



May 18, 2010

Councilperson Mary Cheh, Chair
Committee on Government Operations and the Environment
District of Columbia City Council
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Councilperson Cheh:

I am sending this letter on behalf of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP) to indicate our support of the National Popular Vote bill that is pending in the City Council. We believe this important legislation will encourage and motivate voters in the District of Columbia to increase their participation in the election of future Presidents of the United States.

There are many studies which show that there is an increase in voter turnout when elections are competitive among the candidates. This seems to be true in local, state and national elections. In the case of Presidential elections, there are data documenting that there is normally a lower turnout in states where voters have over a long period of time consistently cast their votes for the Presidential candidate of one political party, either Democrat or Republican. And because of this, voters believe their vote will not make a difference and many of them stay at home.

The Presidential candidates know in advance the outcome in about two-thirds of the states that are not competitive so they don't bother to campaign in these states or D.C. Instead, they concentrate their efforts in those states in which the history of voting patterns and the pre-election polls indicate there is a possibility of winning in these competitive states. Virginia and North Carolina in the 2008 Presidential election are two good examples of states who for several decades voted for the Republican party's Presidential nominee, but when the states became competitive the voter turnout in each was about 8 per cent higher than in the earlier years.

The NCBCP believes that the National Popular Vote bill should be enacted by the Council so that the District of Columbia can become a member of the Interstate Compact that when activated will enable the candidate who receives the most votes in the nation to become our President. This new method of selecting the President is likely to encourage the voters of the District of Columbia to vote in higher numbers because they will believe their vote now really counts. And the Presidential candidates of the two major parties will

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be less likely to ignore our citizens and be inclined to campaign in the District to generate a higher turnout so they can increase their chances of being elected President.

Finally, the bill would seem to be a much more "democratic" method of electing the President than the current system. The current system with the winner-take-all method used in 48 states and the District of Columbia actually permits the awarding of electoral college votes to candidates whom a large number of voters, perhaps as many as 49.9 percent, in states actually voted against in the Presidential election. It is time that we change the archaic and undemocratic way that we current elect our President and make sure that the candidate who wins the most votes becomes President. Therefore, the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation strongly urges that the Council approve this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melanie L. Campbell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "L".

Melanie L. Campbell
President and CEO

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