

Election of President

Problem: The election of the president is based on votes cast by members of the electoral college, which periodically leads to the election of a President who loses the popular vote, but is able to win the electoral college. This occurs because the votes of citizens in some states are given a heavier weight than the citizens of other states. The number of electoral votes of each state are determined by the number of congressmen from that state (which is democratically based on the population of that state) plus two additional votes corresponding to the fact that each state has two senators. In consequence, each electoral vote cast by an elector from a state with small population represent fewer citizens than the vote cast by an elector from a state with large population. At first glance this may not appear too significant, but it was enough to enable President Trump to defeat Hillary Clinton, even though Hillary Clinton received almost 3 million votes more than Trump.

This bias dates back to the time of the adoption of the constitution of the United States. At that time I believe that most states perceived the union as a confederation of states rather than a single country. Also, small states, some of which were slave holding, feared that large states would dominate the union and pass federal laws adversely affecting small them (like abolishing slavery). In consequence, the additional two electoral votes (and I imagine the provision that each state elect two senators), was established to encourage small states to support joining the union.

That was over 225 years ago. Since then, the nation has evolved in many ways: from an economy based primarily on small farms, to an integrated industrial powerhouse; from one where individuals were largely self sufficient from their teen age years until death, to one where individuals were heavily dependent on government for many needs - medical, retirement, infrastructure, food and drug safety, and in many other ways, much of which is financed by the Federal government. It has become an integrated union where the well-being of citizens in each state depends upon the well being of citizens in all states.

In short, there is no longer any valid reason why the votes of citizens in small states should be rigged to be greater than the votes of citizens in large states.

Possible Solution:

There are a number of possible solutions of which two are:

First, the simplest, we could amend the constitution to abolish the electoral college and elect the president by popular vote.

Second, in my fantasies, we could elect the president by a vote of the U. S. house of representatives, similar to that of electing a prime minister. I have always felt that the presidency had too much power - was in fact. similar to a short term monarchy. In the event that the President became incapacitated, **or** was felt to be incompetent by a majority of congress, he or she could be quickly replaced. Why not? The house of Representatives, which is re-elected

every two years, is the institution that is most representative of the voting population and whose members are generally well acquainted with the major issues confronting the country. Moreover, this is a system that would function in a manner originally envisioned for the electoral college, but where each citizens vote would carry approximately equal weight.