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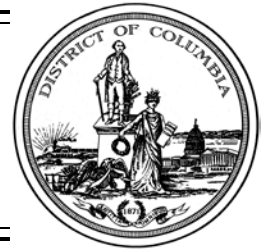
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**OFFICE OF MARY M. CHEH**

COUNCILMEMBER, WARD 3  
CHAIR, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
AND THE ENVIRONMENT

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Members, Council of the District of Columbia  
**FROM:** Mary M. Cheh  
**DATE:** April 12, 2010  
**RE:** National Popular Vote Agreement Act of 2010

Dear Colleagues:

I write to seek your support for a bill I intend to introduce at next week's legislative meeting, the "National Popular Vote Agreement Act of 2010." The aim of this legislation is to modify the current Electoral College system to ensure that the presidential candidate who receives the most votes in an election is declared the winner. As recent elections have shown, the current Electoral College system has essentially turned presidential elections into a contest for a few "battleground states." This political reality erodes the fundamental democratic principle that every vote should count equally.

The National Popular Vote Agreement Act would enter the District into an agreement to appoint the District's electors according to the winner of the national popular vote. Identical legislation has already been adopted by 5 states, including Maryland. It has passed through at least one legislative chamber in 14 others. If enough states enact this legislation (i.e., more than 270 electoral votes collectively), then the proposed compact would go into effect.

The issue of whether the Electoral College system should be retained is one that deserves vigorous debate. In 2008, the New York Times wrote that "[t]here is no reason to feel sentimental about the Electoral College. One of the main reasons the founders created it was slavery. The southern states liked the fact that their slaves, who would be excluded from a direct vote, would be counted — as three-fifths of a white person — when Electoral College votes were apportioned."

District residents have long struggled for a right to have their votes counted. In 1961, through the 23<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution, the District received the right to appoint 3 electors to the Electoral College.<sup>1</sup> This legislation would take another step forward by ensuring that every vote cast by a District voter counts equally for the election of the President and Vice President.

Attached to this letter you will find three documents for your review: a copy of the proposed legislation, a memorandum prepared by National Popular Vote describing the legislation,

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<sup>1</sup> The 23<sup>rd</sup> amendment limits the number of electors that the District may appoint no more electors than the least populous state.

and a report entitled "Presidential Election Inequality: The Electoral College in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" prepared by FairVote. If you need any additional information, please feel free to call me or my Chief of Staff, V. David Zvenyach, at 202-724-8062.

I urge your support and ask that you join me in co-introducing this legislation next Tuesday. If possible, please let me know whether you intend to co-introduce by close of business on Friday, April 16, 2010.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary M. Cheh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a distinct "C" at the end.

Mary M. Cheh