



State of Connecticut  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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VICE CHAIR  
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MEMBER  
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Testimony of State Representative Brandon L. McGee, Jr  
March 19th, 2017

Government, Administration and Elections Committee

**In Support of H.B. 5421 AN ACT ADOPTING THE INTERSTATE COMPACT TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE**

Distinguished Chairs Senator Flexer, Senator McLachlan, Representative Fox, Ranking Member Devlin, Members of the GAE Committee, I am State Representative Brandon McGee her to testify in support of H.B. 5421, "AN ACT ADOPTING THE INTERSTATE COMPACT TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE."

Every person's vote should be equal when electing our President. I support a national popular vote because it would make the equitable principle of "one person, one vote" a practical reality in presidential elections as it is in our state and local elections. I am sitting here today because in my first run for state office I won the State's first "second" primary. Yes, a second primary. In my first election for office I was a significant underdog but because in our state the person with the most votes wins I am here in my third term as the State Representative for the 5th assembly district and Vice Chair of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus.

I am not alone in believing in this principle in fact, a recent poll of 1,202 Connecticut voters shows just how much support the National Popular Vote movement has in our state, across all party lines. The poll showed that 78% of Connecticut residents believe the person who receives the most votes nationwide should be elected President – this includes 92% of all Democrats, 76% of all independents and 62% of all Republicans. This movement is popular and gaining momentum.

As Vice Chair of the Black and Puerto Rican caucus I have a duty to advocate for equity. A national popular vote system is the best way for us to respect the great

democratic ideal of “one person, one vote.” With this in mind, I ask you all do you think our current system is an equitable one?

It is important to point out that communities of color are disproportionately on the wrong side of the “battleground” state equation. Communities of color represent more of the population in states that are ignored in presidential elections and therefore are less influential nationwide when it comes to who will be our next president. African-American, Latinos and Asian Americans alike are all more likely to live in “fly-over” states under our current system.

Today only eight to 12 states truly decide the national Presidential election - these “swing” states are the only ones that garner candidate visits, that generate key national policy discussions and that are paid any attention by the national media and pundits. Considering that more than 136 million votes were cast for the office of President in 2016, this means maybe as many as 100 million people who votes in a state other than these eight to 12 states had their votes truly not count. This is not democracy, and this is not American.

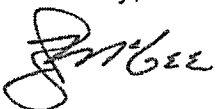
Everyone one of us as members of the Connecticut General Assembly are here because of “one person, one vote.” While not all of us have been through nail biting elections, as someone who has, my appreciation for that process has grown over the years. It allowed me to see how it empowered citizens of the North End of Hartford and Windsor, knowing that their vote would change the outcome of an election. I am literally sitting here because every vote counted the same. A vote in the North End of Hartford counted the same as one in Windsor. So today, I ask you why do we want to continue to participate in an outdated process that makes my vote in the North End of Hartford count less than a Brandon McGee who lives in the suburbs of Columbus, Ohio? †This is inequitable, and that is why I support Connecticut joining the 10 states and Washington DC that have already voted to join a “Interstate Compact to Elect the President of the United States by the National Popular Vote.”

Considering all of the reasons I have laid out for you, I’d like to ask if you believe that “one person, one vote” is the method our nation should elect its President? This idea is popular, it is fair, and it is do-able this year. Let’s join the Interstate Compact and truly make every vote count.

Please join me in supporting HB 5421.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B McGEE', written in a cursive style.

State Representative Brandon McGee