

# THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

**LWV**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF FLORIDA

# THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

The Electoral College is a process, not a place.

The Electoral College process consists of

- **Selection** of electors
- **Meeting** of the electors to vote for President and Vice President
- **Counting** of electoral votes by Congress

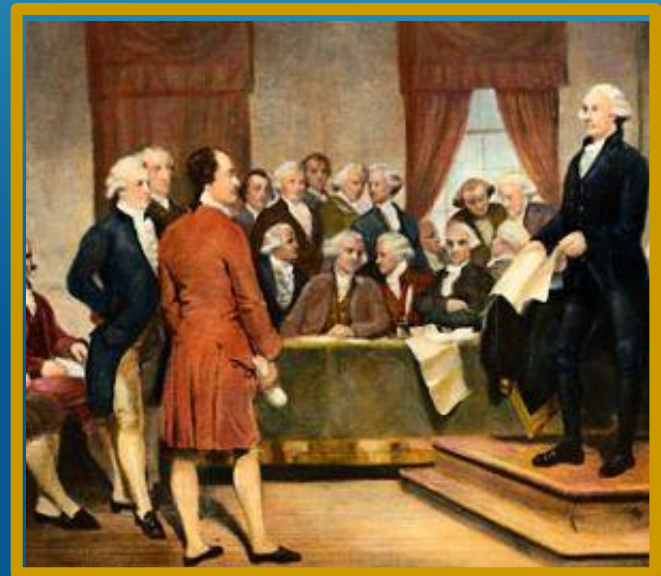
THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE IS ESTABLISHED BY THE U.S. CONSTITUTION.



# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The framers of the Constitution disagreed on method to elect President and Vice President

Direct popular election  
or  
Selection by Congress



# THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE WAS A COMPROMISE

The process combines features of both approaches:

- Popular election
- Final decision by “electors” who DO NOT have to follow the popular vote.

# VOTERS AND ELECTORS

A voter casting a ballot for President is actually voting for **electors** who are pledged to cast their state's electoral votes for that candidate.

# ELECTORS

Allocation of state electors is:

- ▶ one for each member in the House of Representatives +
- ▶ 2 (one for each Senator. )

**FLORIDA has 29 Electors:**

2 Senators + 27 U.S. Representatives = 29

# STATES CHOOSE THEIR ELECTORS

Each state decides method of elector selection.

In most states, electors are selected by state party convention or state party committee.



# WHO WINS?

There are 538 electoral votes in total, based on  
100 senators + 435 U.S. Representatives  
+ 3 electors for District of Columbia = 538

Candidate must win the majority of electoral  
votes, or 270 electoral votes.

# CASTING ELECTOR VOTES

Each state determines how its electors are to cast their votes.

48 states and the District of Columbia use a “winner-take-all” statewide election system.

2 states use a **District System** for allocating votes

Nebraska (3 districts +2 for total)

Maine (2 districts + 2 for total)

# VOTERS AND ELECTORS

29 states, including Florida,  
bar “**faithless electors**”  
(electors who do not keep  
their pledge to vote for their  
party’s candidate).

# ELECTORS CHOOSE THE PRESIDENT

In December of a Presidential election year

Electors gather in their respective state capitals to cast ballots for President and Vice President.

Electors send the results of their state's votes to Congress and the National Archives

# CONGRESS ANNOUNCES THE OUTCOME

## *In January*

New Congress comes into session.

Ballots opened, counted official outcome announced.

## *January 20th*

Next President is sworn into office.

# ELECTORAL COLLEGE

## PROS & CONS



# ELECTORAL COLLEGE SUPPORTERS CLAIM:

- ▶ Protects interests of small states
- ▶ Facilitates stability of two-party system
- ▶ Balances state and Federal power

# OPPONENTS OF ELECTORAL COLLEGE CLAIM:

1. Candidate with the most popular votes may not win.
2. Depresses voter turnout.
3. Big “swing” states get most of the candidates’ campaign attention.
4. “Swing” states receive more federal grants, Superfund liability exemptions, and other considerations.
5. Favors the smaller and less populated states.

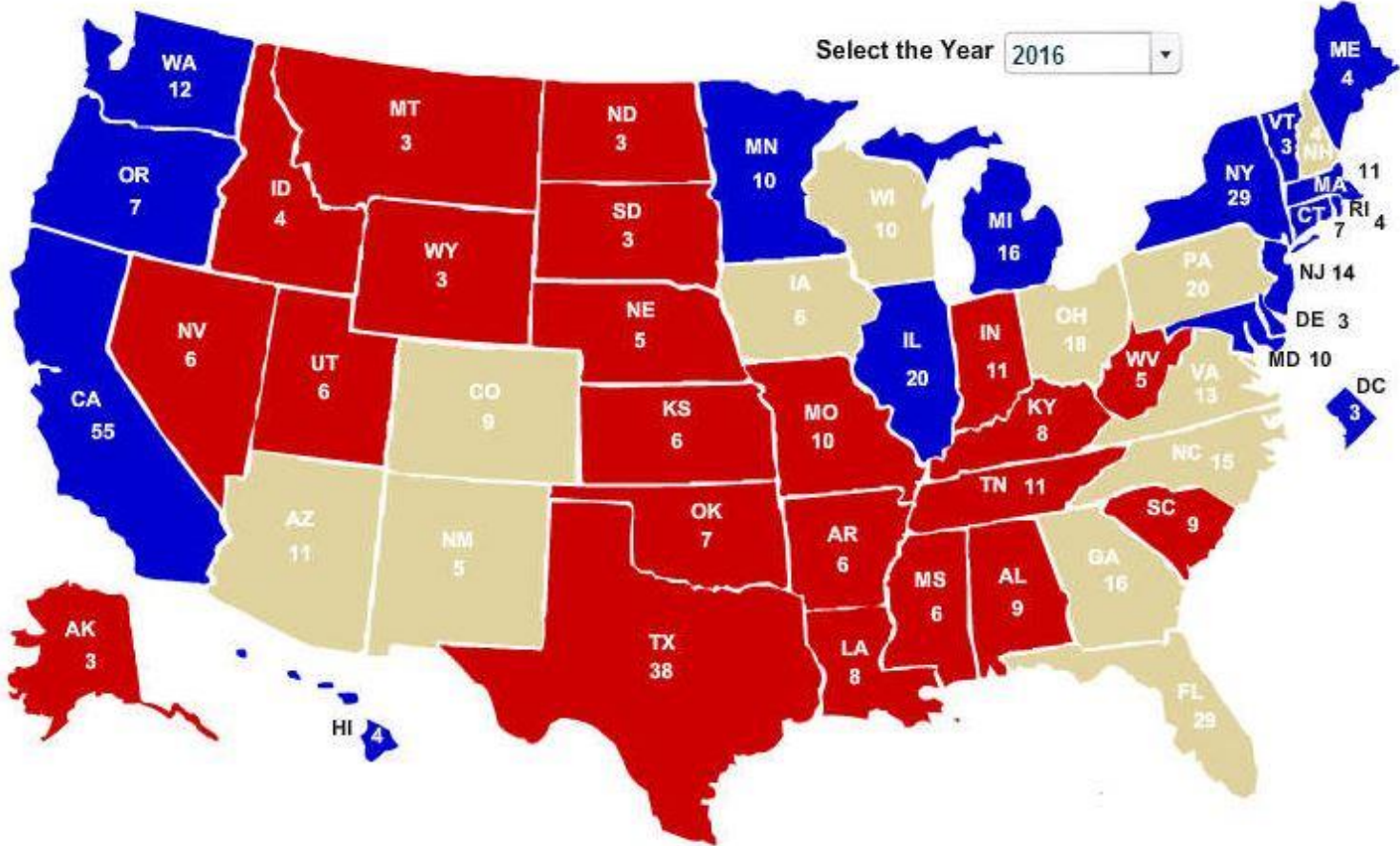


# 2016 SWING STATES

Red States – Republican

Blue States – Democratic

Maize States – Swing States



# SMALL STATE BIAS

Electoral college has small state bias.

# SMALL STATE BIAS

	Wyoming	Florida
Approximate Population	586,000	18,900,000
Electoral Votes	3	29
Number of Persons represented in one electoral vote	<b>195,000</b>	<b>648,000</b>

# SMALL STATE BIAS

A Florida vote  
**has less than 1/3**  
the impact of a  
Wyoming vote.



Florida Voter



Wyoming Voter



# PROPOSALS FOR REFORM

- Amend the Constitution to abolish EC
- Change “winner take all” to proportional allocation
- District System: like Maine and Nebraska
- National Popular Vote Interstate Compact

# NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE INTERSTATE COMPACT (NPVIC)

NPVIC is an agreement among states to award all of their Electoral College votes to the Presidential candidate who wins the **national popular vote**.

# NPVIC

10 states and the District of Columbia have signed on, totaling 165 electoral votes:

California, DC, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington.

# NPVIC

NPVIC does not go into effect until states totaling 270 electoral votes have signed on.



# NPVIC IS THE ONLY SYSTEM PROPOSED THAT:

- Makes all states competitive.
- Makes every vote equal.
- Guarantees that the candidate with the most popular votes nationwide wins the Presidency.
- Pushes Presidential candidates to adopt agendas that unite voters.
- Would NOT require an amendment to the US Constitution.

# THE LEAGUE'S POSITION

*The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. Therefore, the League believes that*

**The Electoral College should be abolished**



# THE LEAGUE'S POSITION

**The League of Women Voters supports  
the National Popular Vote Compact**  
as one acceptable way to achieve the goal  
of the direct popular vote for election of the  
President until the abolition of the Electoral  
College is accomplished.



# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Advocate to US Senators and Representatives.
- Advocate to Florida Constitutional Revision Commission.
- Advocate to Florida Legislators.

# JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Add your voice to LWV members from all 50 states, Washington DC, the Virgin Islands, and Hong Kong

Visit us at: [www.lwvpbc.org](http://www.lwvpbc.org)

Learn more about NPVIC at <http://www.nationalpopularvote.com/>

