

**Testimony in support of HB5421**  
**Submitted by Together We Rise CT**  
**March 16, 2018**

Dear Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Stephanie Armstrong. I am chair of Together We Rise CT. Our group is composed of residents from East Haddam and surrounding towns who oppose discrimination in all of its forms. We hold a weekly vigil that draws people dedicated to this principle, and we promote civic engagement to help our neighbors become more involved in our democracy. About 1,000 people – and growing every day – are part of our email action network and join us for various events. Together We Rise CT writes to support HB5421, under which Connecticut would join the National Popular Vote Compact.

**The National Popular Vote Compact**

As an organization that encourages active citizen participation in government, perhaps the most fundamental principle we stand for is One Person, One Vote. The current Electoral College system undermines this principle and therefore undermines democracy. Twice in recent years we have seen the presidency go to a candidate who was not the winner of the popular vote. No matter which party this system favors, it harms America.

The National Popular Vote Compact would oblige electors from any state that adopts it to cast their electoral votes for the national popular vote winner. We would make the Electoral College obsolete without the burden of a Constitutional convention.

There is particular urgency to adopt the compact in Connecticut. Because the state is a winner-take-all state that has traditionally gone blue, presidential candidates pay little attention to the state and the concerns of its citizens. We have less access to the democratic process that voters in more highly contested states. For this reason alone, legislators should support the reform.

This is a unique time in American history when civic engagement is reaching new heights. Our members and so many other Connecticut residents are demanding more influence on what happens in Hartford and Washington. They are demanding free and fair elections. I hope that you vote in a way that honors their deep sense of civic duty.

Thank you for your attention.

Stephanie Armstrong  
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