



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

**REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL S. FERGUSON**  
ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-EIGHTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 4200  
300 CAPITOL AVENUE  
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

TOLL FREE: (800) 842-1423  
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8700  
Michael.Ferguson@housegop.ct.gov

**MEMBER**  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Testimony in Opposition of  
S.B. 408: An Act Entering Connecticut into the National Popular Compact  
H.B. 5421: An Act Adopting the Interstate Compact to Elect the President of the United States  
by National Popular Vote  
Government Administration and Elections Committee  
March 19, 2018

Good morning Senator McLachlan, Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, Representative Devlin and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. I am testifying in opposition of the bills which would have Connecticut join the National Popular Vote Compact, S.B. 408 and H.B. 5421.

Prior to becoming a State Representative, I had the privilege of co-authoring an article with a former professor of mine, Dr. Patricia Crouse, and a fellow student, Michael French, at Western Connecticut State University. The article, *The National Popular Vote Compact: Undermining States' Rights*, was published in the 2014-2015 edition of *State and Local Government* by Sage Publications/CQ Press. It is attached here in my testimony for the committee to read. Dr. Crouse has also submitted her own testimony in opposition to these bills which I hope the committee will read.

The article explores why the National Popular Vote Compact (NPVC) might seem like a fair proposal on the surface, but once given the chance to evaluate further, has several flaws.

The NPVC violates the interstate compact clause of the Constitution, and would therefore need congressional approval to be enacted. NPVC recognizes that this is a potential issue for them, and has proposed to solve this by introducing a bill in Congress which grants consent to the compact on behalf of the District of Columbia. They argue that this would then "imply consent" to the overall compact. However, because the District of Columbia is not a state, and falls under different jurisdiction from the fifty states, Congress would have to explicit consent to the states to join the NPVC rather than implicit consent to the District of Columbia, making this a flawed argument.

The NPVC enhances federal supremacy in elections, despite elections typically being run entirely by the states. The biggest example of this is for possible recounts. If the president is to be elected by the national popular vote, then it would seem likely that federal recount standards would be made for states to follow. Currently, states have their own rules on how they conduct recounts, and entering into the Compact would take away the states' power over elections. If federal recount standards are not created, or if they are not done so prior to a presidential election, then it is very likely that in a close presidential election, the losing candidate would look at areas throughout the country where the vote was very close, and petition multiple states to conduct a recount. Endless litigation could ensue from this, and could ultimately result in a nationwide recount under the NPVC's plan.

Essentially, the NPVC seeks to circumvent the U.S. Constitution. The only legitimate way to elect the president based on the national popular vote would be to amend the Constitution and abolish the Electoral College. This, of course, would lead to a very passionate debate throughout the country. However, it would be a debate focused entirely on the only proper and constitutional way of addressing the Electoral College.

I thank the committee for reading my testimony, and encourage you to please read through the attached article, *The National Popular Vote Compact: Undermining States' Rights*, in the hopes that you can understand some of the many flaws of the National Popular Vote Compact. I urge the committee to oppose S.B. 408 and H.B. 5421.