

—YALE COLLEGE—  
**DEMOCRATS**

Testimony of Daniel Vernick  
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February 20, 2017  
345 Temple St., Suite  
New Haven, CT 06510

In favor: H.B. 5434  
An Act Entering Connecticut Into the National Popular Vote Compact

Dear Chairs and Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee,

Transitioning to a national popular vote system is critical to engaging young people in government and ensuring confidence in our democracy. This should be a bipartisan issue; while Hillary Clinton won the popular vote in 2016, if John Kerry in 2004 had received 60,000 more votes in Ohio then he would have won the electoral college but lost the popular vote. The states that have already passed the National Popular Vote Compact add up to 61% of the 270 electoral votes necessary. CT would join a diverse group of states from across the country in supporting a popular vote system.

Civic engagement is critical on all sides of the aisle. Yet today's young people are more apathetic about government than previous generations. Many people of all ages have expressed distrust with and lost faith in the system that allowed a person with 2.9 million more votes to lose the presidency. To facilitate trust in our democracy and stand up for our democratic values, it's important to elect our president using the popular vote.

Studies show that the more children and teenagers are exposed to voting and elections, the more likely they are to be informed and active adult citizens. Whether a young adult is civically engaged from the beginning correlates to whether he or she will vote consistently throughout his or her adult life. Active presidential campaigns in every state will engage greater numbers of people in politics and will allow more young people to participate in the process of electing a president. In the last election, many students on both sides of the aisle decided not to vote because Connecticut was safely Democratic. By ensuring the presidential race is competitive, the national popular vote system will facilitate interest and engagement in local and down-ballot races.

Working towards a national popular vote system will increase youth engagement in government and build a more active generation of voters on both sides of the aisle. I strongly urge you to support H.B. 5434.