

electors break their pledges to a particular candidate en masse? Is that possible and legally enforceable? The answer appears to be yes.

In this vein, it does not require a stretch of the imagination to envision three or more candidates splitting the electoral tally of votes such that none received the requisite majority of 270 to win the White House.

In that situation, what prevents one of the candidates directing his electors to another candidate, before the formal meeting of the Electors to count and certify the electoral votes occurs in the month following the November election, to allow him to gain the necessary majority of 270 in exchange for policy concessions or worse, a massive cash payment? Would that kind of corrupt transaction be allowed? What element of the current Electoral College system prevents such an unfortunate outcome?

This may not be likely, given our strong two party system, but it is possible. Yet we tolerate the risk of it happening, year after year, because we assume it will never occur. Someday we may regret our indecision to fix what we know is wrong with the Electoral College system.

Twenty-five years ago in the 96th Congress, a majority of the Senate voted 51 to 48 to support abolishing the Electoral College and replace it with direct popular elections. That legislation, S.J. Res. 26, fell short of the necessary two-thirds required for a constitutional amendment, but I am encouraged that more than half the body supported the concept.

A few years before that, the House voted overwhelmingly in the 91st Congress, by a vote of 338 to 70, for the direct popular election of the President. Alas, the effort fell short in the Senate.

I am prepared to press the case for this idea, on a bipartisan basis, through extensive committee deliberations and onto the Senate floor. The time has come for the Senate to reconsider the essential building blocks of our democracy.

Some might claim that offering a constitutional amendment is a political gambit to overcome my own State's weak position in the Electoral College voting system. It is a fact that smaller States, such as South Dakota, Wyoming, and others, maintain disproportionate influence in the process compared to California.

I would respond to that as follows: my approach does equate the vote of a Californian, Rhode Islander and South Dakotan as being equal. But it also means that millions of votes cast for Republican candidates in future presidential races in my home state will have meaning and value. Their votes will count for something.

In the 2000 race, George Bush received over 4.5 million votes in California. That should have counted for

something—but it did not. All 54 of California's electoral votes went to Vice President Al Gore.

Given the domination of Democratic presidential candidates in California in the modern era, it is clear that my party would not benefit from a direct popular election in California.

But for me, this is about principle over politics. It is the right thing to do, even if it gives renewed life to Republican presidential candidates in my home State.

As it stands now, California is not a place where Republican and Democratic presidential candidates genuinely compete for votes. They come to California to fill their campaign coffers but take a pass with real voters. That needs to change—for California, yes, but also for New York, Texas, for Utah and for so many other States in the country.

I have tried to understand the counterarguments to a nationwide popular vote. They reflect a desire to empower both regional and rural interests, and deny major population centers from having excessive power. I appreciate the notion that we don't want clusters of cities and particular regions where the greatest numbers of Americans reside, New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, to dominate the electoral landscape.

At the same time, a presidential candidate's priorities, record and vision for the country will determine how far he goes in the nominating and general election process. Stitching together a cross section of American voters, who represent different economic and social backgrounds, professions, parts of the country, religious faiths, and so much more holds the key to attaining a winning plurality or majority of votes in presidential races.

I would contend that it is up to the candidates to appeal to the broadest group of Americans but to level the playing field in doing so. In that process each American's vote, regardless of where that person lives in the country, should be counted equally.

Right now, that is just not the case. Our system is not undemocratic, but it is imperfect, and we have the power to do something about it.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the Electoral College Abolition Resolution be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the joint resolution was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S.J. RES. 11

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after the date of its submission to the States for ratification:

“ARTICLE—

“SECTION 1. The President and Vice President shall be elected by the people of the several States and the district constituting the seat of government of the United States. The persons having the greatest number of votes for President and Vice President shall be elected.

“SECTION 2. The voters in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of Representatives in Congress from that State, except that the legislature of any State may prescribe less restrictive qualifications with respect to residence and Congress may establish uniform residence and age qualifications. Congress may establish qualifications for voters in the district constituting the seat of government of the United States.

