

## With NPV, Californians Rule Michigan

The “National Popular Vote” movement—NPV—has been trying to replace Michigan’s distinct state influence in Presidential elections. More specifically, NPV wants Michigan’s Electoral College delegates to give Michigan’s Presidential votes to whichever Presidential candidate receives the most votes from all 50 states and the District of Columbia (please visit [nationalpopularvote.com](http://nationalpopularvote.com)).

Even though NPV means that our Michigan Electoral College votes could go to a candidate who was not chosen by Michiganders, our Michigan state legislature is considering NPV with House Bill 4156 and Senate Bill 126. Who would want to change how we elect the President, especially when our Nation’s Founders explicitly rejected the idea of a NPV system as part of the “checks and balances” system of government that they enacted?

Fifteen states, such as California and New York, have passed NPV legislation. These 15 states provide approximately 70% of the 270 Electoral College vote commitments needed to make NPV America’s new election criteria. These states’ Senators are all Democrats except for Vermont’s now Independent Bernie Sanders, a former Democrat Presidential candidate. Washington D.C. also supports NPV, and those voters have voted only for Democrat Presidential candidates. In our Michigan legislature, only Democrats have sponsored the current NPV bills.

To demonstrate how NPV hurts Michigan’s state interests, let us examine a simplified Presidential vote that depends only upon 5 states. One state is California, which has approximately 22 million voters and 55 Electoral College votes. The other 4 states will be those that border Lake Michigan—Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Together, these 4 states have approximately 25 million voters and 57 Electoral College votes.

Next, consider what occurs if a Democrat Presidential candidate says to California’s voters, “You have a water shortage. Vote for me and for President and I will transfer all of Lake Michigan’s freshwater to you.” California voters unanimously like this idea and support the candidate with 22 million individual votes and 55 Electoral College votes. In contrast, in each of the Lake Michigan border states 90% of the voters do not like the candidate’s idea and vote Republican, but the remaining 10% support the candidate’s proposal because they are loyal Democrats who do not live near Lake Michigan.

The outcome of this election depends upon which election criteria is used. Under the current Electoral College voting system, the Democrat promoting the “Transfer Lake Michigan” policy would be defeated in each of the four Lake Michigan border states by wide vote margins of 90% to 10%, resulting in their combined 57 Electoral votes defeating California’s 55 Electoral votes.

However, under NPV, those 10% of the 25 million Lake Michigan border state votes (2.5 million votes) supporting the Democrat would be combined with the 22 million votes from California. As a result, the Democrat wins the election with a total of 24.5 million votes (22 + 2.5) compared to the 22.5 million votes from the Lake Michigan border states (25 - 2.5). Even though four states did not like the candidate’s policy, under NPV the denser population of California rules over Michigan and the other three states.

Although Presidential races are more complex than this example, this scenario shows why our Nation's Founders deliberately designed our Constitution to reduce the possibility that densely populated regions and big cities might become overwhelming majorities. They knew that such majorities could sacrifice "...both the public good and the rights of other citizens." (please see *Federalist Paper #10*).

As a result, the Founders created checks and balances that included separating the powers of government into three branches as well as balancing state and national interests through "dual sovereignty" (please see *Federalist Paper #51*). Our Congress is an example of this dual sovereignty design with House representation based upon population and state representation given the equal expression of two Senators from each state.

Our current Electoral College system forces Presidential candidates to consider states' interests, especially within "battleground states." Democrats would not think about America's diversity if they only campaigned in California and New York, and neither would Republicans if they only campaigned in Texas and Idaho. However, when candidates visit Michigan, Arizona, or other battleground states, they must consider more states' interests.

As *USA Today* reported, President Biden won the 2020 election by winning only 16.7% of America's 3,084 counties. Under NPV, candidates would be more interested in the priorities of those few, densely populated regions and cities, and less interested in broader, state-level issues.

Additionally, NPV opens up numerous election fraud problems. If Michiganders believe that our state has not conducted an election fairly, we can seek to police our own actions. However, if we believe California Democrats commit illegal election acts for a candidate, Michigan has no enforcement capabilities in California, and our Electoral delegates could still be forced to support California's preferred candidate.

NPV advocates and the Democrats are seeking to undo our state's influence. Our Nation's Founders placed state influence into our system of government. If the Democrats cannot win an election because they have better ideas and results, then they appear to be eager to win by changing the election criteria and giving Californians rule over Michigan. Please let the Democrat sponsors in our Michigan legislature know what you think of their NPV efforts.

*Jeff Lawrence is a member of the Manistee County Republican party. He may be reached at [jeffmanisteegop@gmail.com](mailto:jeffmanisteegop@gmail.com).*