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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6325

August 21, 2008

Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor
State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger,

I am writing to urge that you sign SB 37, the National Popular Vote bill which would guarantee the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states (and the District of Columbia). This is an issue that is particularly important to large states like California whose voters are often disregarded by presidential candidates who focus on a small number of battleground states.

I understand that you had reservations about this legislation in the past. But for those of us who believe in the principal of one person, one vote, this legislation offers an opportunity to change the electoral landscape and ensure that every vote has meaning.

Under the current system, it is possible for a Presidential candidate to lose the popular vote, but to be elected by the Electoral College. This has happened four times in the nation's history: John Quincy Adams in 1824; Rutherford B. Hayes in 1876; Benjamin Harrison in 1888; and George W. Bush in 2000. This legislation is designed to help ensure that such an outcome does not happen again.

I have had an opportunity to discuss the legislation with John Koza, the distinguished California scientist who launched this effort several years ago and has devoted a great deal of his time and funds working on it. If you have any questions, I would urge that you meet with him.

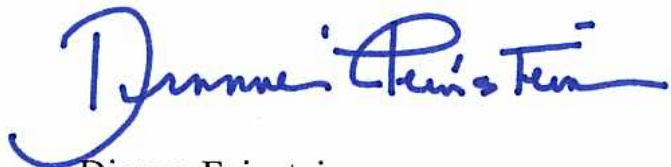
The bill has already been enacted in Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey, and Maryland. It would take effect only when enacted, in identical form, by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes — that is, enough electoral votes to elect a President (270 of 538).

When the bill takes effect, all the electoral votes from the states that enacted the bill would be awarded, as a bloc, to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states (and DC).

These electoral votes will be sufficient to guarantee the election of the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes. California would not start awarding its electoral votes to the national popular vote until states representing a majority of the Electoral College have agreed to do the same thing.

I believe that California could play a significant leadership role in this movement, and I urge you to sign the bill.

With warm personal regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D".

Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator