



## **The End of One-Man-One-Vote with Winner-Take-All Political Polarization, Race, and Geography**

In our Federal system, the Electoral College and the Senate are supposed to protect less populated states, while the House of Representatives is supposed to function on the concept of One-Person-One Vote. The same pattern applies in states, where the State Senate is supposed to protect the less populated areas, while the State Assembly is supposed to be One-Person-One Vote.

However, with political polarization, race, and geography, and winner-take-all in elections, One-Person-One-Vote no longer applies in the House of Representatives or State Assemblies. This disenfranchises people in urban areas, especially minorities. While Democrats are most disadvantaged, the country suffers as politization and racial isolation increase, and the government is gridlocked

### **The Federal System Protects Small States**

The Federal System is designed to protect small states with extra representation in both the Senate and the Electoral College. This protection has been an important element in the success of the United States.

- Every state has two Senators. Wyoming, with about 578,000 people has the same representation as California, with about 39,500,000 people. In other words, in the Senate, the average voter in Wyoming has 62x the power of the average voter in California. The ten smallest states combined, with 20 senators, have about the same population as California, with 2.

The Electoral College also protects small states, since each state receives one vote for each member of the House of Representatives the Senate.

- Wyoming receives 3 votes, while California receives 55. This equates to one Electoral vote for every 192,667 people in Wyoming versus one Electoral vote for every 718,182 people in California, giving Wyoming voters 3.7 times more power in presidential elections.

### **Small States Did Not Cost Clinton the Presidency**

Although the Electoral College is skewed in favor of small states, these states did not cost Hillary Clinton the Presidency. In 2016, Clinton lost the election because, in the winner-take-all system, she won some large states by large margins, while Trump won many large states by small margins.

- In the 12 jurisdictions (11 states and D.C.) with 3 or 4 electoral votes, Clinton lead Trump in electoral votes 23-20

### 12 Smallest Jurisdictions Electoral Votes

Trump	Clinton
20	23

Trump dominated in the largest states, winning 7 out of 10.

- Clinton won many states by large margins, while Trump won many states by small margins. In the 10 largest states,
  - Clinton had a popular vote majority of 4,178,401,
  - Trump won 152 electoral votes compared to 104 for Clinton.

### 10 Largest States 2016 Presidential

	Popular Vote Margin	Electoral Vote
Trump	1,827,067	152
Clinton	6,950,182	104

With the winner-take-all system, Clinton received almost 5.12 million more votes than Trump in the largest states but had a 48-vote deficit in the Electoral College, because she won three states (N.Y., California, and Illinois) by large margins.

### In the Senate, Democrats Also Win a Few States by Large Margins.

The impact of winner-take all also impacts the Senate. Democrats complain that Republicans control the smallest states.

- Yet many of the smallest states, like Maine, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Delaware, Hawaii, Vermont, and New Mexico, are Democratic or are turning Democratic.
- With winner-take-all, Democrats win some states, by huge margins, and lose others by smaller margins.
- Democrats lost the Senate elections in Texas and Florida by 224,954 votes and won N.Y. by 2,058,711. In California, with nonpartisan primaries, there were no Republicans running and the Democrats received 11,113,375 votes.

### Senate 2018- 4 Largest States

Democratic Margin	Republican Margin
13,172,086	224,954

- Like the Electoral College, the Senate is designed to benefit smaller states. However, this may not be as large a disadvantage to the Democrats as it first appears. The basic problem for the Democrats is with winner-take-all, the large margins it achieves in few states are of little benefit.

This pattern of Democrats winning some areas by large margins and Republicans winning other areas by smaller margins applies in most U.S. elections. It is caused by race and geography and is the largest contributor to the polarization in U.S. politics.

### In the House of Representatives One-Person-One-Vote Does Not Exist

While the Democrats may be at a disadvantage in the Senate and the Electoral College, far less recognized is that the Democrats are also at a significant disadvantage in the House of Representatives

and in state governments, and the reason for this disadvantage has nothing to do with the Federalist system. It has to do with geography and race.

The House of Representatives is supposed to be designed around one-man-one-vote. It would seem logical that the party that receives the most votes would win a majority of the seats. It would also seem logical that over the entire country, each party would win some elections by large margins and others by smaller margins. However, Democrats seem to win elections by large margins and Republicans win similar elections by smaller margins. This results in an underrepresentation for Democrats based on the popular vote.

- In 1996 and 2012, Democrats won the popular vote for Congress, but Republicans won a majority of the seats.
- In 2016, the Republicans gained a 47-seat majority with only a 1.4 million vote plurality, while 2 years later, the Democrats had only a 37-seat majority with almost a 10 million vote plurality.

	<u>Margin in Congress</u>	<u>Popular Vote</u>
2018	Democrats +36	Democrats +9.7 million
2016	Republicans+ 47	Republicans +2 million
2012	Republicans +33	Democrats +1.4 million
1996	Republicans +19	Democrats +60 thousand

Why do the Democrats seem to get more votes and less seats than the Republicans?

**Democrats win their elections by larger margins than do Republicans.**

- In 2018, the average Democratic winner received 70% of the vote, while the average Republican winner received 61.2% of the vote.
- In 2016 and 2012 combined, the average Democratic winner received 307,590 votes, while the average Republican winner received 255,485 votes.

**State results coincide with national results.**

- In Florida .
  - Winning Democrats received 81.8% while the winning Republicans received 61.0% of the votes.
- In Michigan
  - Democrats received 52.4% of the vote compared to 44.6% for Republicans, but both parties won 7 seats.
  - Winning Democrats received 64.1% while winning Republicans won 56.1% of the votes.
- In Illinois
  - Winning Democrats received 71.2% while winning Republicans won 58.0% of the vote.
- In Ohio
  - Winning Democrats received 71.2% while winning Republicans won 59.1% of the vote.
- In North Carolina
  - Winning Democrats averaged 71.7% compared to 59.5% for the Republicans.
- In Pennsylvania in 2018,
  - The Democrats and the Republicans both won 9 seats.
  - Democrats won 55% of the popular vote compared to 44.75% for Republicans.
  - Winning Democrats averaged 69.4%, compared to 59.5% for Republicans.

- In Texas
  - Winning Democrats averaged 72.0% compared to 61.3% for Republicans.

Winning Margins in 2018 Congressional Elections		
<u>State</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Florida	81.8%	61.0%
Michigan	64.1%	56.1%
Illinois	71.2%	58.0%
Ohio	71.2%	59.1%
North Carolina	71.7%	59.5%
Pennsylvania	69.4%	59.5%
Texas	72.0%	61.3%

These elections distort the balance between the popular vote and the representation in Congress.

### Democrats are also at a disadvantage in state elections.

The patterns are even more slanted when looking at legislative races in individual states. In the state legislative races shown below, Democrats won the largest share of the popular vote, but the Republicans still controlled a majority of the electoral seats.

	Votes		Seats	
	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>
Michigan	1,935,174	2,128,281	58	52
Wisconsin	1,103,505	1,306,878	63	26
Pennsylvania	2,075,093	2,568,968	110	93
North Carolina	1,779,584	1,866,432	65	55
Arizona Senate	1,091,817	1,124,990	31	29

This represents a fundamental problem to our democracy. It enables the party with the smaller number of popular votes to take action to restrict the other party by gerrymandering districts, enacting voting restrictions, and taking other actions to maintain its control.

- On December 24, 2019, in Wisconsin, a state the Democrats carried by 300,000 votes, Republicans leaders purged 234,000 voters from its voting roles.

### Democrats Win Landslide Elections

The primary reason for the imbalance is that **Democrats win a much larger number of one-sided and landslide elections than do Republicans**. A one-sided election is one in which the winner receives 70% of more of the vote. A landslide election is one in which the winning party receives more than 80% of the popular vote or the losing party receives less than 20%.

