

LWV MASON COUNTY STUDY GROUP ON THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT, 2008-2009

Background information on National Popular Vote Compact

See http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=National_Popular_Vote_Compact.

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote. League members recently considered whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president. The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state's EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States. The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts.

Results of national study

Based on an analysis of the responses to the questions and the comments offered, the NPV Compact Committee and Program Planning Committee recommended that the LWVUS continue to examine opportunities to achieve the goal of direct election of the president in addition to the unlikely opportunity of abolishing the Electoral College by constitutional amendment. Options could include examination of other plans similar to the NPV Compact, proposing a concurrence at Convention 2010 on the NPV Compact, or continued examination of the NPV Compact itself.

Results of local study group

In 2008-2009 LWVMC established a NPV Compact Study Group. Here are the results of our decision-making process. We agreed that LWVUS should continue to work for a Constitutional amendment for popular election/abolition of Electoral College even though such an amendment will continue to have problems being passed.. The likelihood of need for congressional consent for the NPV Compact made us conclude that such consent should be obtained first, and we agreed that NPV will have problems due to need for congressional consideration and state action. The lack of adequate enforcement provisions is sufficient to conclude that the compact is not viable. It was our view that uniformity of voting systems is more important than the NPV compact.