“SECTION 3. Congress may determine the time, place, and manner of holding the election, and the entitlement to inclusion on the ballot. Congress shall prescribe by law the time, place, and manner in which the results of the election shall be ascertained and declared.

“SECTION 4. Each voter shall cast a single vote jointly applicable to President and Vice President in any such election. Names of candidates shall not be joined unless both candidates have consented thereto, and no candidate shall consent to being joined with more than one other person.

“SECTION 5. Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any candidate for President or Vice President before the day on which the President-elect or the Vice President-elect has been chosen, and for the case of a tie in any such election.

“SECTION 6. This article shall take effect one year after the twenty-first day of January following ratification.”

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 83—COMMEMORATING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BLACK PRESS OF AMERICA

Mr. SANTORUM (for himself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. LUGAR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 83

Whereas on February 29, 1940, the Black Press of America gathered for the first time in Chicago, Illinois;

Whereas the Black Press of America joins together over 200 African-American community newspapers from across the United States;

Whereas the African-American press has profoundly influenced the fight for the rights of African-Americans;

Whereas African-American newspapers articulated the ideals of freedom and equality during those times in the history of the United States when the country failed to honor its commitment to the founding principles of the Nation;

Whereas the African-American press has fostered pride, solidarity, and self-reliance within the African-American community;

Whereas the African-American press has had a profound influence on the rise of opinion, leadership, and group action among African-Americans;

Whereas the African-American press has operated as an instrument of social change

for decades as it has protested inequality and spotlighted the achievements of African-Americans;

Whereas African-American newspapers continue to broaden the social discourse surrounding the struggle of today's African-Americans for equal opportunity; and

Whereas commemorating the Black Press of America acknowledges the significant role all African-American newspapers have played in the history of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate commemorates the 65th Anniversary of the Black Press of America by recognizing—

(1) the significant contributions all African-American newspapers have made from the time of slavery and segregation to today; and

(2) the continued contributions African-American newspapers make to the ideal of equal opportunity for all Americans.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 173. Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. TALENT, and Ms. CANTWELL) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2006 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2005 and 2007 through 2010.

SA 174. Mr. COLEMAN (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 175. Mr. VOINOVICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 176. Mr. COLEMAN (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 177. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. DODD, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. KERRY, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. REED) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 178. Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mrs. CLINTON, and Mr. AKAKA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 179. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. DODD, and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 180. Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Mr. DODD, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. CORZINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 181. Mr. LAUTENBERG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 182. Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. SNOWE, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. VITTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 183. Mr. SALAZAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 184. Mr. SALAZAR (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. CONRAD, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. JEFFORDS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. JOHNSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 185. Mr. SALAZAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 186. Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. SALAZAR, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. VOINOVICH, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. OBAMA, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. CARPER) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra.

SA 187. Mr. LAUTENBERG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 188. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. KYL, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. AKAKA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 189. Mr. DODD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 190. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 191. Mr. DODD (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. BIDEN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KOHL, Mr. AKAKA, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Mr. SALAZAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 192. Mrs. LINCOLN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 193. Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. CLINTON, and Mr. KERRY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 194. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Mr. KENNEDY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 195. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Mr. OBAMA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 196. Mrs. CLINTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 197. Mr. ALLEN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. DEWINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra.

SA 198. Mr. ALLEN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. DEWINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 199. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. KERRY, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 200. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 201. Mr. DODD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 202. Mr. DAYTON (for himself, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 203. Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. OBAMA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 204. Mr. BINGAMAN (for Mr. SMITH (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. DEWINE, Ms. SNOWE, and Mr. CHAFEE)) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra.

SA 205. Mr. BAYH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 206. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. BINGAMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 207. Mr. CARPER proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra.

SA 208. Mr. COCHRAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 209. Mr. COCHRAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 210. Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra.

SA 211. Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 212. Mr. DORGAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 213. Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. REED, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. KENNEDY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 214. Ms. SNOWE (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra.

SA 215. Mr. SALAZAR (for himself and Mr. CONRAD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra.

SA 216. Ms. SNOWE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 18, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.