One-sided and landslide elections frequently occur because one party has its voters packed into a particular election district. This deprives that party of chances to win other districts that are much more competitive. It also leads to the election of candidates that are more partisan and hew closer to the party's base. If there is no real competition, the candidate and the party do not have to worry about attracting independents or members of the other political party. This is a major cause of polarization.

In the 2018 Congressional elections,

- 23 Democrats ran unopposed, compared to 2 Republicans.
- 53 Democrats won landslide victories, compared to 5 Republicans.

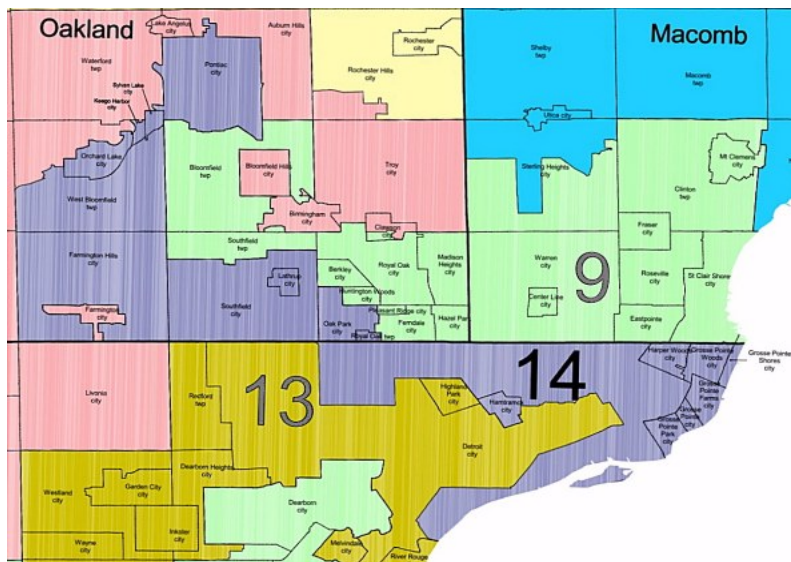
If districts were apportioned so that there were no landslide elections, the Democrats could have distributed more than 5 million votes to other districts and won a larger majority in Congress as well as control of many more states.

**Gerrymandering contributes to landslide elections.**

After the census of 2010, according to the National Association of State Legislatures, Republicans were in full control of 20 states, while Democrats were in full control of only 11. Since the State Legislature draws electoral districts, this gave Republicans an inherent advantage to gerrymander districts to benefit their candidates.

States like Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Texas, Florida, Georgia, Virginia, Arizona, and others have taken advantage of this opportunity to gerrymander districts in a manner that allowed the Republicans to win addition seats.

- In Virginia, Republicans gerrymandered a large percentage of minorities into in District #3. By gerrymandering Democrats into one district, the Republicans were able to win other elections by narrow margins.
- In Michigan, Republicans created districts #13 and #14 to be landslides for the Democrats, so they could win adjoining districts.



It is clear that gerrymandering has given the Republicans a decided advantage in the states they control. In our White Paper on Gerrymandering, we suggest ways of rectifying these issues.

**Geography contributes to landslide elections.**

However, it is not just political gerrymandering. Democrats are also at a disadvantage because geography tends to work against them. Democrats tend to be packed into large urban areas. The rules for districting tend to keep these areas intact and contribute to landslide Democratic victories.

## Rules for Creating Political Districts

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, rules for creating political districts include:

- **Compactness:** Having the minimum distance between all the parts of a constituency.
- **Contiguity:** All parts of a district being connected.
- **Preservation of counties and other political subdivisions:** Utilizing county, city, or town boundaries when drawing districts.
- **Preservation of communities of interest:** Keeping neighborhoods where residents have common political or social interests intact.
- **Preservation of cores of prior districts:** Maintaining districts as previously drawn, to the extent possible. This leads to continuity of representation.

