

Why has the electoral college not been abolished politics essay



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Although it has been argued that the Electoral College is outdated and we should revise the system I feel it has not been abandoned for several reasons. If the United States were to abolish the Electoral College it would mean trying to elect our President strictly through a popular vote system which would potentially lead to complete political chaos. The Electoral College does have some weak points, however that does not mean it should not be dismissed entirely. While the idea to abolish the Electoral College has been tossed around for awhile it took on new strength when George Bush was elected President over Al Gore, despite losing the popular vote. Lots of people point to that election and say “ This is why the Electoral College system doesn’t work”. They say that the people spoke and were ignored, that who they chose was not elected. It is this same election though that shows exactly why it would be a complete disaster to abolish the Electoral College.

If the United States were to abolish the Electoral College we would very likely have many more elections such as the Bush/Gore election. It took weeks upon weeks and court battles to decide who the true winner of the election was. If we were to do this process every year with our elections we would delay having a new president. It would also tie up our court system because determining the winner would take importance over all other cases brought to the court at the time. This would result in a massive back up of our judicial system. By removing the Electoral College it sets into motion many unforeseen obstacles to our process.

There are several arguments made to say the Electoral College should be abolished. One of these arguments is that not everyone’s vote carries the

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same weight. With the Electoral College this is in fact true due to every state being given at least three electoral votes. Another argument against the Electoral College is that the system is outdated, that the original purpose is not being met anymore. Both of these arguments do hold some merit, however neither are enough to offset the benefits of the Electoral College.

While the Electoral College is not perfect, it is fair. Everyone knows the rules of the system and what matters to get elected. All parties understand before they begin running, campaigning, debating, or winning is that the only thing really matters and that is the number of electors they end up with. Only the Electoral College forces Presidential candidates to appeal to both sides to win enough states to gain the majority of Electorate votes. Knowing this in advance gives both candidates the opportunity to campaign based on this, all the decisions they make from deciding to run, to the campaign promises, to which states they choose to most heavily campaign to are with the full knowledge of how the Electoral College works. Similar to a football game all the candidates go in knowing the rules, they understand that at the end of the game the yards they got, they first downs, the turnovers don't matter; what does matter is that final score on the board. The Presidential Candidates know full well that at the end of the campaign the only thing that matters is the number of Electoral votes.

Not only is the Electoral College a fair system it is a stabilizing force. This is very important because it means that the Presidential candidates are more likely to come to the middle of the bigger issues in an election. While this does not seem to be the case it has to be looked at from the popular vote system. With popular vote Presidential Candidates would focus on large

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population areas, or cities known for high voter statistics. By doing this they would almost solely focus on the issues that would win those votes. It would also be far more likely that voters in a few select areas would have similar views on issues and the total population of the United States views would be dismissed in favor of these focus areas. This would mean that rather than having diverse thoughts the Presidential candidates would cater to the population with the most popular votes rather than being forced to appeal to a diverse population.

The Electoral College forces candidates where the population is closely divided politically. This increases the chances that a candidate will come to the middle on issues because a candidate with extreme views most likely will not succeed in these population areas. The Electoral College works a lot like the checks and balances of the three branches; it helps prevent extremist political views. This is part of the reason the Electoral College was put in place, it was considered vitally important to maintain stability in the government. The Electoral College is also a way to ensure that all states and non-voters are represented in an election. Some people argue that non-voters should not get a vote, they are after all non-voters. The Electoral College takes in to account unforeseen events such as natural disasters. What if, for example, the devastation of New Orleans had happened on Election Day, should all those people that would have been unable to vote not get a say in the outcome of the election? In this type of circumstance if even 10% of the state voters manage to vote with our Electoral system the influence on the outcome will be proportional to its population. If we were to switch to a popular vote system in a unforeseen circumstance such as that

the state would clearly be underrepresented. The state however could not vote later because they would then know the results of the other states. The Electoral College makes it so that even in circumstances we cannot imagine.

Many people argue that a popular vote system would be preferable, especially after incidences such as the Bush/Gore campaign. In everyday normal elections our Electoral College system works very well and it has the ability to provide fairness should an unforeseen circumstance should occur. It has served our country very well and is still a huge benefit to our election process. Not only is the Electoral College fair but it also has many other advantages like providing for an alternate plan in the event of a candidate's death to preserving the federal nature of our country as a united group individuals. The Electoral College is a long-standing process and like with many things in life, the grass is not always greener on the other side.