

Dr. Ethan A. Scarl
2380 SE 58th Avenue
Portland, OR 97215-4012
March 17, 2017

The following is respectfully submitted in support of my verbal comments at the March 14 hearing of the House Rules Committee on HB 2927, and I ask that if possible it be included in the record of that hearing

Bill HB 2927 for a National Popular Vote (NPV) has been criticized as (a) trying to sneak a change to the Constitution without due process of amendment, and (b) disrespecting the thought and care that the Founding Fathers put into devising the Electoral College (EC). Upon examination, both arguments are erroneous.

Certainly the nation has changed considerably since 1789, but it is less widely appreciated that the EC has also become something quite different from the Founding Fathers' original intent. Electors were originally assumed to be selected by district elections or other means determined by state legislatures, and free to vote their conscience as determined in debate with other electors.

The change to having state voters directly elect their electors was intended to make the process more democratic and responsive to will of the people. Unfortunately, the winner-take-all nature of state elections have too often had the opposite effect, forcing the electors' votes with some electors even facing punishment for "voting wrong." The result has been that while the selection of President has often reflected the will of the people, it has been through sheer dumb luck. 2016 is only the most egregious example to date of a result that grossly violates the express intent of the voting public.

HB 2927 and the NPV make absolutely no change to the EC itself or its Constitutional role, only changing how some states will instruct their electors to vote, those states simply exercising the role explicitly bestowed upon them by the Constitution.

HB 2927 and the NPV are absolutely in accord with the Constitution as it defines the roles and duties of the states and of the EC.

The only downside for a state participating in the NPV is that its voters cede control of its electors to the will of the nation as a whole. The upside is that never again will the United States be subject to being governed by capriciously selected presidents who lost their elections.

Ethan Scarl