



The League of Women Voters of Saratoga County

PO Box 1029, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Note: This letter was sent to Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand and Representative Paul Tonko:

December 20, 2016

I am writing on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Saratoga County (NY), to urge you to champion Senator Barbara Boxer's bill to eliminate the Electoral College. We realize that Senator Boxer will be leaving the Senate at the end of this year, but it is important to the American people that someone else pick up the sponsorship, and that our representatives talk with their colleagues from other states about the pros and cons of the Electoral College. We hope that you agree with the position of League of Women Voters of the United States which states that:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the president until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished. The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. (*This position in favor of eliminating the Electoral College was first adopted in 1970, and the position in support of the Compact for the National Popular Vote was added in 2010*).

Our League is the League that got LWVNY to initiate a study of the Compact for the National Popular Vote, and then successfully lobbied LWVUS for the study at the national level. The statement above reflects the consensus reached by Leagues across the United States. We are proud that NYS has already adopted the Compact for the National Popular Vote. Our members are committed to using the Direct Popular Vote for electing the president.

We believe in democracy, so we believe that every vote should count and that all votes should be given equal weight.

The Electoral College suppresses voter turnout. We hear it all the time. Republicans in NY say their vote won't count because the Democrats will get the whole electoral vote; Democrats in NYS say that once you have reached a majority extra votes don't count. And they

are both right! Candidates don't bother to campaign in NYS – or consider issues we care about- because they think they know which way the majority will vote in NYS.

Getting rid of the Electoral College would also eliminate the incentive for states to suppress particular voters. They would not be able to count those who didn't vote and still get an automatic number of electoral votes, based on the number of their senators and representatives.

People may think that they live in a blue state or a red state, but in reality every state is some shade of purple – and all their votes should go into the total of those selecting the President of our country. Americans can, and do, move from one state to another all the time, our allegiance is to the country – not the individual state. It makes no sense that we keep the anachronistic Electoral College, which was designed for an electorate of white landowning males who communicated via letters and newspapers carried by stage coaches. It has already failed us twice in this first quarter of the 21st Century. Please don't let it happen again.

Very truly yours,

Barbara K. Thomas
Steering Committee,
League of Women Voters of Saratoga County