



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MICHIGAN

EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

November 17, 2014

Testimony before the Michigan House Elections and Ethics Committee

Good Afternoon. My name is Susan Smith. I am President of the League of Women Voters of Michigan. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify on HB 5974.

The League of Women Voters of Michigan urges you to oppose HB 5974 which would change the way Michigan votes for President.

Currently, along with 47 other states, we use the "winner takes all" system which allocates all of our 16 Electoral College votes to the candidate who wins the popular vote in Michigan. HB 5974 would change our system to a proportional system where the number of electoral votes allocated to each candidate would depend on the proportion of the popular vote they received. Our 16 Electoral College votes would be divided between the top two candidates. The candidate who won the popular vote would receive at least nine electoral votes plus an additional vote for each 1.5% increase in the margin over the second-place finisher.

According to Crain's Detroit Business News, if we had used that system during the 2012 Election, President Obama would have received 12 Electoral Votes and former Governor Romney would have received four.

Reducing the number of Electoral College votes received by the candidate who wins the popular vote, would weaken Michigan's importance in the Presidential campaign and would lessen our ability to attract attention to our state's unique issues such as the auto industry and the Great Lakes.

We have had the "winner take all" system in Michigan since 1836. Changes to something as important as how we elect the President should be made by the citizens of Michigan, not the Legislature. Citizens should have the opportunity to decide whether we should change from our current system of "winner takes all" to a proportional system where the Electoral College Votes are divided among the top two candidates.

For these reasons, the League of Women Voters of Michigan urges you to oppose HB 5974.

Thank you.