

Dear Members of the Oregon Senate Rules Committee,

I strongly support Oregon's entrance into the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact by way of legislative action and not by ballot referral as SB 1512 proposes. SB 1512 came out of this very committee so I am asking you to amend this bill or propose a new bill so that the text that you consider is identical to what has already passed the Oregon house four times and has passed in 10 other states + D.C.

NPV has been held hostage in Oregon since 2009 when it first passed the house. Even when a majority of Senators signed onto the bill as sponsors it was not allowed to be considered by the body. Proposing a referral to the people on an issue the Senate has been denied the ability to weigh in on is not governing, it is playing politics. We want the Senate to govern and do the job specifically given to them by the founders of this country.

If a referral campaign were successful, the validity of Oregon's participation in the compact is sure to be challenged in court, with Oregon taxpayers footing the bill. This is because Article 2 of the U.S. Constitution gives the authority to decide how electors are chosen to the legislature. Your own Legislative Counsel thinks that deciding this issue via legislative referral would win in court but concludes their opinion saying:

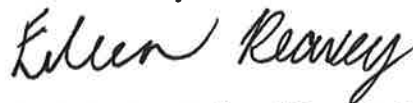
"Given the level of disagreement that the interpretation of "legislature" has produced under other constitutional provisions, and the fact that any challenge to the NPVC would occur in a highly political environment, the resolution of this issue is difficult to predict."

It isn't a responsible use of time or resources to refer an issue to the voters when there is even the slightest question about if it can be decided by the voters when we already know it can (and should) be decided by the legislature. This recklessness is further compounded because referring this invites out of state anti-democracy special interest groups to spend millions of dollars in Oregon. This will become a partisan political football. Whoever gets the most votes winning the Presidential election is not a partisan issue as evidenced by the nine years of bipartisan support this bill has experienced in Oregon and across the country.

I am asking all of you to put forth the real NPV bill which has already been passed by your colleagues in the house four times. Allow that bill to be considered by the committee members here and your fellow Senators. We elected you all to consider bills just like this; technical, a little wonky, solid understanding of existing laws and the U.S. constitution required. It was proved last session you have the mandate from the people and your peers to pass this bill and you failed to even hold a vote. You have the power and duty to correct that now.

Sincerely,

Eileen Reavey



Co-Director, National Popular Vote Oregon
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