

National Popular Vote Interstate Compact - Electing the President who receives the most votes in the COUNTRY based on an agreement between the states

There have been 5 times when the presidential candidate who received the most votes nationwide **LOST** the election!

The U.S. Constitution established the Electoral College to elect the President of the United States. U.S. Constitution Article 2, Section 1. The legislators determine how to appoint the electors.

But, the Constitution does not say how this appointment of electors is supposed to be accomplished in each state.

Presidents are elected by the number of *electoral* votes they receive.

- When you vote for President, you are really casting a ballot for a slate of “electors” for your state.
- Each state political party chooses a slate of electors. Selection of electors and their responsibilities are determined by state (not federal) law.
- Electors are pledged to vote for their party’s candidate in the Electoral College.
- In Missouri, and most states, names of electors do not appear on the ballot; only the presidential candidates are shown.
- The candidate who wins the popular vote in a state gets to have their entire slate of electors certified. “Winner takes all.” (Maine and Nebraska work differently.)
- Nationwide, there are 538 electors. A state gets 1 elector for each House member + 2 (for their Senators). In addition, the District of Columbia gets 3. U.S. territories such as Puerto Rico, Guam, etc. get none. 435 in House + 100 in Senate + 3 for DC = 538 electoral votes total
- A candidate must receive 270 or more votes to win: $538/2 + 1$.
- According to the Constitution, if no candidate gets 270 votes, the House of Representatives meets to decide the winner.

Electors represent a different number of people in each state.

Wyoming - 3 electors; 573,720 population..... **1 elector : 191,240 people**

Missouri - 10 electors; 6.14 million population..... **1 elector : 614,000 people**

California - 55 electors; 39.78 million population..... **1 elector : 723,300 people**

Florida - 29 electors; 21.31 million population..... **1 elector : 734,800 people**

Currently, an elector represents a different number of people in each state and this is unfair and undemocratic. Ideally, in a democracy all electoral votes would represent the same number of people.

With the electoral college, states with small populations are given a disproportional amount of influence.

In our presidential elections each vote is counted. But due to the nature of the electoral college and “winner takes all,” voters in some states can not be as effective as voters in other states. “Effective” refers to the ability to have your issues addressed.

Major Problems with current electoral system

- The **WINNER LOSES**. A candidate can win without getting the most popular votes in all 50 states.
- Many states are **IGNORED** in campaigning. Voter issues in non-competitive states are not addressed.

Example from 2012:

- 100% general election campaign events were in only 12 states (because races were close, 45%-51%)
- 2/3 of events were concentrated in only 4 states
- 38 states ignored because one candidate was safely ahead
- In battleground states, candidates campaign in all parts of the state.

In 2008, 98% of all \$ were spent in just 15 battleground states. And 2/3 of money and time was spent in just 6 states. Similar strategies were used in 2016.

So why not just abolish the Electoral College?

- Abolishing the Electoral College requires an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It is very hard to do!
- LWVUS Position: Abolish the Electoral College.
Direct popular vote is essential for representative government.
- Until the EC is abolished, the League believes the NPV is a way to achieve direct presidential election.

How does National Popular Vote Interstate compact work?

- State legislatures enact a law pledging all their state's electoral votes to the candidate who gets the **most popular votes of ALL 50 States and D.C. combined**, not just votes in the participating states.
- The bill would take effect ONLY when enacted by enough states to reach the majority of electoral votes - 270 of the 538.
- This bill "guarantees" the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most votes in ALL 50 states and D.C.
- This bill must be passed by the legislatures of the enacting states because the U.S. Constitution says that the state legislature appoints and directs the electors.

Status of NPV in the US

- 12 states have passed NPV = 172 electoral votes
- Only 98 more electoral votes needed! Then the compact can go into effect.
- At LWVUS 2018 convention, a resolution was passed to encourage all state Leagues to advocate for NPV.

Approximately 65%-75% of voters nationwide support electing the President by a direct vote.

National Popular Vote Summary

- The candidate with most popular votes in the entire country wins!
- Every voter in every state will be relevant in every presidential campaign.
- Every vote will be equally meaningful in every election.
- Voting power for all citizens is fair.
- NPV encourages citizen participation.
- Campaigns would no longer ignore 2/3 of the states. More voter's interests would be addressed.
- NPV encourages a culture of higher voter turnout when every voter feels important.