

Political Parties & Elections

OBJECTIVES

- Describe the history and roles of the two party system.
- Explain the characteristics of today's major political parties.
- Explain the role played by third parties in the American political system.

Political Parties

- Political parties first emerged during George Washington's first term in office:
 - Alexander Hamilton's Federalist Party in 1791
 - Thomas Jefferson's Anti-Federalist Party or Democratic-Republicans in 1792
- This is known as the time period of the First Party System (1792 – 1824)
 - Where two political parties competed with each other for political power.

Thomas Jefferson

“Two political Sects have arisen within the U.S. the one believing that the executive is the branch of our government which the most needs support; the other that like the analogous branch in the English Government, it is already too strong for the republican parts of the Constitution; and therefore in equivocal cases they incline to the legislative powers: the former of these are called federalists, sometimes aristocrats or monocrats, and sometimes Tories, after the corresponding sect in the English Government of exactly the same definition: the latter are styled republicans, Whigs, Jacobins, anarchists, dis-organizers, etc. these terms are in familiar use with most persons.”

- Thomas Jefferson, 1798

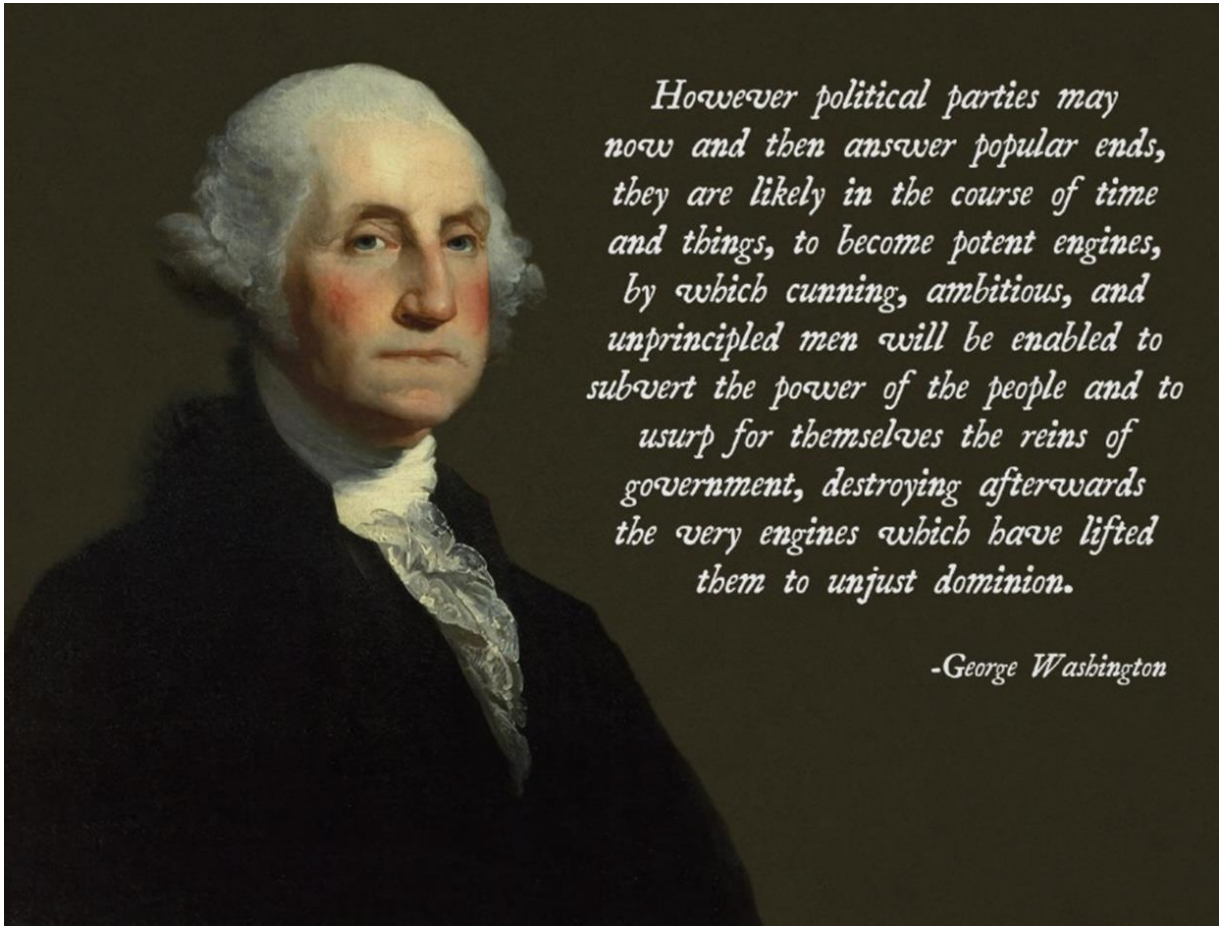
Political Parties (Granted in the Constitution?)

- George Washington was not a member of any political party when he became president (1789).
- GW was against political parties for a specific reason: He thought they were a threat to democracy.

Political divisions were very bitter during this time
GW believed that political parties would divide, not unite, Americans

GW also believed political parties would distract the government from its required duty to the people

Believed they could lead to the eradication of the freedoms established by the Constitution



The First Political Parties

Federalists

- Led by Alexander Hamilton (Washington's Secretary of Treasury)
 - James Madison and John Jay were also prominent members

Democratic-Republicans

- Led by Thomas Jefferson (Washington's Secretary of State)
 - George Mason, Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams were also prominent members

Both parties originated in national politics, but soon expanded their efforts to gain supporters and voters in every state.

Alexander Hamilton and the "Federalists"

- Federalists believed in:
 - A strong national government.
 - Supported by merchants and bankers.
 - Party declined in the early 1800's.

Thomas Jefferson and the “Democratic-Republicans”

- Thomas Jefferson believed in democracy, republicanism, and individual rights
 - He organized the Democrat-Republicans
- Democratic-Republicans believed in:
 - Limiting the power of the national government.
 - Supported the idea of State power.
 - Supported by farmers and frontier settlers.
 - Split into two factions by the 1830's:
 - Democratic Party created in 1828 (after Andrew Jackson)
 - The Whigs (led by Henry Clay) which later led to the Republican Party

Development of the Whig Party

- Whig Party organized in 1834
- Formed in strong opposition to Andrew Jackson (a Democrat).
- Democrats/Whigs were political rivals until the 1850's.

