

Don't Give Michiganders' Votes to California

By Bob Genetski & Ann Bollin

In 2007, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson called for a “national water policy” to benefit western States that often suffer from drought at the expense of states that have access to water. While campaigning in Nevada, the aspiring presidential candidate was quoted as saying, “States like Wisconsin are awash in water.” With his idea to pipe Great Lakes water out west, Richardson’s chances of winning Michigan’s electoral votes in 2008 evaporated. However, under a new scheme forwarded by radical Leftists in Lansing, a candidate like Bill Richardson could thoroughly disparage electors on both peninsulas and lose a large majority of their votes on Election Day, but still win Michigan’s 15 Electoral Votes.

Michigan House Bills 4156 and 4440 would give Michigan’s votes in the Electoral College to whichever candidate wins more votes nationwide regardless of how that candidate performs in Michigan. Under this scheme (called National Popular Vote), a voter might go to bed on election night knowing that a candidate won Michigan but wake up the next morning and learn that Michigan’s electoral votes would go to a different candidate.

This is a terrible idea for Michigan and one that strips away the power that her roughly 10 million residents have enjoyed as a swing state for the last 30 years. The politics of Michiganders are unique and can be fiercely independent. How independent? In 1912, Michigan voters awarded their 15 electoral votes to a 3rd party candidate and as a swing state, its voters have flexed their muscle choosing the winner in 9 of the last 12 presidential elections. Our swing state status means that Michigan voters’ concerns and issues receive a lot of attention and respect from presidential candidates. One can see how large populous states like New York and California would be jealous of such status. Politicians from the coasts would love to claim the clout that Michigan’s voters enjoy every four years.

So, who is NPV good for? The current two-party system and the candidates that dominate in the larger

urban areas in other states; not Michigan, not a third party, and no independent candidates. It's been since 1968 that a candidate other than one from the Democratic Party or the Republican Party won a state's electoral votes. A study by the Pew Research Center in 2022 showed that Americans are not thrilled with the two-party system. Of those polled, 61% felt the statement "I wish there were more political parties to choose from in this country" represented how they felt at least "somewhat well" with 39% of those feel strongly about the need for more choices. National Popular Vote completely ignores those voters and all but guarantees the status quo.

Some day in the future, Michiganders might want to elect a favorite daughter or favorite son to the White House. That candidate might be someone well-liked and respected on both peninsulas and who has truly taken the time to learn what is important to our voters. Does it make any sense that if such a candidate runs well and wins a majority of the state's votes, that our electoral votes should be given to another candidate because more voters in California and New York chose someone else?

Voters in California are not concerned about Michigan's loss of population, the plight of the Big Three Automakers, nor the lake levels of Erie, Michigan, Huron and Superior. Until they are, Michiganders should be giving their electoral votes to the candidate that wins more votes in Michigan.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/08/09/the-two-party-system-and-views-of-differences-between-the-republican-and-democratic-parties/>



Bob Genetski is a former high school social studies teacher and Member of the Michigan House of Representatives, 2009 - 2014.

Genetski is currently the Allegan County Clerk & Register of Deeds.



Ann Bollin is a Michigan State Representative serving portions of Livingston and Oakland Counties in the 49th District, 2019-2024.

She is also a former Brighton Township Clerk.