### Rules for districting all work against the Democrats.

- **Compactness**
  - Democrats are packed into cities.
- **Contiguity**
  - Democrats tend to live in closer proximity to each other than do Republicans.
- **Preservation of Counties and Other Political Subdivisions**
  - Because districts are not supposed to cross country, cities, or town boundaries, large cities all have to have their own districts.
    - This results in huge Democratic majorities from these districts, which is why Democrats can win the popular vote but still have a minority of seats.
- **Preservation of Communities of Interest**
  - Means protecting minority representation. If there are large black and Hispanic populations, those populations are often placed in the same legislative district. Since Democrats have a vast majority in these communities, they are further disadvantaged.
- **Preservation of Prior Districts**
  - Makes changes more difficult.

### Most People, no matter the party, are comfortable with these rules.

Most voters are conceptually against gerrymandering. They think districts should be fairly drawn and believe in one-person-one-vote. However, most people like being in compact and contiguous districts.

- People like having a “local” Congressperson and being in an election district with their “community.”
- People in N.Y. City do not want to share an election district with someone from Elmira.

This means that Democrats will often be packed into urban districts, resulting in landslide elections, and polarization.

### Congressional Elections 2018- New York

The Congressional Elections in New York in 2018 reflect the problems of districting and geographic concentration.

- The average Democratic winner, with a majority of their district in N.Y. City, excluding the Staten Island district, received 91.3% of the votes.
- To allow more competitive elections, there is no obvious way to draw boundaries in N.Y.C. to include Republican areas in Suffolk County or Upstate N.Y.

District	2018 Congressional Elections -New York		Winner
	Democratic	Republican	
1	47.3	51.5	R
2	46.9	53.1	R
3	59	41	D
4	61.3	38.7	D
5	100	0 NYC	D
6	90	0 NYC	D
7	93.4	0 NYC	D
8	94.3	0 NYC	D
9	89.3	10.3 NYC	D
10	82.1	17.9 NYC	D
11	53	46.6 NYC	D
12	86.4	12.2 NYC	D
13	94.6	5.4 NYC	D
14	78.2	13.6 NYC	D
15	96	4 NYC	D
16	100	0 NYC	D
17	88	0	D
18	55.5	44.5	D
19	51.4	46.1	D
20	66.5	33.5	D
21	42.4	56.1	R
22	50.9	49.1	D
23	45.8	54.2	R
24	47.4	52.6	R
25	59	41	D
26	73.3	25.7	D
27	48.8	49.1	R
Total	67.2	31.2	
Total votes	3,990,483	1,855,147	
Average Victory	77.2%	52.8%	
NYC Total	1057.3	110	
NYC Average	88.1%	9.2%	
NYC excluding SI)	91.3%	5.8%	

### 2018 Congressional Elections and Race

The situation becomes more compelling when one considers both urbanization and race. It is generally recognized that minorities are more concentrated in cities. Therefore, it should not be a huge surprise that a large percentage of the elections included minorities.

- 36 of the 57 landslide elections were won by minorities.
- 18 of the 23 Democrats uncontested elections also were won by minorities.

Minorities are packed into cities. Districting rules suggest compactness, contiguity, preservation of political subdivisions, such as cities, and preservation of communities of interest, such as racial groups. These rules, when coupled with the geographic and racial reality of the Democratic party make significant changes in the current system difficult.