Two Party System

Republicans

Republican Party replaces the Whig party in 1854.

Things the Republican Party of 1854 stood for:

- Opposed Slavery and supported business in the North.
- Abraham Lincoln is the first Republican President in 1860.
- Republicans hold most power until 1930, and the Great Depression.
 - Dominated the U.S. Congress and the Presidency in this time.

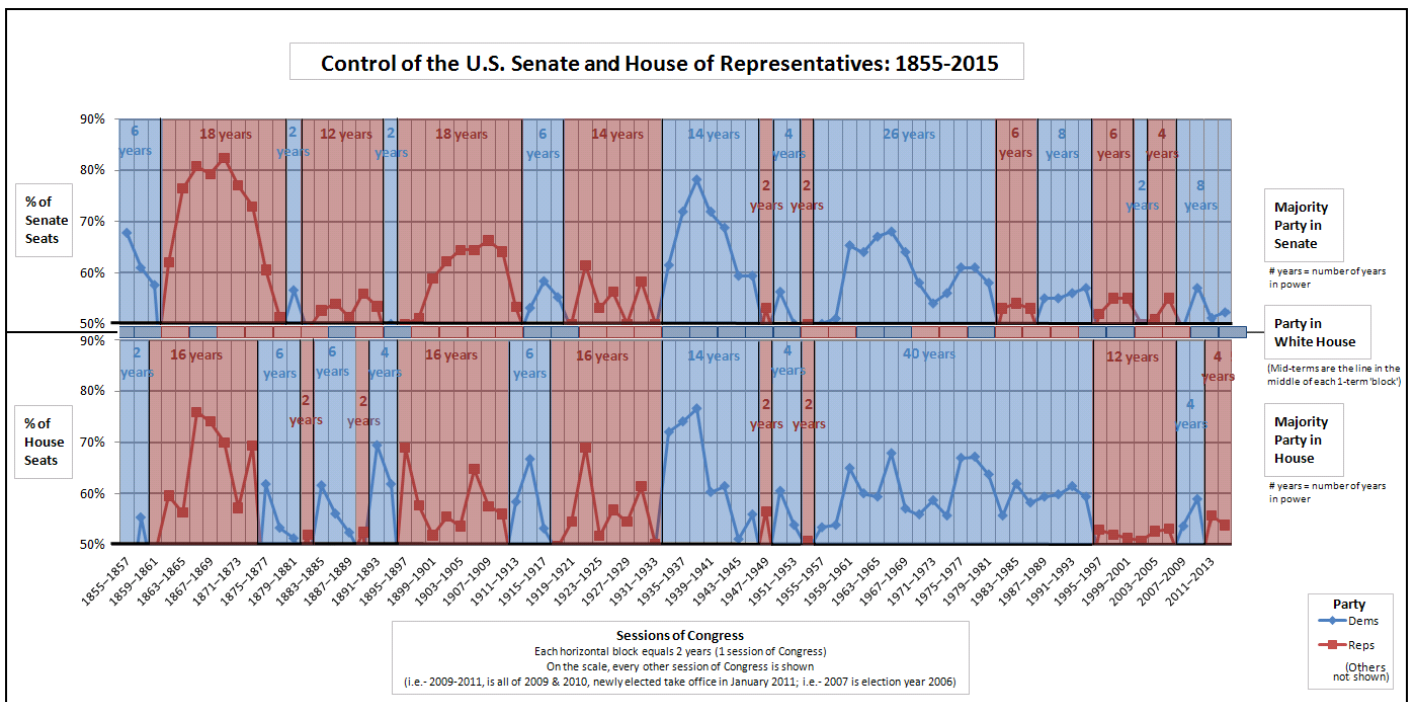
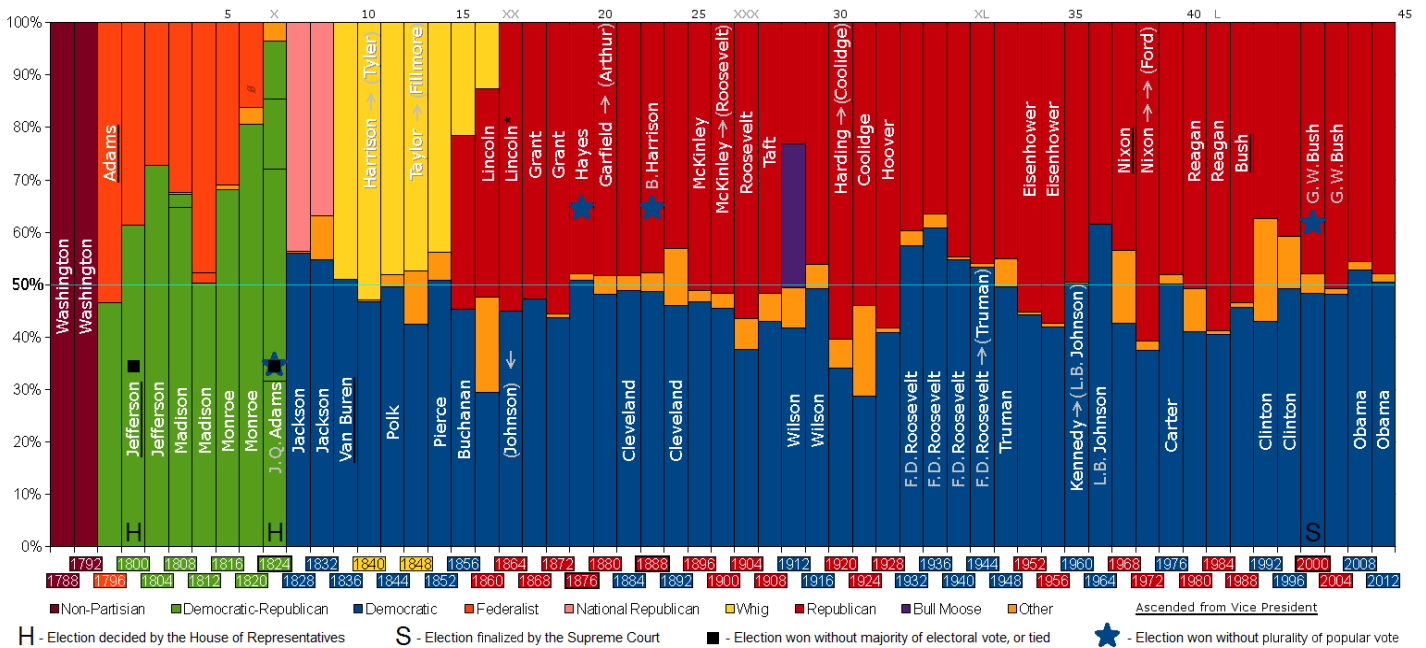
Democrats

- Jacksonian Democrats (1830s)
 - This period of Democrat Party was highlighted by a pro-slavery stance (Southern Democrats)

- Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected in 1932.
 - He develops the “New Deal” for citizens dealing with the Great Depression.
 - Proposed welfare programs and work programs provided by Federal Government.
 - The role of the federal government greatly increases under FDR’s leadership

Where is the Power now?

