

Jonathan Schmidt
Bowdoin
LD 1578

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. My name is Jon Schmidt, I am a resident of Bowdoin, and I am submitting this testimony to express my ardent opposition to LD 1578 "An Act to Adopt an Interstate Compact to Elect the President of the United States by National Popular Vote."

This bill does nothing to better represent the people of Maine or enhance this state's influence in the national political forum. Rather, it devalues Maine's votes and significantly reduces our impact on national presidential election results. Furthermore, the notion that the Electoral College votes of this state should be determined not by how the people of Maine vote, but by the winner of the "national popular vote", is the antithesis of local empowerment and democratic process.

Some bill advocates claim that under the status quo, presidential candidates concentrate their campaigning efforts on "only a few swing states". Even supposing this is so, if the law changes to favor the national popular vote winner, why would candidates have ANY incentive to visit the smaller/lower population states? The answer is obvious: they wouldn't. Candidates would be foolish to waste their time on sparsely populated areas -- such as Maine.

Our Constitutional republic's federal system wisely and deftly balances the concepts of proportional representation (Congressional House representatives based on population) and State sovereignty (two senators, regardless of population or size). This arrangement ensures every State at least has "a seat at the table" and relevance in national decision-making. For a relatively small state, such as Maine, to surrender this already-limited influence in order to follow the "will" of the most populous states defies common sense.

Members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, I urge you not to muffle our voices and diminish our influence in national presidential elections as proposed in this bill.

Vote: OUGHT NOT TO PASS. Thank you.