

Testimony of Common Cause Rhode Island on H 5519—An Act Relating to Elections—  
Agreement Among the States to Elect the President by National Popular Vote

Position: Oppose

Common Cause Rhode Island opposes H 5519 which would remove Rhode Island from the interstate compact to elect the president by national popular vote. We supported Rhode Island's decision to join the compact in 2013 and believe it would be a mistake for our state to withdraw.

The National Popular Vote Compact would take effect when states totalling 270 Electoral College votes join. Currently 17 states and the District of Columbia have joined the National Popular Vote Compact, including five of the six New England states. Eight of the 17 joined *after* Rhode Island signed on in 2013.

Since Rhode Island joined the compact in 2013 the winner of the popular vote again lost the Electoral College vote. The Electoral College continues to undermine faith in our democracy with its possibility for a countermajoritarian outcome.

The compact works by binding the member states to award their Electoral College votes to the winner of the national popular vote. The National Popular Vote Compact makes ours a more equitable democracy. Instead of just a handful of swing states deciding who will be president, every voter's voice would be equal. Candidates would have greater incentive to speak to all voters, wherever they might happen to live.

We strongly urge the committee to reject H 5519 so that Rhode Island remains a part of the National Popular Vote Compact.