- The power shifts between parties now, no side has held or holds power for very long.
- Why do you think that political power shifts from party to party?



Largest Gaps in Presidential Approval Ratings by Party, All Presidential Years Since 1953

President	Year	Dates	Average approval rating, Republicans	Average approval rating, Democrats	Party gap (pct. pts.)
G.W. Bush	4	1/2004–1/2005	91%	15%	76
G.W. Bush	5	1/2005–1/2006	86%	14%	72
G.W. Bush	6	1/2006–1/2007	79%	9%	70
Obama	2	1/2010–1/2011	13%	81%	68
Obama	3	1/2011–1/2012	12%	80%	68
G.W. Bush	7	1/2007–1/2008	73%	7%	66
Obama	1	1/2009–1/2010	23%	88%	65
Clinton	4	1/1996–1/1997	24%	85%	61
G.W. Bush	8	1/2008–1/2009	67%	6%	61
Reagan	4	1/1984–1/1985	89%	29%	60

Note: Gallup's presidential years begin on Jan. 20 of each year and end on Jan. 19 of the following year.

GALLUP®



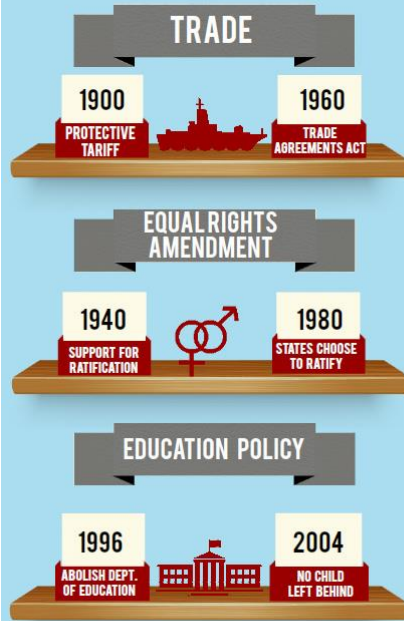


Top Party Platform Changes

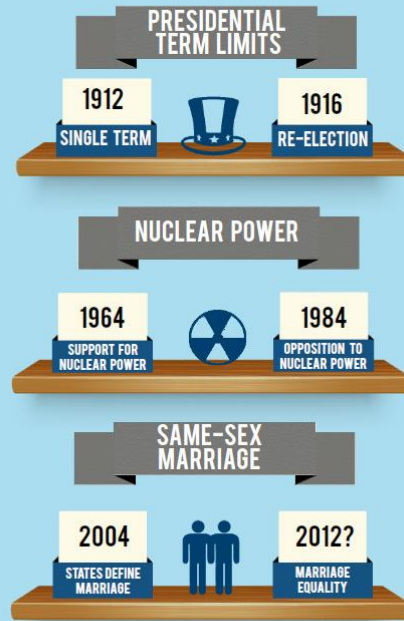


At each party's presidential convention, delegates do more than nominate candidates, they release their official platforms, non-binding statements of party principles and goals. Since the first convention in 1832, the parties have each changed their minds on key issues. Here's a look at the top party platform changes. Hover over the dates to read statements from each platform.

