

## Mothering Justice - Courtney Blake Sims

Thank you to the elections committee for the opportunity to testify in favor of this bill. My name is Courtney Blake Sims, I am here representing Mothering Justice and we urge you to please, vote in favor of this bill to help make sure that our mama's voices — and the voices of all voters — count in *every* presidential election.

Mothering Justice is dedicated to advancing our mama's agenda, which is centered on reproductive justice, affordable child care, basic needs security, and paid time off to care for our loved ones. We elevate the voices of the next generation of Mothers and stand up for mothers of color, whose voices have historically been overlooked. Success on all of these issues depends on a functional democracy and transparency in our elections.

Currently 70 to 80% of voters have their votes taken for granted every four years because it is a foregone conclusion how their state's electoral votes will be awarded. When the National Popular Vote bill goes into effect, all votes will be equal in the presidential election. This will newly enfranchise tens of millions of voters on a scale that we have not seen since the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. We are proud to be a part of the coalition calling for this historic change.

We are also excited about what we expect electing the president by popular vote will do for voter engagement and participation. Many voters have come to understand that they are politically irrelevant in the process of electing the President. Compared to the rest of the country, voter turnout in the battleground states was 11% higher in 2020 and 2016, 16% higher in 2012, and 9% higher in 2008.

We're particularly hopeful that we'll see an increase in voter engagement amongst our youngest voters. More than half of Generation Z is now old enough to vote and they are uniquely affected by this inequitable system. When they cast their ballot in 2024 they'll have spent more than a third of their life with the president being the popular vote loser.

For millennials like myself it's no better. The oldest millennials cast their first ballots in a presidential race in 2000 and saw George W. Bush win the presidency despite losing the popular vote by more than 540,000 votes. The youngest millennials cast their first ballots in a presidential race in 2016 and saw Donald Trump win the presidency despite Hillary Clinton winning the popular vote by 2.8 million votes.

These two generations of Americans have been reminded repeatedly throughout their lives that their votes for president don't matter nearly as much as what state they cast their ballot in. I hope we can fix this for all of their sake.

They're certainly the ones who will be dealing with the consequences of this broken system for the longest. Consider this - 5 of our 9 Supreme Court justices were appointed by popular vote losers, resulting in decisions wildly out of step with the opinions of the nation. Reproductive justice is of the utmost importance to our Mothers - and their access to healthcare was deeply restricted, and will continue to be infringed upon, by the decisions of this minoritarian court.

It is on all of us to leave a better country for the next generation, and at Mothering Justice it is clear that electing the president by National Popular Vote is a part of doing that. We strongly urge you to support the National Popular Vote bill - it is what is best for Michigan, best for America, and best for future generations. Thank you.