	2018 Congressional Landslide Elections						No Dem.			
	Dems.	Minority	No Minority	No Rep. Opp.	State	District	Reps.	No. Dem Opps.	State	District
Terri Sewell	x	x		x	AL	7				
Ruben Gallego	x	x			Az	7				
Mike Thompson	x		x	x	Ca	5				
Doris Matsui	x	x		x	Ca	6				
Paul Cook							x	x	Ca	8
Nancy Pelosi	x		x		Ca	12				
Jimmy Panetta	x		x		Ca	20				
Tony Cardenas	x	x			Ca	29				
Jimmy Gomez	x	x		x	Ca	34				
Karen Bass	x	x			Ca	37				
Naneete Barragan	x	x		x	Ca	44				
Val Demings	x	x		x	FL	10				
Kathy Castor	x		x	x	FL	14				
Alcee Hastings	x	x		x	FL	20				
Lois Frankel	x		x	x	FL	21				
Frederica Wilson	x	x		x	FL	24				
John Lewis	x	x		x	Ga	5				
Austin Scott							x	x	Ga	8
Robin Kelly	x	x			Il.	2				
Jesus Garcia	x	x			Il	4				
Danny Davis	x	x			il	7				
Cedric Richmond	x	x			La	2				
Richard Neal	x		x		Ma	1				
Joe Kennedy	x		x		Ma	4				
Ayanna Pressley	x	x		x	Ma	7				
Stephen Lynch	x		x		Ma	10				
Rashida Tlaib	x	x		x	Mi	13				
Lacy Clay	x	x			Mo.	1				
Donald Payne	x	x			NJ	10				
Gregory Meeks	x	x		x	NY	5				
Grace Meng	x	x		x	NY	6				
Nydia Velazquez	x	x		x	NY	7				
Hakeem Jeffries	x	x		x	NY	8				
Yvette Clarke	x	x			NY	9				
Jerry Nadler	x		x		NY	10				
Carolyn Maloney	x		x		NY	12				
Adriano Espaillat	x	x			NY	13				
Alexandra Occasio Cortez	x	x			NY	14				
Jose Serrano	x	x			NY	16				
Eliot Engel	x		x	x	NY	16				
Nita Lowey	X		x	x	NY	17				
Walter Jones							x		NC	3
Marcia Fudge	x	x			Oh	11				
Dwight Evans	x	x			Pa	3				
Mike Doyle	x		x		Pa	18				
Steve Cohen	x		x		Tn	9				
Al Green	x	x		x	Tx	9				
Mike Conaway							x		Tx.	11
Mac Thornberry							x		Tx.	13
Joaquin Castro	x	x			Tx	20				
Henry Cuellar	x	x		x	Tx	28				
Eddie Bernice Johnson	x	x		x	Tx	30				
Bobby Scott	x	x		x	Va	3				
Pramila Jayapal	x	x			Wa	7				
Adam Smith	x		x		Wa	9				
Mark Pocan	x		x	x	Wi	2				
Elanor Holmes Norton	x	x			DC					
Total	52	36	16	23			5	2		

**The Voting Rights Act of 1965 contributes to landslide elections.**

Besides political gerrymandering and geographic concentration, Democrats also suffer from issues of race. For all of the talk about gerrymandering by Republicans, some of the most significant gerrymandering was created by the Supreme Court and well-meaning political leaders in response to the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

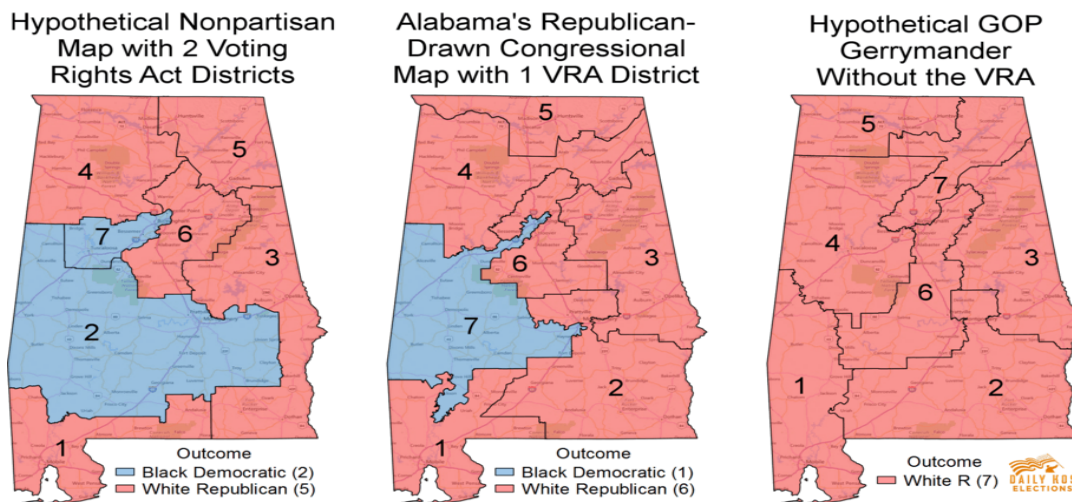


The Voting Rights Act sought to insure minority representation. However, in the last 55 years, the Act may actually have created gerrymandered districts that work against the interests of the minorities it was supposed to protect by limiting their representation. Here is an illustrative example of how racial gerrymandering impacts the electoral process.

Prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1965, most district maps in the South looked like the one on the right. Even though there were many minorities in Alabama, the politicians gerrymandered so they would have no representation.

After the passage of the Civil Rights Act, with the support of the Democrats and the acquiescence of the Republicans, maps, like the one in the middle were drawn. This gave the minorities a district, (District 7). In the last election, District 7 was a landslide district for the Democrats, with no opposition.

With the increasing percentage of minorities in a state like Alabama, boundaries could be redrawn so minorities could win a second district, as shown in the map on the left.



There are two problems with drawing this type of map. Republicans do not want to give up another seat, and minority Democrats enjoy having districts in which they face no competition. These two factors combine to limit both minority and Democratic representation.

In an excellent article, Kim Soffen, of the Washington Post wrote.

*"The Supreme Court expanded the meaning of one of the most important civil rights laws in U.S. history — the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Among other things, the court prohibited a then-common practice among some states of spreading minorities across voting districts, leaving them too few in number in any given district to elect their preferred candidates. The practice became known as "racial gerrymandering."*

*“The court’s solution required that states create majority-minority districts — districts in which the majority of the voting-age population belonged to a single minority. With voting that occurred largely along racial lines, these districts allowed minority voters to elect their candidates of choice...But a fascinating development occurred in the years since. These districts, rather than giving African Americans more political power, might have actually started to deprive them of it. Majority-minority districts, by concentrating the minority vote in certain districts, have the unintended consequence of diluting their influence elsewhere. Experts say some Republican legislatures have capitalized on this new reality, redistricting in their political favor under the guise of majority-minority districts.”*

### **2018 Congressional Elections: The Black Caucus**

An analysis of the results of the 2018 Congressional Elections reflects the extent to which minorities have been packed into a small number of districts where they have been able to win elections, but also where their influence has been limited and diminished.

- The average Black candidate received 78.5% of the vote.
- Excluding 8 candidates that ran from swing districts, the winning percentage was 80.8%.

The Voting Rights Act mandated that minorities receive representation, but in practice this has resulted in minorities being crammed into a small number of districts where they can win elections unopposed or by landslides. The flip side is that the remaining districts in a state have fewer minorities and hence fewer Democrats. That is why in many states, the Republicans have managed to win majorities of the seats in Congress while losing the popular vote.

Further, since these districts have fewer minorities, the elected representatives in these districts have no incentive to consider the problems of minorities. Many calculate that the “token” Black or Hispanic representative in their state is responsible for his or her own people. While these office holders do represent their own people, there is little incentive for others to help solve minority problems.

Some of the problem is legal. People are still trying to abide by 55-year old Supreme Court decision. Some of the problem is with the minority officeholders themselves, who like having landslide districts. Some of the problem is with the Democrats, who want to appear to be supporting their minority constituents; and some of the problem is with the Republicans, who are using the guise of civil rights to gerrymander to their advantage.

