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### Electoral College: Reform It Or Keep It The Same

The Electoral College has been a part of the US Constitution since the founding fathers signed it in 1787. There is a reason they created such a thing, and that's so small states like Utah have a say in the election of president. In his article, "The Connecticut Effect: The Great Compromise of 1787 And The History of Small State Impact On Electoral College Outcomes," Todd Estes informs us on how the Electoral College was established, "Connecticut Compromise (or Great Compromise), which resolved a standoff between large and small states over representation in Congress. This compromise, settled at the convention on 16 July 1787, gave all states equal representation in the Senate, thus reassuring the small states that they would not be outvoted in both houses by the large states." President George W. Bush Jr., won the election because of the Electoral College, even though he lost the popular vote. We don't necessarily vote for the president we vote for the Electoral College and through them the President is put into office. This is a compromise the founding fathers created so there could be a balance between the popular vote and a vote by Congress. This is a process that consists of a selection of electors, a meeting where these electors vote for the candidates for President and Vice President, and where the votes are counted. According to the Government Archives, "The Electoral College consists of 538 electors. A majority of 270 electoral votes is required to elect the President." Even though some people feel we would benefit if the Electoral College was

reformed or eliminated, giving each state an equal opportunity to vote creates a more uniformed country, the way the Electoral College is setup now is beneficial to us all.

Some would say that reforming the Electoral College or even getting rid of it would be more beneficial to the United States. In some ways I can see how great that could be for our country. Our President would be chosen based solely on what the people want. David Leip states in his article, "The Pros and Cons of The Electoral College," states the following, "opponents of the Electoral College system point to *the risk of so-called "faithless" Electors*. A "faithless Elector" is one who is pledged to vote for his party's candidate for president but nevertheless votes of another candidate." If an elector proposes they will vote for one candidate but when it comes down to voting, they in fact, vote for another the purpose of the Electoral College is completely misused. In this case reforming the Electoral College or demolishing it completely would be what's best for our country. Upon further investigation I found another reason one might want to reform the Electoral College. "Opponents of the Electoral College are further concerned about *its possible role in depressing voter turnout*. Their argument is that, since each State is entitled to the same number of electoral votes regardless of its voter turnout, there is no incentive in the States to encourage voter participation" (Leip). I can see how one might be discouraged to vote because they feel that their vote means nothing in the grand picture for who becomes President. Even though reforming the Electoral College may seem like a good thing, having more informed electors creates a more equal opportunity for both candidates.

I feel that the Electoral College was established for a great reason and for those reasons I feel that it should stay enforced. The Electoral College gives each state an equal

say as to who the President will be. "Under the 23rd Amendment of the Constitution, the District of Columbia is allocated 3 electors and treated like a state for purposes of the Electoral College. For this reason, in the following discussion, the word "state" also refers to the District of Columbia" (Government Archives). "Proponents argue that the Electoral College system contributes to the cohesiveness of the country by requiring a distribution of popular support to be elected president, without such a mechanism, they point out, president would be selected either through the domination of one populous region over the others or through the domination of large metropolitan areas over the rural ones" (Leip). By this logic smaller areas like Utah would go unnoticed, and as a citizen of the United States living in a small state I want my vote to be taken into consideration. Also, you have to take religion into consideration, with a Mormon president running for office this year, without the Electoral College the Mormon Faith would have a huge impact on the vote. Which may or may not be a bad thing, but it could sway the vote. With many different ethnic backgrounds and religions in this Country points of views of the President get skewed and it becomes an election based on the persons background not what they want to do for the country.

The setup of the Electoral College now is beneficial to us now and always has been. In every single election from 1828 through 2008 the candidate who had the lowest rate of electoral votes per state that he won (calculated simply by dividing a candidate's total electoral votes by the number of states he carried) has been the beneficiary of the "Connecticut Effect" (Estes). This shows that the Electoral College has been used in every single election for the past 180 years. The structure of this has been used for many years, meaning it obviously works and should not be changed. When you have something great

why would you want to change it? The meeting of the electors takes place on the third Monday after the second Wednesday in December. After the election in November, according the Government archives governor prepares a "Certificate of Ascertainment" which is sent to Congress and the National Archives as part of the official records of the presidential election. On January 6<sup>th</sup> following the election year the Members of the House and Senate meet in the House chamber to conduct the official tally of electoral votes (Government Archives). This process works it has for 180 years, it will be applied this year in the upcoming election, and I feel as though it should stay.

Although some people feel that the Electoral College should be reformed or eliminated I feel that the Electoral College is beneficial to our Country with the setup we have and how it has positively affected our Country up to this point. With the popular vote one may think that their vote is helping their candidate win President and that way would be the best to decide the leader of this Country. When in fact that would make it so smaller states and areas would have no say toward who becomes the President and Vice President. "Recognition of the Connecticut Effect also makes it clear that each election was decided as it was because the winning candidates prevailed in enough small, lesser-populated states to carry slim Electoral College majorities thanks to the bonus votes" (Estes). The Electoral College gives us a reason to vote even though we are essentially voting for the electors who represent the Presidential candidates it gives Utah a reason to vote and since I live here and I'm a registered voter I need a reason to vote.

## Works Cited

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