

**Written Narrative**

Uhh... hello. Apparently I was told to talk about how terrible the Electoral College is. It appears that I was running a few hours late and the studio has closed, but I went in through the back door, so I think it's fine.

The Electoral College has been the primary system of electing the President of the United States since Washington's first term as President. Alexander Hamilton installed the Electoral College system to act as one more degree of separation between the average citizen and the Federal Government. The Electoral College is a system where each state gets a certain number of votes in an election based on its population; more specifically, the way each state gets an Electoral vote is the sum of the number of seats the state has in the House of Representatives plus the number each state has in the Senate, which is always two. The way each state gets one seat in the House is that one seat is equal to 747,000 people. This is updated every ten years during the Census. For example, in this upcoming federal election in 2024, California will have 54 electoral votes, because they have 52 seats in the House (or 52 districts) and two senators; and South Carolina has 9 electoral votes, because they have 7 seats in the house (or 7 districts) and two senators.

The issue, however, that I have with the Electoral College is the "winner-take-all" system, where if a candidate wins even the slightest majority of a state, they win all of their electoral votes. For example, in 2016 the State of Michigan went for Trump by about 0.3% of the vote. However, all 16 of their electoral votes went towards Trump as opposed to a little over 50% of their electoral votes. This was the main issue in the other three states that also barely went for Trump: Pennsylvania and Wisconsin which Trump led both by only 0.7%, and Florida by only 1.2% but entirely won their 20, 10, and 29 electoral votes, respectively. This caused Trump to win the 2016 General Election against Hillary Clinton 306-232, whilst not even winning the popular vote by 3 million votes. This has happened three times before in American history, making the Electoral College seem less and less reliable.

Thankfully, I have a much simpler solution. Instead of having the Electoral College system in place, we can use the way that House seats are given to each state. We could take votes from electoral "districts", a lot like in Canada, and leave it up to each local district to give one vote. For example, District 1 in South Carolina comprises most of the coast except for downtown until Horry County and Jasper County, as well as a little bit inland. Therefore, if we use those boundaries to allot District 1 one vote, then we could have a much more accurate way of tallying up Electoral Votes without giving large cities total control because each district is supposed to have around the same population. Maine and Nebraska actually do this today, where they split their electoral votes among their House districts, so that the votes can be proportionally distributed. This gives the city of Omaha the advantage of voting democratic while the rest of Nebraska votes republican, and rural Maine the advantage of voting republican while the urban areas vote democratic.

Using this new system would actually give the Democrats in 2016 a close but victorious election. This is probably what the election map would look like, where each district is represented. Or this map could be used, where each state is represented but they all have split electoral votes. The grey states indicate that the vote is split 50-50, but this doesn't actually change the outcome of the election. And with popular candidates, good voter turnout, and no partisan gerrymandering, this new system of counting electoral votes would truly make the American electoral system more fair and give it fewer discrepancies.

There would be 102 fewer votes needed to win than the Electoral College system, because the number of Senators wouldn't be considered; and we're going to include DC in this because they already get 3 electoral votes in the Electoral College today, so they'll just have 1 for our scenario. This wouldn't really change anything since the proportions are the same for every state. So with this system, Donald Trump wouldn't actually win the Electoral College in 2016; he would only win 208 votes, which would be a 32% decrease in votes which he shouldn't've had anyways; and Clinton would only see a 2% decrease in electoral votes, but that's only because of the decrease of electoral votes in general mixed with greater amounts of districts needed to win an election.

This has been my commentary on the issues that I have with the Electoral College, and the solutions that I have proposed would solve the problem with candidates being elected with a minority of the popular vote, and would reflect the similar electoral systems of Canada and Great Britain.

"2016 Presidential Election Results." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, [www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/president](http://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/president).

"South Carolina US District 1." *South Carolina's 1st Congressional District*, 14 Sept. 2021, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South\\_Carolina%27s\\_1st\\_congressional\\_district](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Carolina%27s_1st_congressional_district).

"YAPms - USA 2020 House." *Yapms.com*, [www.yapms.com/app/?t=USA\\_2020\\_house](http://www.yapms.com/app/?t=USA_2020_house).

