

SB 870: National Popular Vote STRONGLY IN FAVOR

April 3, 2019

Dear Committee Members:

I strongly support SB 870 and urge you to vote “yes” on this bill and allow Oregon to join the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact so **each** Oregonian’s vote will count.

As you probably know, in the last three presidential elections, Oregon was ignored by presidential candidates. Not one major candidate held a campaign event in our state during the general election, instead focusing on the “battleground” states. I have voted in Oregon in three presidential elections, and I have never had the opportunity to hear from a presidential candidate in person. I have never once had my vote matter. In 2016, I had friends tell me that they saw no need to vote as Oregonians. Some made voting a game, writing in their spouses or best friends because they thought it didn’t matter. They were right. Their vote and my vote does not matter and will not ever matter in Oregon under our current system.

Some contend that our current electoral system protects small states and rural voters and that a popular vote would disenfranchise the rural population. This, however, is a misconception. A national popular vote would actually make the rural vote count too because presidential candidate would have to consider the opinions of all voters and not just the select few from swing states. In 2016, 94% of campaign events occurred in just 12 states, none of which were Oregon. NPV would force candidates to consider the opinions of all voters, including rural voters.

Some also contend that big cities would determine elections under a popular vote, but those who believe this fail to realize that only 6% of the American population live in the five biggest cities, and only 15% live in the fifty biggest cities. In fact, 82% of Americans live in places with population less than 360,000, and these smaller areas have a lot of power. In California, for example, four recent Republican governors were elected and none of them carried Los Angeles, the biggest city in California and the second biggest city in the United States.

I am the mother of two girls one of whom will be able to vote in just two years. When she reaches that magical age of 18 and fills out her first ballot, I want her to know that her vote really does matter. With this understanding, my daughter will be an engaged and active citizen who pays attention to the very important election process. She will have the critical thinking skills to push through alternative facts and fake news. She will value the ballot decisions she will have to make. However, if we hold onto the archaic system we have today, voter engagement and voter turnout will continue to be dismal. For a nation that barely inspires more than 50% of its eligible voting population to vote, it’s time for a change. Vote YES on SB 870 and make Oregon matter in our presidential elections. **It’s time to make every vote count.**

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Donley
PCP, HD 43
Portland, Oregon