

By: Reynolds

H.C.R. No. 149

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, In a democratic election, the candidate who receives
2 the most votes should win; and

3 WHEREAS, That elementary principle has been undermined in the
4 United States, where in two out of the last five elections, the
5 Electoral College has awarded the presidency to the candidate who
6 was rejected by the majority of voters; in the most recent
7 presidential election, the winning candidate received nearly 3
8 million fewer votes than the losing candidate, who won a wider
9 margin of the popular vote than 10 past presidents; and

10 WHEREAS, Candidates with the least votes also won the
11 presidential election three times in the 19th century, and such a
12 result is likely to happen again in the near future, thanks to an
13 antiquated mechanism that subverts the will of the people; a
14 vestige of the days when only white male landowners had a voice in
15 political life, the Electoral College was written into the
16 U.S. Constitution in the course of heated negotiations between more
17 heavily populated northern states and more rural southern states;
18 designed to protect the power of the elite and the influence of
19 slave states, the college is a complicated system under which
20 citizens mark their ballots for presidential candidates, but in
21 reality, their votes are cast for a slate of electors in their
22 respective states, who are actually entrusted with the task of
23 choosing the president; and

24 WHEREAS, Because the college allocates electors based on each

1 state's representation in Congress, it distorts the outcome of
2 presidential campaigns; residents of smaller states have a larger
3 voice in the results, and today, Wyoming voters exert almost four
4 times as much influence as do California voters; moreover, 48
5 states and the District of Columbia award electoral votes on a
6 winner-take-all basis, so that it makes no difference whether a
7 candidate wins a state by a vast or minuscule margin; it is
8 technically possible for a candidate to gain the presidency with
9 only about 23 percent of the national popular vote; moreover, tens
10 of millions of voters are effectively disenfranchised in states
11 with a heavy partisan lean, and turnout can be depressed among
12 citizens who believe that their vote is wasted; and

13 WHEREAS, From its inception, the Electoral College has been a
14 source of contention, and over the past two centuries, legislators
15 have proposed more than 700 constitutional amendments to reform or
16 eliminate it; public support for the system has waxed and waned, but
17 for decades, the majority of Americans have expressed opposition to
18 it; and

19 WHEREAS, The Electoral College is a discredited 18th-century
20 relic that violates the principle of one person, one vote; the
21 nation's highest office should be awarded on the same basis as every
22 other elected position in our democracy; now, therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, That the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas
24 hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to pass a
25 constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College and
26 creating a system for the direct election of presidents by popular
27 vote; and, be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
3 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
4 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
5 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
6 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
7 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.