



**Government Administration and Elections Committee
Public Hearing
March 19, 2018**

TESTIMONY OF SECRETARY OF THE STATE DENISE W. MERRILL REGARDING:

- **H.B. 5421, AN ACT ADOPTING THE INTERSTATE COMPACT TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE**
- **Senate Bill 408, AN ACT ENTERING CONNECTICUT INTO THE NATIONAL POPULAR COMPACT**

Good morning Chairman Fox, Chairmen Flexer and McLachlan, Vice Chairs Frantz, Slossberg, and Winkler, Ranking Member Devlin, and members of the committee. My name is Denise Merrill and I am the Secretary of the State of Connecticut. I am here to testify in support of the two bills that will enter Connecticut into the Interstate Compact for the National Popular Vote.

Before I do however, I want to briefly address you on the myriad of bills related to the Citizens' Election Program that are before you today.

The Citizens' Election Program is one of the things that I am proudest of from my time in the legislature – taking big money out of the political process empowers small, local donors and makes meeting and talking to voters the number one job of candidates, instead of raising money.

There are several bills before you today regarding the Citizens' Election Program that I won't comment on specifically, except to ask you to preserve and strengthen this valuable program.

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For the second time in five presidential contests, the candidate for president who won the most votes lost the election. That simply doesn't make sense to citizens who cast their ballots. It also does little to bolster faith in the process and encourage participation.

From School Board and Town Council, to Representatives in Congress and Senators, to the Governor and Constitutional officers, every person we elect to represent us is elected on the basis of receiving the most votes. Except for the President of the United States.

It is unsurprising then that the people of Connecticut, across demographic groups and party lines, overwhelmingly believe that the President of the United States should also be the candidate that receives the most votes.

My support for the National Popular Vote is because of the fundamental democratic principle of one person, one vote. I stand with the voters, of all parties and no party, of every demographic group, and of every region of Connecticut, who believe that the person with the most votes should win the election.

Our electoral process is complicated enough. The outcome should be simple: the person with the most votes should win. That is not what is happening now, and I support the National Popular Vote compact because we need this to change.

Thank you.