



January 31, 2023

Senate Elections Committee
Room 1200 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: S.F. 538

Dear Chair Carlson and Committee Members,

The League of Women Voters Minnesota supports SF538/HF642 - the National Popular Vote bill. As you may know, since the 1940s the League of Women Voters has advocated for direct election of the President. We believe in the one-person, one-vote principle. We believe that voters in every state should play a meaningful, equal role in electing the President. And we believe the candidate with the most votes should go to the White House.

The longer America continues to violate these basic principles of fairness in our highest profile election the weaker our democracy becomes.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization that was formed out of the Women's Suffrage movement in 1920. And that movement provides some interesting backdrop to the debate in front of you with National Popular Vote.

In the 1800s the Women's Suffrage movement was focused on the Federal Government and amending the Constitution to grant women the vote. Getting nowhere by the late 1860s a split emerged in the movement and some decided to pursue action in the states.

In 1869 Wyoming became the first state to grant women the vote. By the time the 19th amendment passed in 1920, 30 states permitted women to vote. Our country has a strong history of states advancing the democratic process.

The decision before you is whether or not Minnesota should join the fifteen other states and Washington DC in declaring that our electoral votes will go to the candidate who earns the most votes in the country.

In Minnesota we have a history of strong voter turnout, of believing in the sanctity of the ballot and of advancing equity. National Popular Vote is a logical next step in that history and we urge you to pass the bill this session.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Michelle Witte, LWVMN Executive Director