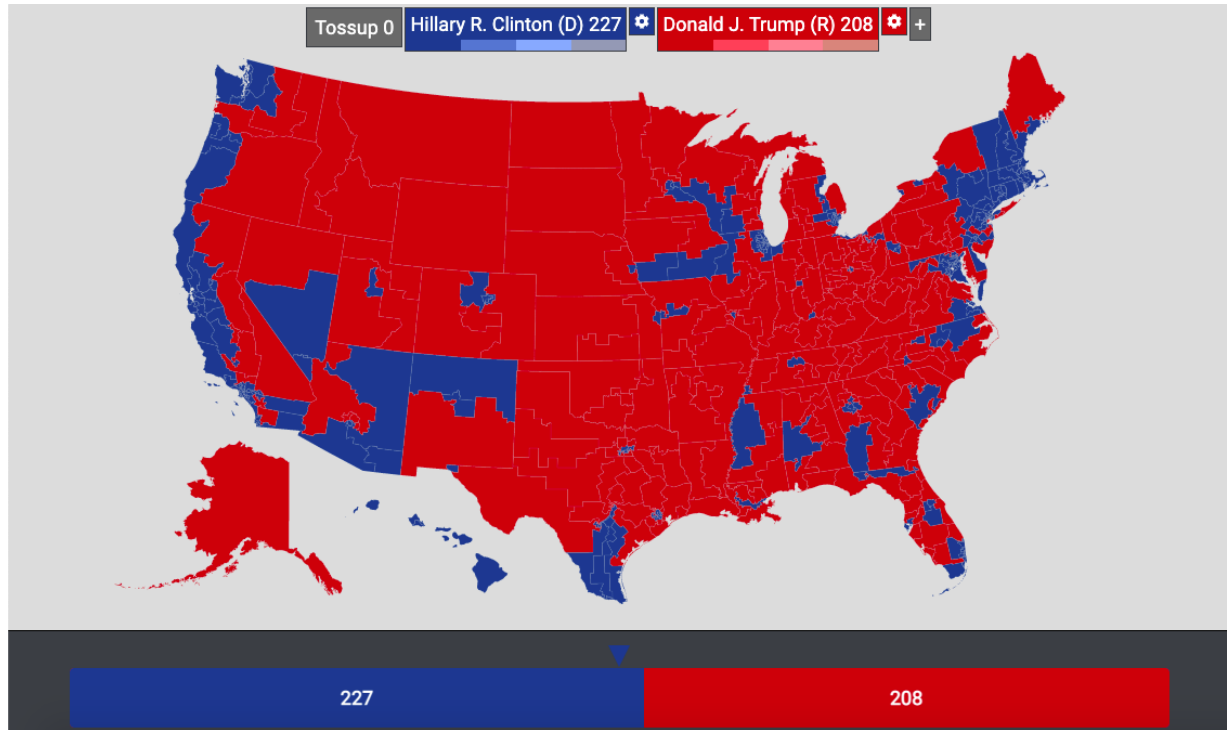
"YAPms - USA 2020 Proportional Presidential Election Map." *Yapms.com*, [www.yapms.com/app/?t=USA\\_proportional](http://www.yapms.com/app/?t=USA_proportional).

### Calculated Work and Election Maps

436 remaining electoral votes – 538 current electoral votes = 102 total electoral votes lost nationally

$$\frac{(208 \text{ remaining votes for Trump} - 306 \text{ actual votes for Trump})}{306} = -0.32 \rightarrow 32\% \text{ decrease}$$

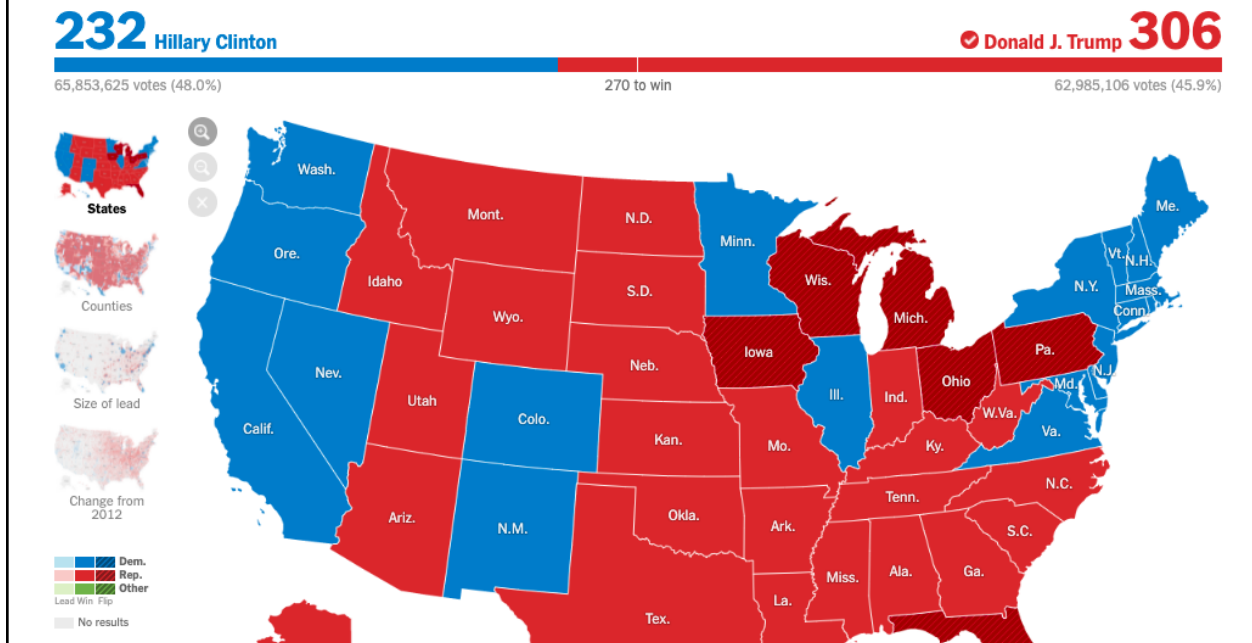
$$\frac{(228 \text{ remaining votes for Clinton} - 232 \text{ actual votes for Clinton})}{232} = -0.02 \rightarrow 2\% \text{ decrease}$$



Representational Map with Districts (this does not include D.C.)

Election Map with Split States (this includes D.C.)

2016 Actual



### **Why I Chose These Comparative Statistics and Univariate Data Elements**

Subtraction: I decided to use subtraction for my first comparative statistic because I feel like it was the best and simplest way to inform the audience about the “concrete” sort of decrease of electoral votes, while making it seem that there weren’t too many electoral votes lost, which, again, doesn’t even change the outcome of the election.

Two Percent Change Stats: I decided to use percent change for my other two comparative statistics because I already stated how many electoral votes Trump and Clinton would have gotten with the new system, so I reiterated the percent decrease by each candidate. And since I wanted to make it seem like Donald Trump lost more electoral votes, I decided to use this comparative statistic.

Three bar graphs: I only decided to use the three bar graphs from our Univariate Data unit because I feel like it was important to display the two parties compared against each other, and it was easy to see which party had the majority of electoral votes.