



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON

March 20, 2013

To: House Committee on Rules
Representative Chris Garrett, Chair

Re: HB 3077 National Popular Vote

SUPPORT

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a non-partisan, grass roots political organization that supports and encourages informed citizen participation in government. The League wholeheartedly supports HB 3077 which would enact the interstate compact to elect the U.S. President by National Popular Vote.

At the 2010 convention of the League of Women Voters of the U.S., League members adopted an addition to our long-standing position on the Electoral College. The position now reads: "The League of Women Voters believes that the direct popular vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as a way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of President until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished. The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections".

In asking your support for this important legislation, we bring the following points to your attention.

1. Currently, voters are not treated equally in the presidential elections. Two-thirds of the states are ignored during campaigning, and 98 percent of the campaign dollars are spent in 15 states. Oregon is one of the spectator-only states where candidates drop by only for brief fund raising events.
2. Adoption of NPV would not disadvantage small states. The political power of such states would increase because every vote would count. NPV will guarantee the presidency to the candidate who receives the most votes in all 50 states. Hawaii and DC have already adopted the compact. All states would be battleground states.
3. States are empowered to enter into interstate compacts; they are sanctioned in the U.S. Constitution, and they have long been a part of the country's history. No state can withdraw from a compact, other than by rules of the compact, and the proposed compact has such rules.

The Constitution also gives each state the exclusive power over how the Electoral College works and the manner of appointment of electors.

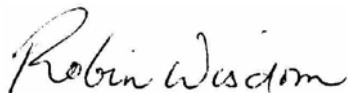
4. Data shows that more than 70 percent of Americans favor a national popular vote for president. While a constitutional amendment to eliminate the Electoral College would accomplish this goal, it has been decades since that approach has been considered. The NPV plan works within the present system to bring about direct elections within the foreseeable future.

5. Some have wondered about voters minding that their electoral votes would go to a candidate who won the national popular vote, but not the popular vote in their state. What needs to be pointed out is that we elect a president of the United States, not a president of an individual state.

6. The National Popular Vote bill preserves the Electoral College and state control of elections. It ensures that every vote, in every state will matter in every presidential election. It is time for Oregon to end being ignored every four years and to participate in the direct election of our nation's leaders.

Thank you for this opportunity to support HB 3077, and the League urges its movement to the House floor.

Sincerely,



Robin Wisdom
LWVOR President



Kappy Eaton
Governance Coordinator