### **Election Results for Members of the Congressional Black Caucus**

<u>Congressperson</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Percentage Vote</u>
John Lewis	GA	5	100
Elanor Holmes Norton	DC		87.04
Maxine Waters	CA	43	77.7
Sanford Bishop	GA	2	59.6
James Clyburn	SC	6	70.2
Alcee Hastings	FL	20	100
Eddie Johnson	TX	30	91.1
Bobbie Rush	IL	1	73.5

Bobby Scott	VA	3	100
Bennis Thompson	MS	2	71.8
Shelia Jackson Lee	TX	18	75.2
Elijah Cummings	MD	7	76.5
Danny Davis	IL	7	87.6
G.K. Butterfield	NC	1	69.8
Emanuel Cleaver	MO	5	61.7
Al Green	TX	9	89.1
Gwen Moore	WI	4	75.7
Yvette Clark	NY	9	89.3
Greg Meeks	NY	5	100
Barbara Lee	CA	13	88.4
Wm. Clay	MO	1	80.1
David Scott	GA	13	76.2
Marcia Fudge	OH	11	82.2
Karen Bass	CA	37	89.1
Cedric Richmond	LA	2	80.6
Terri Sewell	AL	7	100
Frederica Wilson	FL	24	100
Joyce Beatty	OH	3	73.6
Hakeem Jeffries	NY	8	94.2
Marc Veasy	TX	33	76.2
Robin Kelly	IL	2	81.1
Alma Adams	NC	12	73.1
Brenda Lawrence	MI	14	80.9
Bonnie Coleman	NJ	12	68.7
Dwight Evans	PA	2	93.4
Lisa Rochester	DE		64.5
Anthony Brown	MD	4	78.1
Val Demings	FL	10	100
Al Lawson	FL	5	66.8
Donald Mcechin	VA	4	62.6
Steven Horsford	NV	4	51.9
Colin Allred	TX	32	52.3
ANTONIO Delgado	NY	19	51.4
Jahana Hayes	CT	5	55.9
Lucy McBarth	GA	6	50.5
Joe Neguse	CO	2	60.3
Ilhan Omar	MN	5	78.2
Ayanna Presley	MA	7	100

Stacy Plaskett	Virgin Islands		98.41
Lauren Underwood	IL	14	52.5
Donald Payne	NJ	10	87.6
			78.50%
Excluding Non-minority districts *			80.90%

**Problems are even worse at the state legislative level.**

If the problems at the Congressional level are severe, the problems at the state level are even worse. Since each state has more representatives in their legislature than they do in Congress, concentrations of population become more prominent. Cities, large towns, and even neighborhoods with homogenous populations become natural election districts.

In states like Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, **Democrats won the popular vote, but Republicans won a majority of the seats.** The results in Wisconsin are especially slanted. Democrats won the popular vote by 8.5% but only ended up with 36 of 99 seats.

	Votes		Seats	
	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>
Michigan	1,935,174	2,128,281	58	52
Wisconsin	1,103,505	1,306,878	63	36
Pennsylvania	2,075,093	2,568,968	110	93
North Carolina	1,779,584	1,866,432	65	55

It is difficult, for even well-meaning people, to find ways of drawing boundaries that actually create competitive elections. This leads to more landslide victories the local level than the Federal level. With more landslide victories, polarization increases.

**This Situation is Bad for All Voters and Parties**

The geographic and racial concentration of Democrats is clearly a problem for that party, because it often wins the popular vote but loses the electoral vote; but the impact is more far reaching.

- Landslide districts result in elections of people who can often be more focused on the bases of their party.
  - Without competition, they have no incentive to focus on the electorate as a whole,
- Landslide elections for one party tend to provide safe districts for the other party.
  - This pushes those candidates towards their bases.
- With fewer competitive elections,
  - Party control is enhanced.
  - Good candidates are discouraged from running.
  - Turnover is minimized.
  - Politicians can focus on a narrow population base, which means that few are focusing on making the country or their states.
  - The concept of one-person-one-vote is nullified.

**Can We Return to One-Person-One-Vote?**

The House of Representatives was supposed to be organized on the basis of one-person-one vote. However, with gerrymandering, geographic concentration, and racial concentration, the concept of one-person-one vote is no longer fully applicable because districts are winner-take-all.