REPUBLICANS

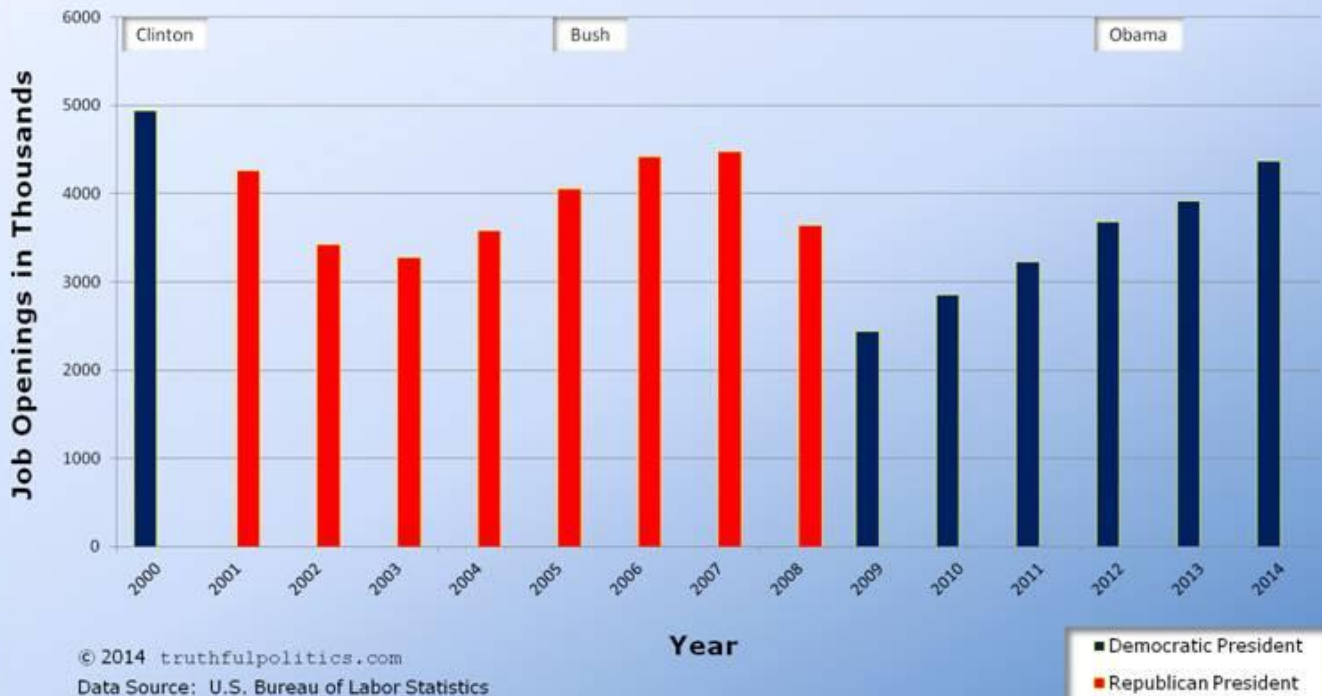


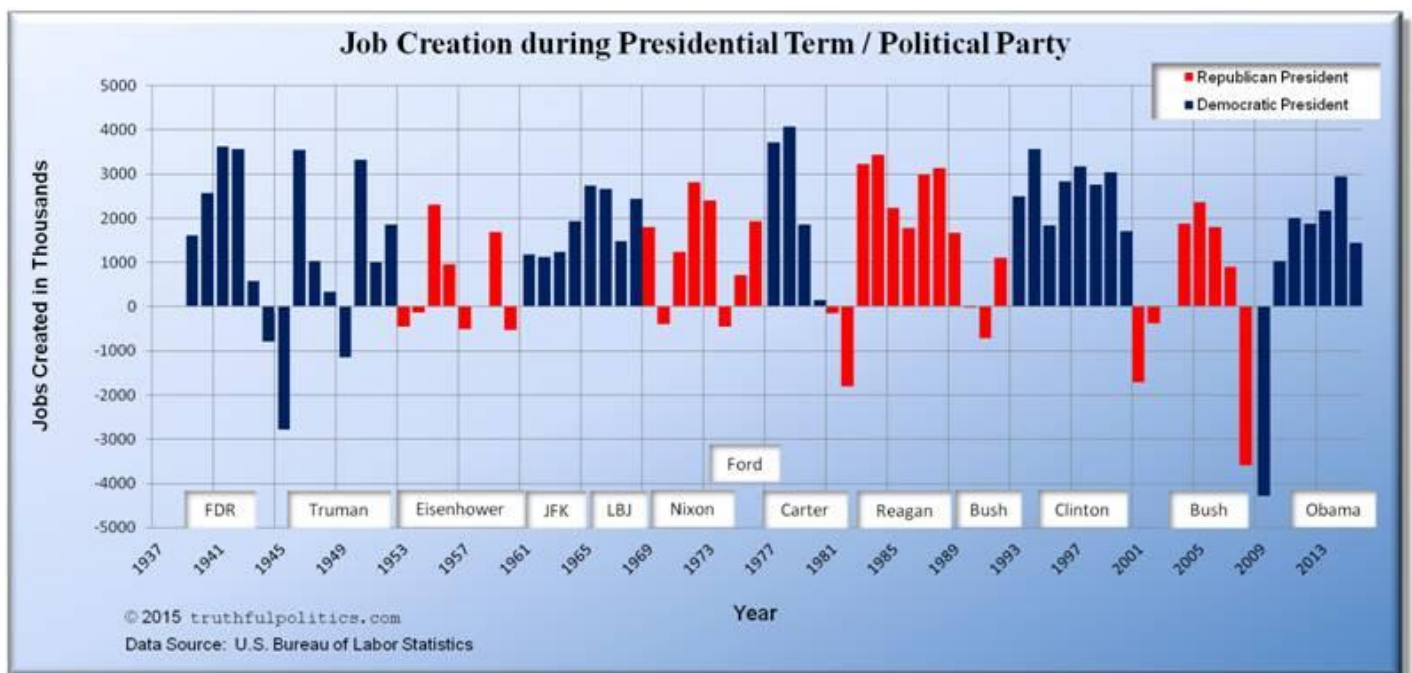
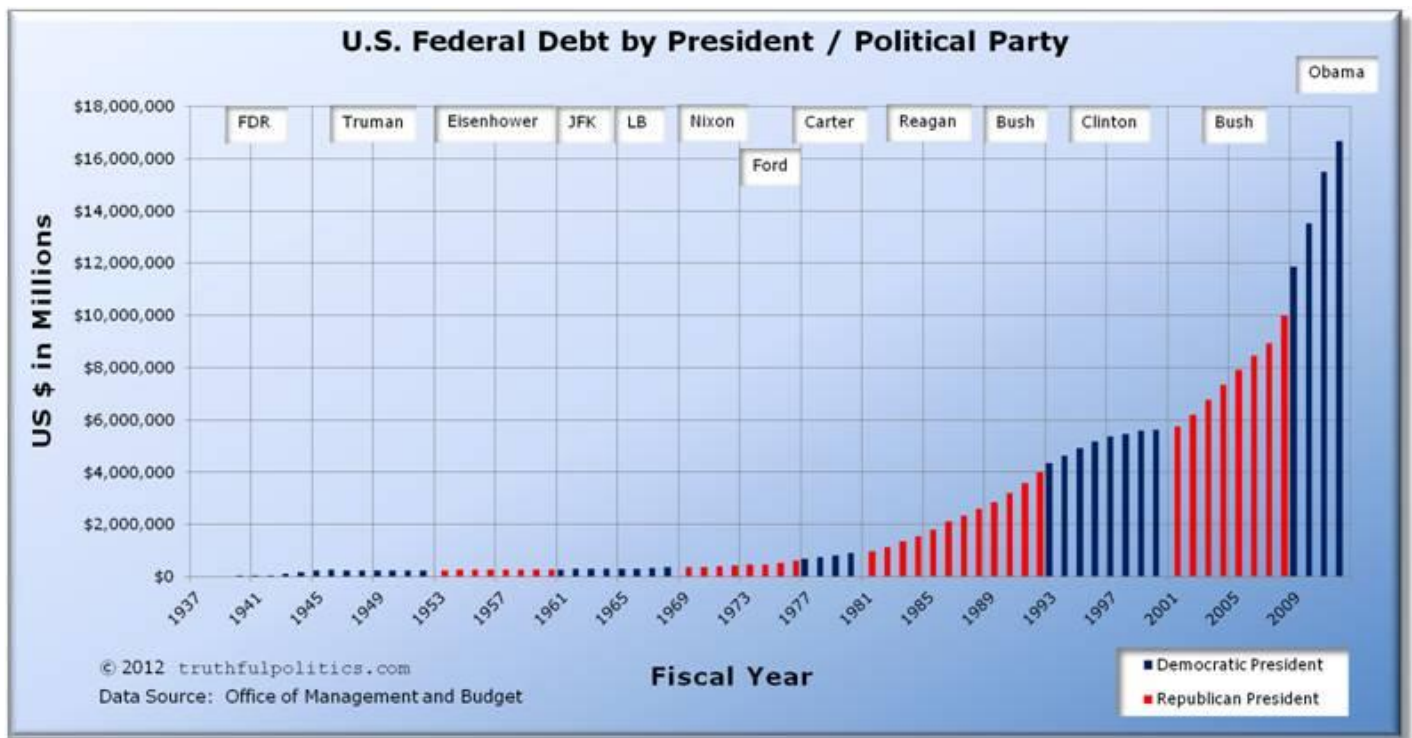
DEMOCRATS



SOURCE: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SANTA BARBARA'S THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY PROJECT

U.S. Average Annual Job Openings during Presidential Terms





Third Parties

- Why do third parties generally start?
 - Tend to arise to support particular issues or candidates.
- Why do third parties have problems winning?
 - They have difficulty raising money, because they are small and never have much chance of winning.
 - They have won state and local elections, but never do well in national elections.

Problems Created By Third Parties

1. Draw votes away from the two main parties.
(1912, 1992, 1996, 2000)
2. Brings up new ideas and issues to debate, drawing away from more predominate issues.

Major Third Parties

Progressive (Bull Moose) Party (1912)

- Led by Theodore Roosevelt after his first term in office
- Election of 1912

Constitution Party (1992-Present).

- Anti-gun control
- Anti-tax
- Protectionist
- Strict adherence to U.S. Constitution

Green Party (1985-Present).

- Environmental Protection
- For Medical Marijuana

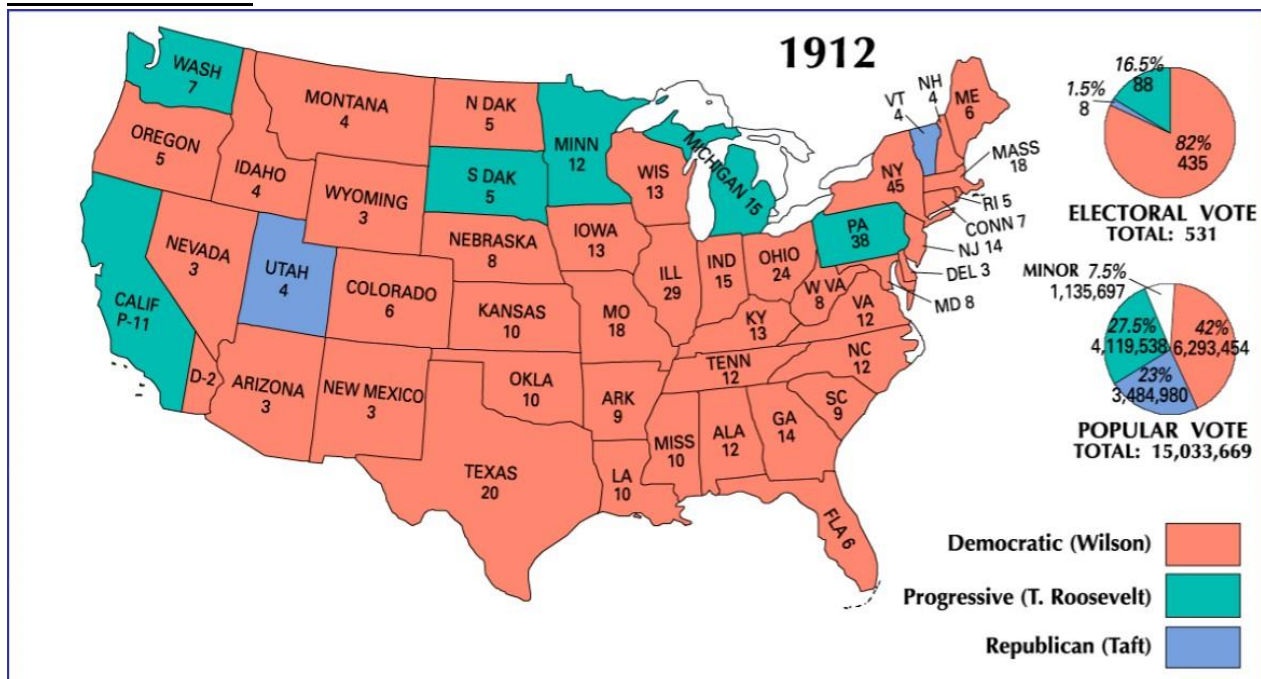
Labor Party (1996-Present).

