



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 22, 2010

Massachusetts Moves to Circumvent the Electoral College

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is on the verge of passing a new law that will circumvent the Electoral College system so that future elections will be determined by the national popular vote. One vote remains in the Massachusetts state senate before the National Popular Vote bill is signed into action by Governor Deval Patrick. The legislation will allow all of the state's electoral votes to go to the candidate who receives the most votes nationally. It is part of an effort lead by a group called National Popular Vote (NPV) that is gaining momentum across the country to obliterate the Electoral College.



The *Wall Street Journal* explains that in order for the NPV campaign to be successful, “The plan needs to enlist just enough states to command 270 electoral votes, or a majority of the Electoral College.”

The *Boston Globe* addresses the implications of such a law that seems contradictory to the intent of the Founding Fathers. “[Critics] point to the disturbing scenario that Candidate X wins nationally, but Candidate Y has won in Massachusetts. In that case, all of the state’s 12 electoral votes would go to Candidate X, the candidate who was not supported by Massachusetts voters.”

Likewise, the *Boston Globe* adds, “Once states possessing a majority of the electoral votes have enacted the laws, the candidate winning the most votes nationally would be assured a majority of the Electoral College votes, no matter how the other states vote and how their electoral votes are distributed.”

These notions are diametrically opposed to the system of government created by the Founding Fathers that rested the greatest control and authority to the individual first and foremost, the state second, and finally the least control to the central government.

Despite this, Massachusetts state House Speaker Robert DeLeo issued a statement on the bill. “The National Popular Vote measure will ensure that our presidential elections reflect the true will of the people.”

Little does DeLeo know that the intention of the Electoral College was created to guarantee the rights of the people. It is a uniquely American system that was intended to be one of the many protections against a too-powerful federal government.

It was the belief of the Founding Fathers that the Electoral College would ensure that the interests of both small and large states would be protected. Members of the Electoral College were to be chosen by the states, and those members would then elect the chief executive. With this system, the election of the president was controlled by the states.

The Electoral College is one of the many checks and balances which functions to protect the rights of the individual.

Unfortunately, like many other areas of the Constitution, the Electoral College has been under attack by



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progressives. Critics of the system claim it is undemocratic, seemingly forgetting once again that the United States is not a democracy, subject to the will of the majority, but a republic, a government of law.

In addition to Massachusetts, Colorado, Vermont, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and California are considering similar legislation, while Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, Washington, and Hawaii have already enacted the law.

Remarking on the long-standing efforts to create popular elections, Republican Congressman Ron Paul noted that the “calls to abolish the Electoral College system are heard most loudly among the liberal/collectivist elites concentrated largely on the two coasts.” With the exception of North Carolina, Ron Paul’s words ring true here.

The movement for popular elections grew after the notorious 2000 presidential election, where Al Gore allegedly received the popular vote while George W. Bush secured the much needed Electoral votes.

Tara Ross, author of *Enlightened Democracy: The Case for the Electoral College* warns states not to be fooled by the NPV’s proposition, as it will allow the 11 largest states to band together and virtually control the election of the president.

Ross also remarks on the underhanded method by which the states are attempting to undermine the Constitution, yet again, by passing a law that would virtually do that which only a constitutional amendment should achieve.

“If you got those 11 biggest states to all agree to do that, you would be switching to a direct election system. By contrast, if you were to try to formally get rid of the Electoral College through a constitutional amendment, that would take 38 states, which is a much higher hurdle to climb and one they think they can’t climb, which is why they’re trying to do it through this kind of end-run around the constitutional process.”

David Falcone, spokesman for Massachusetts Senate President Therese Murray, indicates that a date for the final vote has not been decided at this time.

According to [stateline.org](#), it is uncertain whether the legislation will even reach the desk of the governor, as similar legislation approved by both chambers in Massachusetts in 2008 did not.

Photo of Massachusetts Statehouse: AP Images



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