There are a number of relatively easy fixes to the problem of geographic and racial concentration on the concept of one-man-one-vote.

**1. Popular Election of the President**

- The popular election of the President would resolve some of issues of geographic and racial concentration. Unfortunately, there is almost no way such an idea would appeal to smaller states.

**2. Multi-member election districts**

- A multi-member election district is one that elects multiple candidates. Instead of 10 districts each electing one candidate, one district would elect 10 candidates. Such a system should lead to more moderate candidates being elected and less geographic and racial concentration. Unfortunately, the law says that all members of Congress must be elected from single-member districts.

In other words, while these easy fixes may sound appealing, but in the current political environment, there is little chance of them being implemented. This perpetuates a major problem, not just for the Democrats, but for the country as a whole.

With polarization dominating U.S. politics, it is important to find ways of restoring some sort of balance. Here are steps that could have a positive impact on the system.

**1. Recognize the Problem Exists**

- There is almost no discussion of the fact that Democrats are winning elections by much larger margins than Republicans. Democrats have to understand that the current winner-take-all system that works against them. They may think it is unfair, but if they do not recognize it, they will continue to suffer the consequences.

**2. Establish Independent Commissions in all States to eliminate Gerrymandering**

- Even with winner-take-all, Political Gerrymandering exacerbates the problem of geographic and racial concentration. Independent commissions, not politicians, should draw the boundaries.

**3. Rethink the Voting Rights Act of 1965**

- The Democrats supported it for excellent reasons, but now it appears that this act may be working against minorities, and also polarizing politics. Many minority candidates do not need 100% protected districts to win.

**4. Rethink the Way Congressional (and Legislative) Districts are Created**

- Congressional and legislative districts are drawn around political and community boundaries, but another feature that could be considered is drawing boundaries to promote competitive elections. The benefit of having homogeneous districts may be more than offset by the landslide elections. While this may be complicated in a state like

N.Y., boundaries in other states could be drawn in a way that more closely reflects the popular vote and creates more competitive election districts.

#### **5. Establish National Rules for Voter Registration**

- Republican controlled legislatures have sought to maintain their advantage by eliminating likely Democrats from the voter rolls. In this polarized world, we need consistent rules for registration.

#### **6. Make Voting Easier**

- Restrictions on voting tend to work against the specific voters that already suffer from geographic and racial concentration. We should not be making it more difficult for people who want to vote.
  - In this time of Coronavirus, we should also not force people to risk their health in order to vote. Everyone should be able to vote by mail.

#### **7. Create More Competitive Elections by Implementing New Voting Systems Like Nonpartisan Primaries or Ranked Choice Voting**

- If we are to lessen polarization in a country of geographic and racial concentration, we need to think about how to create more competitive elections. Nonpartisan Primaries and Ranked Choice Voting are two alternatives that will create more competition and lead to the election of more moderate candidates.
- People in both cities and rural areas should have the opportunity to vote in competitive elections.

### **Conclusion**

Our Federal system created the Senate and the Electoral College to protect smaller states and set up the House of Representatives to function on the basis of one-person-one vote. Because of gerrymandering, geographic and racial concentration, and the winner-take-all voting system, the House of Representatives no longer really supports one-person-one vote.

There are no easy fixes for this condition. Brooklyn and Elmira cannot be put in the same congressional district. People choose to live in communities in which they are comfortable, and these communities often form logical legislative districts.

However, to combat polarization in U.S. politics, we can recognize that the problem exists, establish independent commissions to take drawing of political boundaries out of the hands of the politicians, rethink the Civil Rights Act of 1965 by placing minorities in more competitive districts, which could lead to higher representation, rethink how districts are drawn to minimize landslide elections, create national rules for voter registration, make voting easier, and create more competitive elections by utilizing systems like nonpartisan primaries and ranked choice voting.

Until we find way of dealing with geographic and racial concentration, the concept of one-person-one-vote in our politics will remain in jeopardy.

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