

*Everett McKinley Dirksen*  
*Illinois*

*United States Senate*  
*Minority Leader*

....., 1963

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Dear .....

The original purpose of the provision in the Constitution for an electoral college was to select men or electors who would exercise independent judgment in selecting in turn a president and vice president.

In due time this purpose fell by the wayside. Electors followed the views of their own political parties and voted for their own candidates. The party candidate receiving a majority of the popular vote in any state, therefore, received the entire electoral vote of that state. This seemed quite unfair and in a sense disfranchised all other voters who may have opposed the winning candidate.

For many years efforts have been under way to change this process and three proposals have received considerable attention. The first would be an amendment to the Constitution to elect a president by direct popular vote. The second is designed to give a presidential candidate that proportion of the electoral vote which would have been his share of the popular vote. The third proposal is the selection of electors by congressional districts with two electors to be elected from the state at large.

This latter proposal would provide the same number of electoral votes as the present, namely, one for each congressman and senator. However, it would make the vote conform closely to sentiment as expressed in various congressional districts.

My present preference is for this latter method. It could be easily administered and would more accurately reflect voter sentiment throughout the country.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen