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National Popular Vote Passes Oregon House

National Popular Vote seeks to modernize how presidents are elected

SALEM – The Oregon House of Representatives voted today to modernize how the president is elected and ensure that every vote is counted equally by passing the National Popular Vote (NPV) compact.

Currently, Oregon awards its electoral college votes to the winner of the state’s popular vote. [Senate Bill 870](#) enters Oregon into the NPV compact and would award electoral college votes to the national popular vote winner. This becomes effective once NPV is enacted by states that cumulatively possess a majority of all electoral votes.

“This is about giving all voters in the United States, regardless of where they live, the ability to be heard in the most important of our elections,” said chief sponsor Rep. Tiffany Mitchell (D-Astoria). “Today, we make Oregon a battleground state.”

Five times in the history of the United States, including twice since 2000, the winner of the presidency has not won the popular vote.

Further, the inequity of the electoral college system gives some votes more weight than others in electing a president. For instance, Oregon has a population of 4 million people and receives seven electoral votes. Wyoming has a population of 586,000 and receives three electoral votes. This means that Oregon has one electoral vote per 571,000 residents while Wyoming receives one electoral vote per 195,000 residents.

The bill also seeks to ensure that candidates for President of the United States actually campaign throughout the whole United States. During the 2016 election, candidates concentrated over two thirds of their campaign visits and ad money in just six closely divided “battleground” states (Ohio, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Michigan), and 94% in just 12 states.

“Oregon deserves a voice in who becomes president,” said chief sponsor Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer (D-Portland). “Our country’s electoral college system of electing our president and vice president is flawed and outdated; it is time to replace it with a National Popular Vote.”

If the bill is signed into law, [Oregon will join 14 other states and the District of Columbia in joining the NPV compact.](#)

In addition to Rep. Mitchell and Rep. Keny-Guyer, the legislation was chief sponsored by Rep. Brian Clem (D-Salem), Rep. Diego Hernandez (D-Portland), Rep. Dan Rayfield (D-Corvallis), Sen. Shemia Fagan (D-Happy Valley), Sen. Brian Boquist (R-Dallas) and Sen. Michael Dembrow (D-Portland). The legislation had 33 sponsors.

The bill, which passed 37 to 22, now goes to Gov. Kate Brown.

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