

Testimony in Support
of LD 1578, “An Act to Adopt an Interstate Compact to Elect the President of the United States
by National Popular Vote”
Legal and Veterans Affairs Committee, Jan. 8. 2024

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Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and LVA committee members:

This bill has been considered by seven different Legislatures, and I have testified in its favor four times. It has been supported by both House and Senate at various times but never enacted.

I believe I know why. Both supporters and opponents, myself included, have focused on how a popular vote would be different than the present electoral vote system – while failing to address the fundamental underlying issue.

It’s really quite simple. Do we trust the American people to directly choose their president – as they do for every other office in the land, from governor and senator to school board and town council – by majority vote? Or must we continue to have states do the voting for them?

The national popular vote honors the basic principle that the person with the most votes wins, and that each vote, wherever it is cast, counts equally.

Clearly that does not happen now. A handful of swing states get all the attention, while the votes of the vast majority are basically ignored because everyone already knows where most states’ electoral votes will go.

If we’re willing to look afresh at how Americans vote for president, objections to this bill quickly fall away. The ones I hear most often are that Maine gets more representation through the electoral vote, and that big states would overwhelm small states like Maine.

Neither is true. Because our voter turnout is among the highest in the nation, we would get more representation through the popular vote. And states simply won’t matter, because each American will be voting directly for president.

Using the popular vote would heal many of the political and some of the cultural divisions around us, and get rid of the never-ending red state vs. blue state conflicts.

At least when we vote for president, we will be voting as one, with no need for the courts or Congress to determine the outcome.

This compact will help us preserve the Republic, and move closer to fully honoring our democratic principles.