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Government Accountability & Oversight
House Bill 25 Testimony
December 11th, 2018

Chair Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, and Ranking Member Clyde, thank you for the opportunity to bring before you House Bill 25, legislation proposed by Representative Leland and I to adopt an agreement to elect the President by popular vote.

The first time I was eligible to vote for president was the year 2000 – Bush versus Gore. Assuming we are all aware of that year’s election outcome, I will summarize: President Bush won the Electoral College, becoming president, without winning the nation’s popular vote. I wish I could report this was some rare fluke or the only time the Electoral College victor did not win the popular vote. Unfortunately, to our democracy’s detriment and those who place trust in it, this was the fourth of five times when the individual who lost popular support of the nation became president.

In fact, two of five presidential elections since 2000 resulted in this same electoral mismatch. That’s 40-percent, and election experts anticipate this trend will increase in frequency over the next several decades as to further dilute the voting power of Ohioans.

One measurable effect of electing presidents who lose the country’s popular vote is the increasing mistrust in our nation’s democratic institutions. Research shows that faith in our democracy and national politics are already falling, partially among millennials who now make up our largest voting bloc. Individuals feel as if their vote does not matter. These trends are both bad for democratic societies and have large, negative effects on voter participation. House Bill 25 would help restore faith in our election system and increase voter turnout by reassuring Ohioans that their voices are being more directly heard in every presidential election.

Representative Leland and I believe that House Bill 25 will make our elections more competitive by requiring candidates to campaign everywhere and for every vote. One vote in Ohio should count for more or less than a vote in Idaho, California, or North Carolina. By adopting the interstate compact to give Ohio’s electoral votes to the nation’s popular vote winner, we will be lending our commitment to holding true democratic elections that value each vote equally.

I will end by noting that House Bill 25 only becomes effective after states with a sum of at least 270 electoral votes adopt this compact, essentially nullifying the Electoral College by pledging electoral votes to the individual who wins our nation's popular vote. I urge my colleagues in the House of Representatives to strongly consider this legislation to make our presidential elections more competitive and honor the voice the American people.

Thank you, again, for allowing Representative Leland and I to offer our sponsor testimony this afternoon and for the opportunity to bring H.B. 25 before the committee. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.