

March 19, 2012

To: Dave Reed, Chairman, and Members of the House Majority Policy Committee

From: Olivia Thorne, President, League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania

Re: HB, 1270, National Popular Vote Interstate Compact

CC: Rep. Tom Creighton and Rep. Mark Cohen

The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania would like to add our voice to the Committee's March 12, 2012 hearing on HB1270. Cosponsored by Rep. Tom Creighton and Rep. Mark Cohen, HB 1270 would authorize Pennsylvania to join the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. The League supports this bill and we encourage the committee and the Republican caucus to support it as well.

The League believes that in any election each vote should count equally. We have a long standing position in support of eliminating the Electoral College and electing the president by direct popular vote. Under the current system, candidates tailor their messages to maximize their appeal in a limited number of "swing" states. Under direct popular vote every vote in every state would be equally important. Candidates would have to campaign nationwide and appeal to a broader and more diverse population.

Past attempts to get Congress to propose the necessary Constitutional amendment for ratification by the states have failed. An alternative is the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. States that join the Compact pledge to award their electoral votes to the overall winner of the national popular vote regardless of who won the popular vote in their state. To date, enough states have joined the compact to make up 49 percent of the 270 electoral votes needed for the compact to take effect. Polls show voters nationwide overwhelmingly support electing the president by national popular vote including 70 percent of Pennsylvania voters.

Pennsylvania's legislative GOP majority has the power to pass this bill and help make our presidential election system truly fair.