

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Do Pass
Vote:	7 - 1 - 0
Yeas:	Berger, Edwards C., Garrard, Gelser, Nolan, Read, Roblan
Nays:	Jenson
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Jerry Watson, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/20, 3/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Enacts Oregon's participation in interstate compact for election of U.S. President by national popular vote. Provides that compact takes effect when enacted by states cumulatively possessing a majority of all electoral votes. Establishes procedures requiring chief election official of each state participating in the compact to (a) separately determine national popular vote winner by tallying votes in all states (those that belong to the compact and those that do not) and (b) certify the elector slate nominated in that state in association with the national popular vote winner. Provides mechanism for state to withdraw from compact. Terminates compact if Electoral College is abolished.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Impact of "winner take all" rule on Electoral College
- History of Electoral College
- Impact on federalism
- Impact on voter turnout

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The existing mechanism for selecting a president provides for indirect election through the Electoral College. Most presidential elections have resulted in the eventual Electoral College winner also winning the popular vote--but not always. Proponents of SB 2588 assert that the president selected through the Electoral College should reflect the national popular vote and that SB 2588 will accomplish that goal. The concept of electing U.S. presidents by national popular vote is not new, but increased attention has been devoted to the idea since the hotly contested presidential election in November, 2000. One approach, abolishing the Electoral College, requires a federal constitutional amendment and, in the usual case, the support of the legislatures in three-quarters of the states. Other approaches include distributing Electoral College electors within a state by proportional representation, allocating those electors through a combination of congressional district and statewide elector selection, and the approach taken in SB 2588, a compact between states to cast Electoral College votes for the national popular vote winner. Opponents of the national popular vote compact assert that the compact (a) seeks to do indirectly what likely cannot be done directly (i.e., amend the U.S. Constitution), (b) negates the impact on presidential elections of the voters in states which do not belong to the compact, and (c) threatens the principles of federalism.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.