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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Rep. Hebl Circulates Bill to Join Wisconsin into the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact

(MADISON) – Today Representative Gary Hebl (D-Sun Prairie) released LRB-0267, a bill that would have Wisconsin join the growing list of states in the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. The compact is an agreement among several U.S. states and the District of Columbia that would award all of their Electoral College votes to the winner of the national popular vote.

The agreement only goes into effect when a majority of electoral votes are represented in the compact. Currently, states representing 196 electoral votes are members of the compact, with Colorado, Delaware, New Mexico, and Oregon joining most recently, in 2019.

“Voters in Wisconsin want elected officials that represent the will of the majority of voters,” Hebl said. “Due to the nature of how the United States presidential election system is set up, that has not always been the case.”

Hebl said that the current system incentivizes ignoring most of the country while focusing on a few key swing states. The national popular vote would remedy that.

“Having a national popular vote would force presidential candidates to campaign in places they normal would not, instead of focusing on a handful of swing states,” Hebl said. “A national popular vote would release presidential candidates from focusing on only those few states, to renew focus on states whose votes are, under the current system, a foregone conclusion. Those running for President would need to listen to a broader coalition of American citizens, and our country would be better for it.”

Indeed, in 2016, 92% of all campaign stops were held in just 12 swing states (Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Virginia, North Carolina, and Florida). More than half (57%) of all stops were held in just 4 states (Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Florida).

“A National Popular Vote also gives a voice to those whose votes in the past have not counted. 6 million people in California voted for Donald Trump in 2020. That’s more votes for Trump in one state than he received in Arkansas, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, and Wyoming *combined*. And yet, under our current system, their votes counted for nothing. Likewise, 5.2 million people voted for Joe Biden in Texas. That’s 2 million more votes than Biden received in New York. A popular vote would give these people a voice, and indeed may convince those who normally do not vote that they might finally count for something.

“Joining Wisconsin’s voice to the National Popular Vote Compact would send a signal that Wisconsin wants a President who will represent all of the country,” Hebl finished. “It also will show that we stand for majority rule, and that the United States should always respect the will of the voters.”

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