

Jeffrey Stevensen  
South Portland  
LD 1578

TO: Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee  
Testimony In Favor Of LD 1578

Good morning Senators and Representatives of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. We are writing in support of LD 1578, An Act To Join The National Vote Compact.

We believe it is vital to move our country in the direction of more equal democracy, not less. Yet we are distressed and disheartened to see entrenched interests denying us an equal vote.

The initial founding of our Constitution of the United States set up a system of unequal representation in the United States Senate, to insure smaller population states had a check on the power of larger population states. Inequality was further extended by the system for counting the population for Representatives to Congress and the Electoral College, in order to preserve the vile institution of slavery. Thankfully, that institution is ended. But our unequal Electoral College remains in place.

Extreme gerrymandering of Congressional districts and “winner take all” awarding of electoral votes has led us to this moment. Only a narrow fraction of voters in just a handful of “swing” states are decisive in our national election for President. Most states are simply ignored by candidates in order to win in this system. Twice now since the year 2000, a president has been elected who lost the popular vote.

Amending our Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College is a politically daunting task. Thankfully, we can join The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact will guarantee the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The Compact ensures that every vote, in every state, will matter equally in every presidential election. The Compact is a state-based approach that preserves the Electoral College, state control of elections, and the power of the states to control how the President is elected. It will only go into effect when enough states join to reach 270 or more required electoral votes.

We want our votes to count equally with all voters in all other states. It’s only fair to have One Person, One Vote. It’s only fair that candidates campaign for all voters in our country, not just in a select few states. It is only fair that the will of all the people be enacted.

The states have the absolute power to enter into compacts such as this one. Some people have worried there may be unintended consequences should this Compact go into effect. If that becomes the case, the solution is simple: any state entering the Compact by legislation may exit the Compact by legislation. That is its strength, preserving each state’s decision to each state alone. In the long term, amending the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College would be a better solution. But this Compact allows us the luxury of “trying it on for size” and seeing if we are satisfied with the fairness of the results.

We believe once the Compact is enacted and used, no one in any state will want to go back to elections without it. We urge you to pass LD 1578 and join The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. It is vital that enough states join to reach the 270-plus electoral votes needed to ensure fairness in voting for President of the United States.

Respectfully yours,

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