

Dear Committee Members,

The issue of fairness and its effect on voter turnout is my primary reason for supporting NPV. Voter turnout in our democracy is deplorable. According to one source only 35% of Americans who are eligible to vote are registered. Of those registered voters, only 55% actually did vote in the 2016 presidential election. On average, swing states see an 8% higher rate of voter turnout than "spectator" states such as CT. This supports my understanding that if people believed **every vote matters** there is a greater likelihood that voter turnout would increase. So many people are disillusioned, angry and apathetic about our government. They feel hopeless and disenfranchised--- people of both parties. Poor voter turnout can only be explained by the sense of futility that so many Americans feel.

Our democratic process is slow, unwieldy, often inefficient. But as citizens of this quirky democracy we tolerate this inefficiency in order to be sure that the clear will of the majority is heard and acted on. I believe strongly that this clarity – the certainty that the government is responding honestly to its citizenry – will be greatly enhanced by adopting the National Popular Vote Compact (Currently H.B. # 5421 in CT) as a legal way of awarding our state's seven electoral votes in the presidential elections.

I remember vividly when Al Gore lost the election after winning the popular vote. That was my first introduction to the problems in our current system. Until then, it had never occurred to me that the minority candidate could win. It has happened again in 2016 and I believe it is time to tweak the system. In the interest of full disclosure, I tend to swing left on most issues, but I would remind Republicans, who are pleased that the *winner take all* approach placed their candidate in office this time, that when it comes to the popular vote the door swings both ways. If the majority of popular votes are cast for a Republican candidate, that is acceptable to me. The take-away is that the NPV Compact is the fairest way of electing the president and the clearest expression of the democratic process.

Please vote YES for H.B. #5421. If people believe that they have a true voice in their government they are much more likely to show up at the polls. A more participatory process can only make us stronger as a democracy.

Thank you,
Melinda Fields