



Presidential Elections and the National Popular Vote

All public officials in the United States are elected by a majority of the popular vote of their entire constituency except two: **The President and the Vice President.**

Many people think the way we currently elect the President/Vice President is because the Constitution requires it. It does not! The Constitution simply states that “each state shall appoint a number of Electors”. It does not say how the electors are to cast their votes.

It was not until the 1880s that the majority of states (48) passed laws awarding all of their state’s electors to the winner of their own state’s presidential vote, resulting in the “winner take all” system we know today. “Winner Take All” creates several major problems:

1. It overrides the will of the majority of Americans, potentially undermining a President’s legitimacy and ability to lead. Because of winner take all laws, 5 of our 45 Presidents have come into office without having won a majority of popular votes in the country. And winning margins are thin. In 2004, popular vote winner George W. Bush would have lost had 60,000 votes in Ohio shifted.
2. Today, national elections are determined by the dozen or so battleground or ‘swing’ states (i.e. not reliably Republican or Democrat). Battleground states receive most of the campaign attention and funding; the remaining states do not matter to Presidential candidates and are essentially ignored. Fully $\frac{3}{4}$ of Americans live in these states.
3. Voters in the reliably red or blue states know their votes won’t matter, so many people state home. Lower voter turnout can also affect down-ballot races.

We can, however, easily elect our President by popular vote. A number of states have already passed local bills that would instruct their electors to vote for the winner of the national popular vote, thus joining the **National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC)**, a bipartisan agreement among states. Once activated, the Compact would:

1. Guarantee that the candidate with the most popular votes nationwide wins the Presidency every time
2. Ensure every person’s vote in every state counts in every Presidential election
3. Honor the will of the American people
4. Work within the Constitutional framework established by the Founders by retaining the electoral system and state control over elections
5. Not require an amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Red and blue states representing 172 of the 270 electoral system votes have already enacted local popular vote laws, with another 20 considering it. 98 more electoral votes are needed to make election of the President and Vice President by national popular vote a reality.

With a simple change, the electoral system and the popular vote can work together. Help make this happen!

Learn more about electing the president by popular vote at www.npvlwv.org/issue/npv/