, depending on whether they are hosts of urban centers that drive our economy and where most Americans live.

Second, the recent 2016 election shows that the Electoral College, even if designed with wisdom, is not working, and it's dysfunction is more dangerous than that which it was designed to stop. If the Electoral College had actually done their job and serve as a final "check" against demagogic candidates or candidates with ties to foreign powers, we would not have the crisis of legitimacy currently on our hands with our 45th President and the odious ties to Russian interference.

Third, as a matter of accountability, it is better that the President—whose executive powers have grown substantially since World War II—be held accountable not to state *electors*, but the population in general. The rise of the administrative state and agency rule-making highlights this point. Now that more *legislative* power is entrusted into agencies headed by people like Betsy DeVos, Scott Pruitt, and Ben Carson—unelected individuals with dubious qualifications for their respected offices—it is more important that the people have more direct say in who gets to nominate these key positions.

With the Presidential winner now having lost the popular vote, and *the people of Connecticut's* vote, twice in the last five elections, it is time that Connecticut **do what it can** to stop the national effacement of the Connecticut voter.

You can do something. So do it.

Respectfully yours,
Byron Ruby



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