

Ethan Rodriguez-Torrent  
New Haven, CT

**Testimony in support of**

**H.B. 5421**

**“AN ACT ADOPTING THE INTERSTATE COMPACT TO ELECT THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE”**

To the members of the Government Administration and Election Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for Connecticut’s entry into the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

The Electoral College, as it currently stands, fails on two counts. First, it fails to serve its original purpose: the election of the President by an elite group of well informed citizens (electors) in whom local citizens have placed their trust. Second, it fails to reflect the will of the majority of Americans. In doing so, it contributes to the disenfranchisement and disengagement of voters throughout the country who do not live in “swing states” and are left to wonder whether their vote is meaningful at all.

There are many reasons why voter registration and participation in the United States is much lower than in most of our peer countries. A major one, in my belief, is the feeling of helplessness that voters in non-swing states feel when they go to the polls. That feeling has been magnified in recent years by the election of two presidents who failed to win even a plurality of the popular vote. Right or wrong, their effectiveness in fulfilling their promises has also been hobbled as a result of their lack of legitimacy.

The number of electors assigned to each state is undemocratic. As a resident of Connecticut, why should my vote have only 65% of the value of the vote of a random resident of New Hampshire? The “winner take all, segregated by state” system is even more disempowering, leading to a consistent and excessive focus by major party candidates on 9-12 “swing states” every four years. To return to the New Hampshire comparison: between the primaries and the general election, Connecticut hosted one (1) campaign event by a Presidential or Vice Presidential candidate. New Hampshire, with only 40% of our population, hosted twenty-one (21).

A true democracy requires anonymity, or **symmetry** – the academic terms for the very basic principle of “one person, one vote.” Where the status quo is otherwise, then it is time for a change.

In 1969, a national popular vote bill was supported by Nixon (the newly elected Republican President), Humphrey (his defeated Democratic challenger), and *more than 80% of the U.S. House of Representatives*. It was defeated by a narrow majority in the

Senate. Today the states, with their Constitutionally granted authority to appoint their electors as their legislatures see fit, have a second chance to fix what the Senate won't.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ethan Rodriguez-Torrent', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ethan Rodriguez-Torrent  
New Haven, CT