- Protecting the rights of workers.
- Pro-union

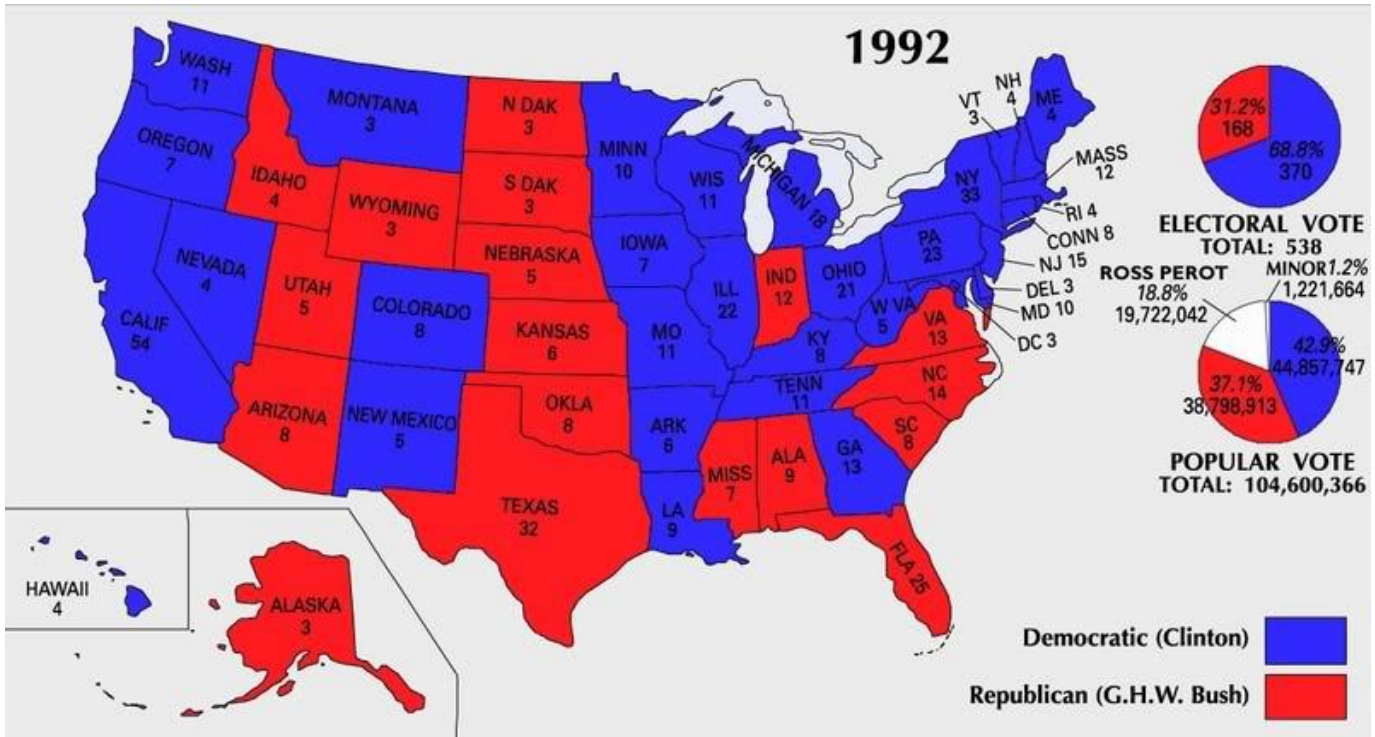
Libertarian Party (1971-Present).

- Individual Liberty
- Economic Freedom
- Strictly follow Constitution

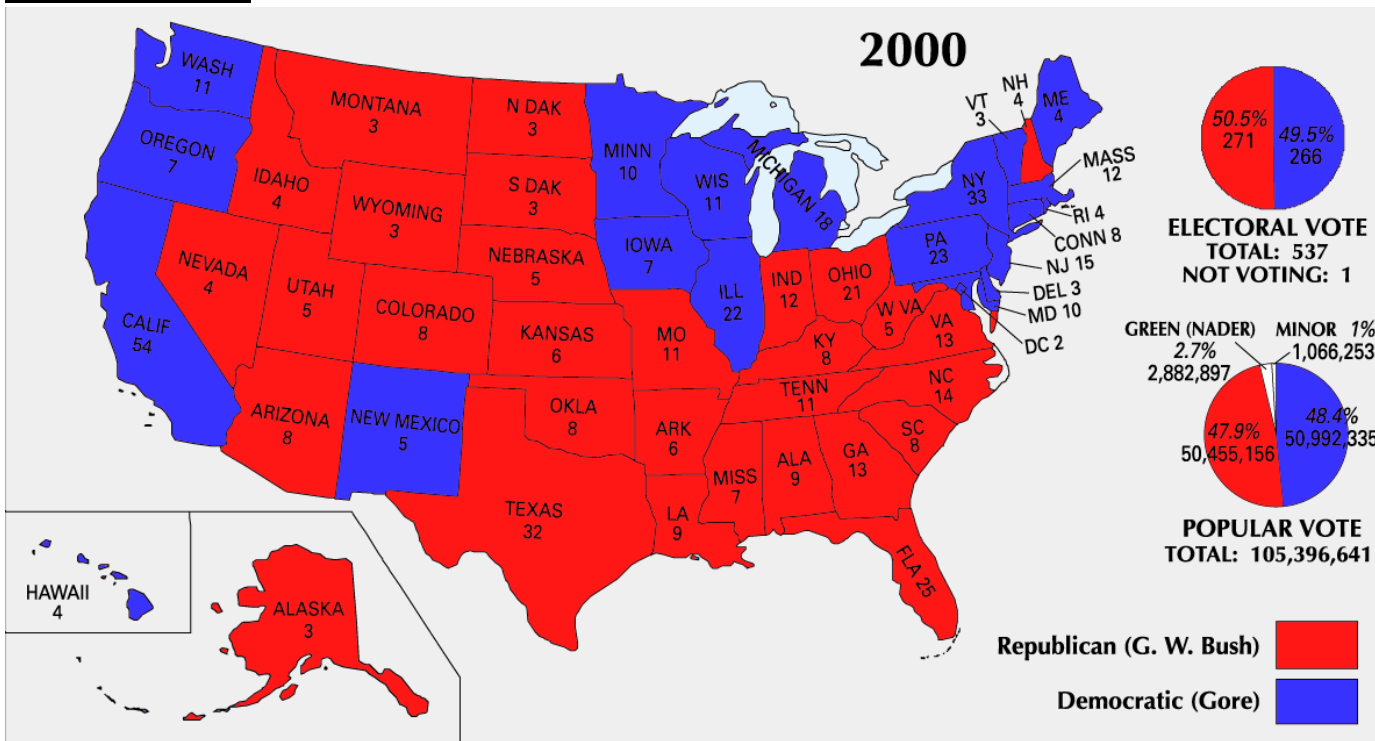
1912 Election



1992 Election



2000 Election



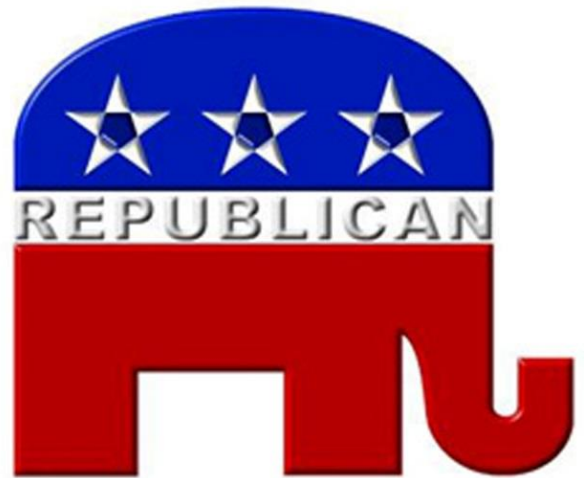
Characteristics of the Democratic Party Today

