

Letter: Electoral College

September 24, 2023



As so many have said “It needs to go away.” I have completed an analysis of the actual minutes of the Federal Constitutional Convention of May 25, 1787, through September 17, 1787, which set out the arguments for and against the Electoral College, including the Seven Constitutional Articles. Article II established the “executive power” and section one established how the President and Vice-President would be chosen. There followed several amendments, but nothing specific to the Electoral College except a mention of it in the 23rd & 24th amendments.

The following arguments, which can quickly be identified as no longer valid, pertain to the establishment of the Electors:

Argument #1: James Madison – pg 57, July 19, 1787

“There was one difficulty however of a serious nature attending an immediate choice by the people. The right of suffrage was much more diffusive in the Northern than the Southern States; and the latter could have no influence in the election on the score of the Negroes. The substitution of electors obviated this difficulty and seemed on the whole to be liable to the fewest objections.”

Since the institution of the 3/5ths compromise, the Representatives could now count 3/5ths of their slaves toward the numbers needed for electing Representatives to the House, and the number of Electors was established based on the number of Representatives in the House.

As we know – Slavery is no longer an issue relative to this “count.”

Argument #2: Mr. Gerry: - pg 57, July 19, 1787

“He was agst. a popular election. The people are uninformed, and would be misled by a few designing men.”

As we know - with the advent of radio, television, and the internet (telecommunications), “the people have been informed” for many years. This is no longer an issue.

There were other arguments and concerns for intrigue and cabal regarding the choice by the House of Representatives, and other issues, but Arguments #1 and #2 were the major issues that decided our current Electoral system. Since those arguments are no longer legitimate and as we have seen from the January 6, 2021 fiasco what can happen regarding the Electoral College, it is time to put an end to this archaic method and let the people choose their President and Vice President directly.

Patricia J. Estlund

Crescent City