

Co-chairs Fox, Flexer and McLachlan and distinguished members of the GAE Committee,

My name is Garrett Sullivan, I am from East Haven. I am testifying in support of H.B. 5421, An Act Adopting The Interstate Compact To Elect The President By National Popular Vote. The bill would sign Connecticut onto the National Popular Vote Compact which requires a 270 electoral vote-majority of states pass similar legislation. Upon the compact enacted in a majority of states, future Presidents shall be elected via the national popular vote.

Historically there have been five elections in which the electoral college (EC) opposed and overrode the popular vote. Before 2016, in which the popular vote margin was approximately three million votes, it happened in 2000 by about a half million popular votes, in 1888 by about one hundred thousand votes, in 1876 by about twenty-five thousand votes, and in 1824 by about forty thousand votes. In each of these cases, the popular vote was overridden due to the EC, and the candidate with the lesser popular vote won the Presidency.

As you can see, this contradiction of the EC and the popular vote is a huge problem which appears to be getting worse. Our Constitution and Bill of Rights were founded on the ideas that the democratic process means each and every citizen has equal power to vote for their elected officials. When the EC opposes the will of the majority, we need to fix the system so that it accurately reflects the will of the people. The EC must reinforce and support the will of the American citizenry, not compete with it.

The EC made sense in the post-Constitutional era, where policies were susceptible to slavery ideas, and before the invention of the telegraph. Reason for implementation of the EC was that it was difficult to securely transport a large number of ballots to a central location (i.e., Washington DC) to be counted. Thus, the solution was to divide each state equally into EC districts so that states could submit only the number-about 1 or 2 dozen per state-of EC votes. Such a system also allowed slave-owners the ease of casting, to whomever candidate the slave owner chose, the many votes (multiplied by  $\frac{3}{5}$ ) of his/her slaves. But, as technology increased and the telegraph was invented, and as slavery was abolished, the states became able to easily communicate amongst themselves. Thus, the necessity for the antiquated vestige that is the EC became less and less.

I believe Election Day results should be more significant than an inaccurate tally. Some states' EC votes are given up when the popular vote begins to lean heavily toward one candidate. This is what is called the "winner-take-all" outcome, and it is based merely upon the leading number of votes and not the precise number of popular votes. I feel this is not right and every, single vote should be counted.

With regards to the most recent presidential election, we witnessed the largest number of deviant EC members in history. Five Democratic and two Republican electors, in dissent, casted their votes for neither of the candidates for president. This caused Donald Trump to lose two EC votes, yielding 304 votes (270 is the necessary majority for election). In addition, it had

been found by a team of investigators that 65 of the Republican EC members were illegitimate due to living in separate districts or holding public office positions (these situations are illegal under respective state laws). All of these problems should be reasons why the American people do not require an unbalanced and unregulated system of representation for presidential elections, such as the EC.

I write these words to prevent future unfairly elected president(s) and/or damage to our great nation. I'm also advocating for a fairer election system. There are numerous ills with our current system, and the EC is one such ill. In addition, I think that the EC is the reason why many individuals don't show up at the polls. An unfair and unequal system such as this dissuades individuals from becoming engaged citizens. I think, if individuals saw their vote counting as they should (i.e., one person, one vote), we would see a much higher rate of voting.

*Now is the time* to put the government, namely the White House, back into the hands of the people. This movement currently has the momentum it needs to see nationwide success. Connecticut should be doing its part as a member state in the Republic. Please, take this easy step and enter Connecticut into the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC) and help restore our great democracy.

Thank you for your time,

Garrett Sullivan  
East Haven, CT resident