- Believe that the federal government should take responsibility and provide for the nation's citizens – social programs, etc...
- Favors government regulation of the economy.
- Favors organized labor.
- Favors higher taxes for high-income earners and a redistribution of tax revenue to programs for the poor
- Favors keeping welfare in place for the poor and disadvantaged
- Favors school-funding initiatives that create competitive public schools



Characteristics of the Republican Party Today

- Favors reducing the power of the federal government.
- Believe state and local government should have most of the power – not the federal government
- Favors less governmental intervention in the economy; supports restricting organized labor
- Favors lower taxes and breaks for high income earners to encourage business investment and economic growth
- Favors cutting back welfare benefits in order to foster initiative for welfare recipients to find work
- Favors school funding initiatives that allow for parental choice, including school vouchers for private schools



OBJECTIVES

- Describe the process of nominating candidates.
- Explain the process of electing the President.
- Describe the Electoral College and its role in U.S. Presidential elections.

Why Vote?

- Does your vote as an individual count?
- Bush won by 500 votes in Florida.
 - The Point: *Your vote counts*, in most cases only half of eligible voters vote in the general election.

Election outcome (if your candidate loses

- Your vote matters because:
 - You announce where you stand on issues.
 - It is your civic duty to vote.
 - You decide who will lead and the policies that those leaders will follow.

Personal Appearances

- Political rallies, debates, and speeches
- Shows candidates stance on issues and gets their face known.
- Personal appearances became very important when the TV was invented.

Messages from Candidates

- Internet
 - Social Media, Chat Rooms, Weblogs.
 - Candidate Websites:
 - Information about the candidates.
 - Positions on major issues.
 - Biography
 - Internet donations

Messages from Candidates

- Advertisements in the media come from Television, radio, newspaper, magazine, internet.
 - Very expensive
 - Don't give a lot of information.
 - Focus on candidates personalities.
 - Does NOT explain candidate positions.

Presidential Election

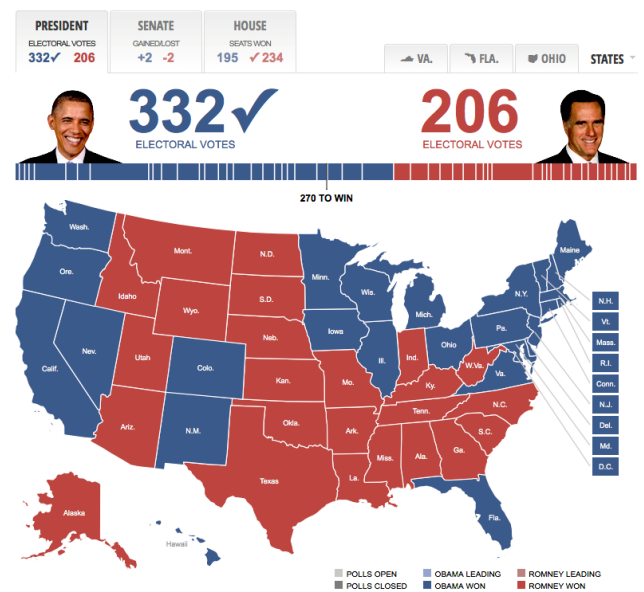
- Starts at the beginning of the election year.
- Candidates start to declare the intent to run for their party.
- Democrats and Republicans will both have candidates.
- Incumbent Presidents are usually not challenged by their own party.
- <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/us/elections/election-2016.html>

Primary Elections

- Democrats and Republicans both hold primary elections.
- First primary is held in New Hampshire and states will either hold primaries or caucuses.
- Candidates are accumulating delegates that will represent them at their National Conventions in the summer.

National Conventions

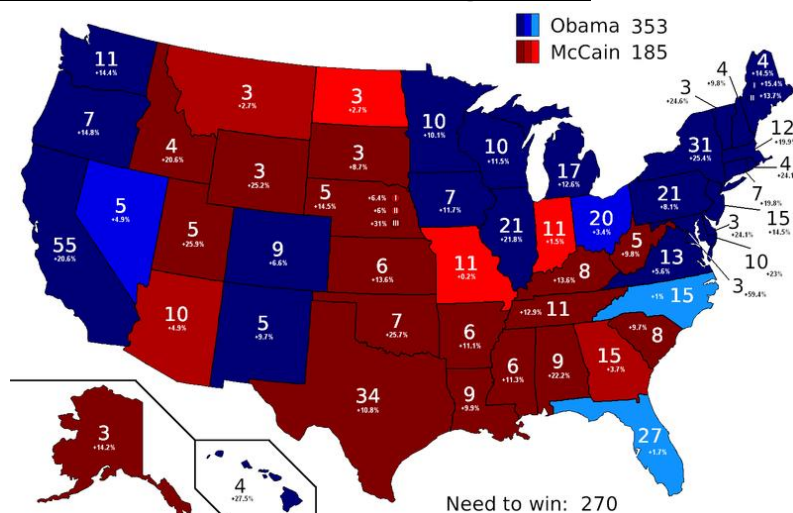
- Democrats and Republicans hold conventions in the summer of the election year.
- This is where each party will officially nominate their candidates.
- They will also choose a running mate, their vice-presidential candidate.



