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The following Op-Ed was submitted by Secretary of State John Gale.

National Popular Vote Compact: A poor choice for Nebraska

How do Nebraskan's want their vote to be counted in the next presidential election? That's the battle about to be waged in the state legislature.

LB 1058, sponsored by Senator Tyson Larson of O'Neill proposes that Nebraska join into an agreement with other states that agree to allocate their electoral votes to the presidential candidate gaining the highest popular vote.

The National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact has been passed by 10 states so far, possessing 136 electoral votes. The compact will go into effect once the electoral votes represented by participating states exceed 270, the margin by which a president would be elected.

Entering into the NPV Compact would be the wrong move for Nebraska, a disaster for the Great Plains states and a blunder for our nation.

Consider this: entry into the Compact would commit Nebraska's electoral votes to be cast for the popular winner of the presidential election, even if that winner was not chosen by a strong majority of our citizens.

For example, in 1976 President Ford received the largest percentage of the popular vote in Nebraska and as a result, all five of Nebraska's electoral votes went to Ford. However, that year, President Carter received the most votes nationwide. If LB

1058 had been in effect in 1976, all of Nebraska's electoral votes would actually have been cast for Carter, not Ford.

That's true not only in 1976. The same scenario would have played out in the presidential elections for 1992, 1996, 2000, 2008 and 2012. That's six of the past 13 presidential elections in which our state electors would have been required to cast their votes contrary to what Nebraska voters actually wanted.

NPV also represents an "end-run" around the Constitutional amendment process. Knowing there would be strong forces emerging on and off to change the Constitution, the founding fathers made it tough to do so.

Proposing an amendment requires a two-thirds vote from both houses of Congress. It needs final approval from three-fourths of the states. Cleverly, the NPV Compact seeks to avoid this standard in order to be adopted. The Compact subtly amends the Constitution to provide for popular vote of our presidents and sets a dangerous precedent of weakening our nation's charter for the future.

Obviously many states, especially smaller ones, will have no desire to enter the Compact. Large, populous states can't do it alone. They need to beguile some small states into the Compact too. Once enough states sign on with enough electoral votes to ensure the election of a president, the Compact will go into effect.

The Electoral College is a core feature of our Constitution and accurately reflects the will and genius of our founding fathers in creating a federal republic with checks and balances and protection of the interests of the smaller states. Forty-eight states cast their electoral votes by "winner-take-all." The focus is on the voice of each separate state. Nebraska and Maine are more representative than the majority of states in that we allow our electoral votes to be split by the winners of the congressional districts. However, it has only happened once, in Nebraska in 2008.

There have only been a few times in 57 elections that a presidential candidate has won the electoral vote without winning the popular vote. There have only been two instances when the House of Representatives decided the race when no candidate got a majority of electoral votes. The system has worked and worked well.

Why should the small states give up the electoral edge given by our forefathers, which has worked in our nation for 225 years, in order to give the large populated states the power our forefathers sought to prevent?

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