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MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members

FROM: Rep. Mark B. Cohen, Chair 
Democratic Human Services Committee

DATE: January 31, 2011

RE: Legislation Creating a Popular Vote Winner as President

Your co-sponsorship is requested of legislation that would allow Pennsylvania to join a compact of states that would allow the President to be elected by popular vote. The Electoral Vote is a result of an 18th century political compromise that has no meaning in the 21st century. Indeed, few understand how Electoral College works. A Gallup Poll indicated that 78% of Pennsylvanians wish to eliminate the Electoral College. When enough states join this compact such that their total Electoral votes equal a majority of the Electoral College, all compact states will cast their Electoral votes for the popular vote winner. Thus, the Electoral College can be effectively ended without going through a lengthy Constitutional amendment process.

The winner of the Presidency should be the candidate who receives the most popular votes. The President should not be decided by a complex system of "winner take all" per each state that currently determines the winner. The Presidency is an important office and it should not be allowed to be held by the losing candidate.

The Electoral College reflects a state's population. Ironically, states with high proportions of voting citizens find their voting power weakened compared to states with high proportions of people too young to vote and immigrants. Pennsylvanians, with relatively fewer young people and immigrants, find their influence diluted through the Electoral College.

This bill is the same of HB 841 from the previous session. The co-sponsors then were JOSEPHS , J. TAYLOR , STURLA , LEVDANSKY , CALTAGIRONE , BELFANTI , YOUNGBLOOD , WALKO , SIPTROTH , PAYTON , PARKER , PALLONE , McILVAINE SMITH, McGEEHAN , KOTIK , GOODMAN, GIBBONS , GERGELY , FRANKEL , BROWN, BRIGGS, BOYLE and MURPHY .

Please contact Linda Huntington in my office at lhunting@pahouse.net or at 787-3085 to co-sponsor this bill.