General Election

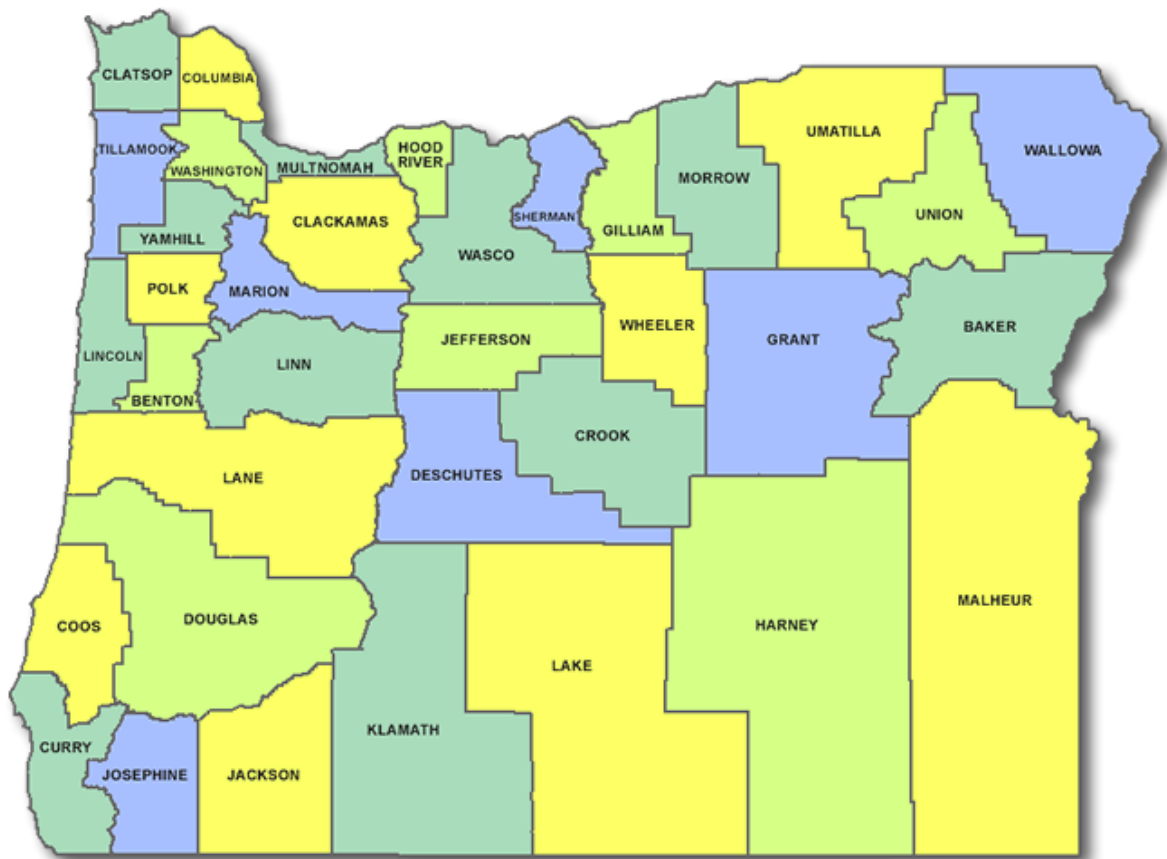
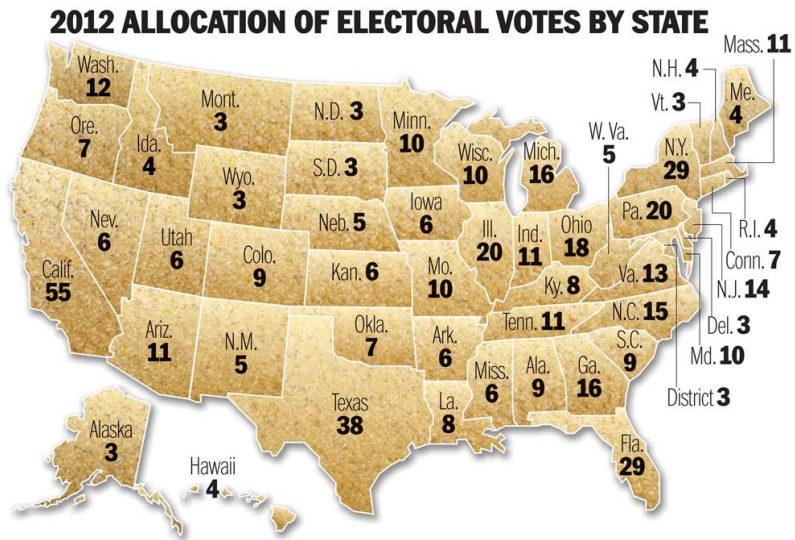
- This runs from September through the election date in early November.
- Candidates will hold televised Presidential Debates on TV.
- Voters will vote for their candidates on Election Day, and the Electoral College System will determine the winner.

2008 Presidential Election - Electoral College Map



The Electoral College

- **Electors:** People who promise to cast votes for the candidate selected by the voters
- The larger the state's population, the more Electoral votes it has.



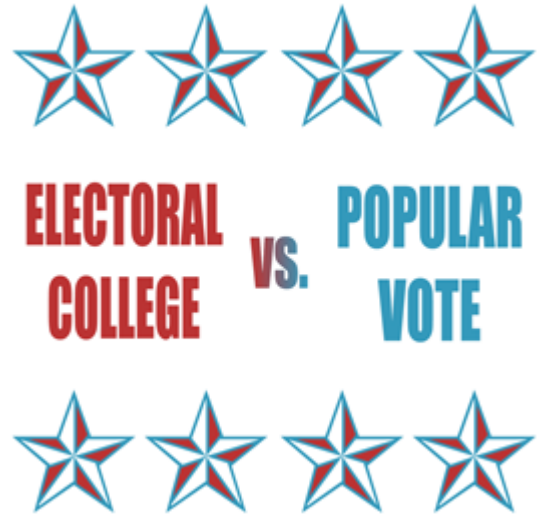
Predict what might happen if we used the Electoral College model to elect local or state government representatives. What would it look like here in Oregon?

How the Electoral College Works

Each state has the same number of electors as it has members of congress

(Senate/House)

- Oregon has 7 electors because we have 2 senators and 5 in the House of Representatives
- The electoral college has 538 electors
 - Each has one vote
- Before the presidential election:
 - Each party picks electors
 - Electors promise to vote for party's presidential candidate
 - On election day when you vote, you are actually voting for the presidential candidates team of electors
- Election night:
 - Nation waits to see the states that each candidate wins
 - "Winning" or "carrying" a state means that a candidates whole team of electors has won in that state
 - The "winning" team then casts their vote in the electoral college



Electoral College Activity:

Answer the following in the Activity Section of your notebook:

1. What is the fairest way to elect the president?
2. What would be the repercussions of doing away with the Electoral College?
3. What might have caused the founding fathers to choose the Electoral College as the means of electing the President? How significant was this decision?