



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONNECTICUT, INC.®

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CGA Government Administration and Elections Committee

March 19, 2018 Public Hearing

Testimony Submitted by Yvonne Senturia, Election Law Specialist

Support for:

HB5421 AN ACT ADOPTING THE INTERSTATE COMPACT TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE

SB408 AN ACT ENTERING CONNECTICUT INTO THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut is a nonpartisan, statewide organization committed to effective public policy, the active involvement of citizens in their government and improving the electoral process. We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on bills before you today.

HB5421 AN ACT ADOPTING THE INTERSTATE COMPACT TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE

SB408 AN ACT ENTERING CONNECTICUT INTO THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

The League of Women Voters believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice President is best for representative government. The National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact provides a way to achieve the goal of choosing the President of the United States by popular vote without amending the Constitution, which is a protracted process with delayed outcome. The NPV Compact would guaranty the the winner of the popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia becomes the President. Accordingly, LWVCT *supports HB5421 and SB408.*

Voters believe that the candidate who “wins” an election should be the candidate who received the most votes – either a majority or a plurality (in multi-candidate elections) in our democracy based on “one person, one vote.” When this does not occur, the legitimacy of our electoral system is called into question. Yet out of our nations’s 56 presidential elections, there have been five elections in which the candidate elected to the presidency was not the person who won the most votes.

Under the current Electoral College system, presidential candidates tend to focus their campaigns on the relatively few battleground states that determine an Electoral College victory or loss. A large part of the country is virtually ignored by the candidates, and residents of non-key states become passive observers of the election process. With a shift to the NPV Compact, voters across the country, including Connecticut, would have a greater sense that their votes do indeed count in a meaningful way and would have an incentive to pay attention, vote and participate in the electoral process. **The League believes that it is more important than ever that we preserve the democratic ideal of making each vote count.**

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment upon these bills.