



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on November 18, 2019

California Liberals Financing Effort to Pass Plan in Colorado to Gut Electoral College

Apparently, the effort to circumvent the Constitution's Electoral College method of choosing the president of the United States through the "National Popular Vote," is important enough to some liberals in California that they are willing to dump hundreds of thousands of dollars into a referendum on the subject in Colorado.

After Democrat Governor Jared Polis of Colorado signed legislation putting his state into the multi-state compact designed to elect the U.S. president by a *national* popular vote, rather than the *state by state* popular vote through the electoral vote system, opponents of the plan have used the referendum process to force a statewide popular vote to reverse that decision by the Colorado Legislature. Before Colorado, all of the states that have adopted the National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact have been strongly Democratic "blue" states. Colorado, on the other hand, is known as a presidential swing state, or "purple" state.



But the Colorado Legislature went Democrat in the 2018 elections and they quickly passed the NPV, largely because it is believed Democrats would have a better chance of winning presidential elections via a *national* popular vote, rather than the present system using an Electoral College. Under the Electoral College, all states award their electoral votes based on the *state* popular vote.

Despite this, opponents of the NPV used a provision in the state constitution that allows citizens to circulate a "referendum petition" to force a statewide vote for the purpose of reversing the decision of the Colorado Legislature. NPV opponents were able to secure 227,000 signatures, far more than the minimum threshold to force such a vote.

Fearing that Colorado voters will undo the addition of that state to the NPV compact, California liberals are pouring money — almost \$750,000 so far — into the "Yes on National Popular Vote" group that is fighting against the proposed referendum. *More than 98 percent of their money is from these California donors.* One longtime Democrat donor, Craig Barratt, has given \$100,000, while Stephen Silberstein, a board member of the NPV, has given \$500,000.

"Clearly California is very interested in Colorado's votes," Rose Pugliese, a key figure in the referendum effort, told the *Washington Free Beacon*. Pugliese, a Mesa County commissioner, added that she believed "the people of Colorado understand the importance of keeping the Electoral College."



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She estimated that her effort has 2,200 grassroots volunteers statewide.

Under the NPV, if enough states join onto the compact to produce a majority of the electoral vote, then those states in the compact agree to award all of their state's electoral vote to the winner of the national popular vote, regardless of who won their state's popular vote. In other words, even if Colorado voted for a Republican, but a Democrat received more votes *nationally*, then Colorado's nine electoral votes would go for the Democrat. As of now, 15 states — strongly Democrat — and the District of Columbia have entered the compact.

In addition to violating the spirit of the Constitution, it would appear to also violate the clear wording of the document. Article I, Section 10 stipulates, "No state shall, without the consent of Congress ... enter into any agreement or compact with another state." Of course, no such consent has been granted by Congress, nor is it likely to be granted, as it violates the trust the smaller population states placed in the larger population states when the Constitution was adopted. In addition to diminishing the clout of the smaller population states, NPV would shift political power more toward the nation's population centers, even in those larger states.

So why have liberals embarked on a course of such dubious constitutionality? Besides the fact that liberals regularly disrespect the work of the Constitution's framers when it inhibits their activities, it is obvious that they are simply unable to muster two-thirds vote of each house of Congress to send a proposed constitutional amendment to the states, to formally abolish the Electoral College. Because of this, they have opted to try an "end-run" around the Constitution with the so-called National Popular Vote.

There are several reasons to retain the present Electoral College system. It reduces the significance of vote fraud, as no matter how many votes are added illegally in places such as Chicago, the state of Illinois still only gets a set number of electoral votes. But, were the Electoral College abolished, either by amendment or by this circumvention known as the NPV, the incentive to stuff the ballot box in the large population centers such as Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and New York City would be greatly increased.

This NPV is even worse than a formal and legal abolition of the Electoral College via a constitutional amendment because it would create a *national* popular vote election, without any governing electoral system over vote counting and recounts. It is unlikely that any close presidential election could be settled peacefully, in our present highly-partisan environment.

Those who oppose the Electoral College put forth the argument that it is "undemocratic." But making sure that the will of the majority prevails is not the primary goal of good government. Perhaps the simplest argument for the retention of the Electoral College is that it better protects the primary function of government, which is to protect the life, liberty and property of its citizens.

Hopefully, the citizens of Colorado will vote to overturn this very unwise decision by their governor and legislature.

Photo of Colorado Capitol Building: ChrisBoswell/iStock/ Getty Images Plus

Steve Byas is an instructor of history and government and author of History's Greatest Libels, a book which challenges many of the falsehoods levied at such historical figures as Christopher Columbus, Thomas Jefferson, and Joe McCarthy.



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