

March 18, 2018

Dear Senator Flexer, Senator McLachlan, Representative Fox, and Distinguished Members of the GAE Committee,

My name is Paula Bacolini, a resident of Glastonbury, CT for over 30 years. I am one of three State Coordinators for National Popular Vote CT. I am a volunteer in our grassroots organization of over 2000 strong from cities and towns across CT. I am submitting **testimony in support of HB 5421, AN ACT ADOPTING THE INTERSTATE COMPACT TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE.**

I strongly support CT joining the National Popular Vote Compact of 10 states and the District of Columbia, to award it's Electoral College votes to the presidential candidate who wins the most votes in all 50 states.

The choice of National Popular Vote is a state's rights issue granted to every state by the U.S. Constitution.

Some opponents of the National Popular Vote compact say abolish the Electoral College by amending the U.S. Constitution. Well this is just an ill informed debate, since legislation to abolish the Electoral College has come before Congress over 590 times in our nation's 241 years. All attempts to abolish the Electoral College have failed every time. So this is obviously not the way to proceed to make every vote matter, nor is it the intention of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact to abolish the Electoral College. Instead, supporters of the National Popular Vote want to work within our Constitution and the rights afforded to each state by the U.S. Constitution, which allows state's the right to determine how to award their Electoral College votes. In fact, Massachusetts has changed it's electoral voting system 11 times, and finally adopted the "National Popular Vote" system.

People confuse the Electoral College with the "Winner Take All" system and assume they are the same, but the "Winner Take All" system was adopted by the states in the 1800's, awarding all the Electoral College votes to the winner of that states' popular vote. This system clearly disenfranchises groups of voters. Republicans in blue states and Democrats in red states feel that they don't truly have a voice in the election of our president, the leader of our country.

However, under the "National Popular Vote" system, a group of states, with a collective 270 Electoral College Votes, would pledge their electors to vote for the candidate who wins the most votes in all 50 states, thereby, assuring that the will of all the people across the United States, and their votes would count equally.

In the "Winner Take All" system candidates spend most their resources and have significantly more campaign events in the 12 battleground states, ignoring the specter states' needs. In the "National Popular Vote" system, candidates would have to pay attention to all 50 states or at least a good proportion of the 50 states, because the states in the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact will pledge their electors to vote for the winner of the most votes in all 50 states and D.C.

**According to National Popular Vote website, the "Winner Take All" system contributes to:**

- battleground states receiving 7% more in Federal Grants under presidents from both parties: Republican and Democrat,
- "...twice as many presidential disaster declarations,
- more Superfund enforcement exemptions, and
- more No Child Left Behind law exemptions." to name a few.

This leaves spectator states out and their needs are ignored, while the 12 battleground states benefit. Not so with “National Popular Vote”, as presidents can’t play favoritism, since all the 270 Electoral College votes of the states in the Compact will be awarded to the winner of the popular vote throughout the country. “Votes cast in cities would be just as valuable and no more controlling than votes cast in suburbs, small towns, or rural areas”, and candidates would listen to the needs of all areas of the country.

(From: <https://www.nationalpopularvote.com/written-explanation> )

**“The National Popular Vote bill has been enacted by 11 jurisdictions possessing 165 electoral votes—61% of the 270 electoral votes necessary to activate it, including:**

four small jurisdictions (RI, VT, HI, DC),  
three medium- size states (MD, MA, WA), and  
four big states (NJ, IL, NY, CA).

The bill has passed a total of 35 legislative chambers in 23 states—most recently by a 40–16 vote in the Arizona House, a 28–18 vote in the Oklahoma Senate, a 57–4 vote in New York Senate, a 37–21 vote in Oregon House, and a 26-16 vote in the New Mexico Senate. **A total of 3,055 state legislators have either sponsored or cast a recorded vote for the bill.”**

(From: <https://www.nationalpopularvote.com/written-explanation> )

The “Winner Take All’ system does not truly represent the will of the people. It is highly likely that this trend in national presidential elections will continue going forward, and the loser of the national popular vote will win the Electoral College. This is a serious problem because the collective will of all American people will be thwarted several times in our lifetime. This creates less faith in our electoral system and causes more dissatisfaction among citizens, less engagement and ultimately less involvement of our electorate, and it is worth considering that this path forward could put our very democracy at risk.

In a 2018, a poll of Connecticut voters, just released by Making Every Vote Count found: 76% of Connecticut voters support the National Popular Vote, and 78% endorsed the idea that the candidate who garners the most votes should be president.

<https://gallery.mailchimp.com/f93096352cb7e5d6f293b07e3/files/a756fb18-6fb1-4928-8059-14f14d85cc82/>

[Making\\_Every\\_Vote\\_Count\\_CT\\_Voter\\_Survey\\_Results.pdf](#)

Joining the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact is not an issue to divide us by party. This is an issue for all Americans in every state, for every vote cast by every eligible voter to count equally in electing the president of the United States. I am urging the Honorable Members of the GAE Committee to unanimously support this legislation by voting for HB 5421 and out of the committee, thereby, keeping our democracy safe and our elections free and fair, so every vote matters in every state equally.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,  
Paula Bacolini  
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