

**Rep. Matt Lori testimony before House Redistricting and Elections Committee
11/1/11**

Today I sit with colleagues from both sides of the aisle in support of National Popular Vote – a Constitutional plan that preserves the Electoral College and would guarantee the presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states.

The intent of our Founding Fathers' and Article II, Section I of the Constitution is the reason why we can even have this debate here today.

Article II, Section I of the United States Constitution says:

"Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors"

This is no accident of history.

The founders left the method for awarding Electors to the state in a manner – any manner – that would maximize the influence of the citizens of each state.

There is no more explicit power left to the states than the power to award electors.

Under the National Popular Vote plan, each state that enters into the interstate compact agrees to award its electoral votes to the winner of the overall popular vote in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The plan goes into effect for the nation when enough states totaling 270 electoral votes have passed the bill.

So far, the bill has been enacted by jurisdictions possessing 132 electoral votes — 49% of the 270 necessary to activate the law.

The bill has been endorsed by 2,129 state legislators.

Additionally, the bill has passed 31 legislative chambers in 21 jurisdictions.

The shortcomings of the current system stem from the "winner-take-all rule."

The winner-take-all rule is the method of awarding all of a state's electoral votes to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in each state.

The winner-take-all rule is NOT in the Constitution.

It was used by only 3 states in our nation's first election in 1789.

Furthermore, the winner-take-all rule has permitted a candidate to win the Presidency without winning the most popular votes nationwide in 4 of our 56 elections — that's 1 in 14 times.

A recent close call was in 2004. A shift of 60,000 votes in Ohio would have elected John Kerry despite George Bush's nationwide lead of 3,000,000 votes.

Another shortcoming of the winner-take-all rule is that presidential candidates have no reason to pay attention to the concerns of voters in states where they are comfortably ahead or hopelessly behind.

It is no secret that the winner-take-all rule is the reason why John McCain abandoned Michigan in the fall campaign of 2008.

In 2008, candidates concentrated over two-thirds of their campaign visits and ad money in the November general election campaign in just SIX closely divided "battleground" states— with 98% going to just 15 states.

The current winner-take-all rule makes two thirds of the states mere spectators.

Under National Popular Vote, there would be no more battleground states and flyover states.

Under National Popular Vote, Michigan would matter and we would elect the President of the United States – not the President of the Battleground States.