

## **Statement against SB 1512**

January 31, 2018

I am a strong supporter of National Popular Vote. With 10 states and DC already in the compact, it is time Oregon joins. It's been over 10 years since the fight in Oregon has begun and NPV legislation has passed the House four times. There is no reason Oregonians should wait any longer.

SB 1512, however, is not the answer, and I find the introduction of this bill by the Senate Rules Committee incredibly problematic. The short session was created to focus on fiscal issues, and Senator Courtney has already said that there is not enough time to even pass cap and trade. Why then has NPV suddenly become a priority? There are no named sponsors, and the statement at the top has made it clear the Senate President does not support it. Yet Senator Burdick has been quoted as saying that she expects "lawmakers to act quickly to put a referral to Oregon voters on the national popular vote." Why NPV now, in the 35-day short session that was created to focus on fiscal issues? Why is this committee willing to move an NPV bill now?

We need to call this bill what it is: a backhanded way to kill NPV. A ballot campaign will do that, and the members of the Rules Committee should know this very well. Ballot measures are complex and expensive. Measure 101 cost 3 million dollars to secure its successful passage. Measure 97 cost 40 million with opponents outspending supporters 26 million to 14 million, and it failed, despite polling at 60% in September of 2016. To think that an NPV campaign won't reach somewhere between 4 and 10 million is naïve. As reported in [a recent article](#), the Koch brothers have pledged to spend 400 million in 2018 on "politics and policy to shape November's midterm elections nationwide." There is no doubt Oregon will see some of this money if NPV becomes a ballot measure, and there is no doubt that outside opponents like the Koch brothers will outspend NPV supporters and defeat this bill.

We could avoid ballot referral by just passing the clean NPV bill (HB 2927 in 2017) that has passed the House four times. This bill allows state legislatures--as stated in the Constitution (Article II, Section I)--to decide how to allocate our electoral votes. This is how every electoral college law in every state has been enacted, including the proportional voting we see in Maine and Nebraska. This path costs taxpayers no money, is constitutionally sound, and does not require a statewide campaign that will cost millions of dollars and countless hours of Oregonians' time. This is the way to bring NPV to Oregon, not the backhanded, politically-charged bill that sits in Senate Rules.

I strongly urge you to vote "no" on SB 1512.

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