



The League of Women Voters of Delaware Supports Use of the National Popular Vote Compact

In 1970, following a national consensus study process, the League of Women Voters of the U.S. adopted a position stating that "...the direct popular vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government." By 2001, that position was amended to add that "therefore, the Electoral College should be abolished." Recognizing the difficulty of accomplishing that objective, in 2010, the position was further amended to suggest that "the National Popular Vote Compact is one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for the President."

The League of Women Voters of Delaware agrees that the winner of our presidential elections should be the person who receives the most votes, nationwide. With our current Electoral College system, that is not always the case. In two out of the last five presidential elections, the candidate with the most votes, nationwide, did not win the election. The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact is a way to correct this problem without having to go through the lengthy process of a Constitutional Amendment.

Currently, according to the U.S. Constitution, each state can apportion its electoral votes as it sees fit. Most have a winner-takes-all system where the candidate with the most votes in their state receives *all* of its electoral votes. However, states could decide to do things differently. States that join the Popular Vote Compact agree that their electors will vote for whoever is the winner of the popular vote nationwide (not necessarily the winner in their state).

When enough states join the Compact to control 270 electoral votes, the candidate who wins the popular vote nationally will also be the winner of the election. As of this writing, 11 states with 165 electoral votes have joined this Compact.¹

One of the ways that current voting is undemocratic is that it violates the principle of "one person, one vote." Because of the way the electoral votes are apportioned, for example, the state of Texas gets one electoral vote for every 722,811 residents, but the state of Wyoming gets one for every 195,369 residents².

A second problem with the current system is that huge numbers of voters are essentially disenfranchised because of the winner-takes-all system used by most states. If you are a Republican voter in a blue state, or a Democratic voter in a red state, your vote essentially does not count. This means that if you are a Republican voter in Delaware, your vote for president in recent elections has been, for all practical purposes, irrelevant.

When enough states representing 270 electoral votes join the Compact, everyone's vote will count equally, whether they live in a large or small state, a blue or a red one. Therefore, the LWV of Delaware urges the General Assembly to join the Compact as an effective and democratic way to deal with the often-undemocratic results of the electoral college, without actually abolishing the institution.

¹ www.nationalpopularvote.com

² Observer.com: The built-in bias of the Electoral College, November 4, 2016.