



# Voting Reform Simulations - 2024

Same Voters – Different Winners

Changing Incentives for Candidates and Elected Officials

# *Broken System*

According to Reuters (January 2024):

- 70% of Americans don't believe Joe Biden should be running for president
- 56% of Americans don't believe Donald Trump should be running for president
- A majority of Americans (52%) are not satisfied with the two-party system and want a third choice.

In our recent survey (weighted for national levels of party affiliation):

- 69% or more of our participants preferred all six "alternative" presidential tickets presented over Trump/TBD
- 52% of our participants preferred two "alternative" presidential tickets presented (Jaime Dimon/Gina Raimondo and Bill Gates/Liz Cheney) over Biden/Harris
- 19% said none of our alternatives were desirable

A system giving us these choices and feeding the flames of division is broken

This presentation is about reforms with momentum to fix this problem

# *Purpose, Stipulations, and Weighting*

## Purpose

- Illustrate how results vary based on election system – explore implications
  - Same set of voters, same preferences, different types of winners
- Educate on reforms being discussed
- Get pulse on reform support/interest

## Stipulations

- Not a projection of 2024 – participants skew moderate
  - But, population still generates diverse outcomes
- Survey preceded Hogan and Manchin announcements – Including Hogan results as proxy for No Labels “Unity Ticket” potential

## Weighting

- To reflect national party affiliation (per Gallup, January 2024)
  - Republicans – 25%
  - Democrats – 27%
  - Independents – 45%
- Randomly duplicated sufficient (R) and (I) “ballots”
- Total surveys completed - 297
- Total “votes” in general election simulation – 435
  - Republican primary – 189
  - Democrat primary – 185

# Survey Content Review

## Election Reform Simulations

- 14 hypothetical candidates for President
  - Announced viable candidates (including Independents)
  - High-profile figures most named in earlier survey
- Asked participants
  - Rank all 14 – As utilized in certain reforms
  - Separately, indicate “approval” or “disapproval” of each

## Voter Psychology on Independent Candidates

- 7 real and hypothetical alternative tickets
  - Including some non-politicians named in earlier survey
- Asked participants to indicate preference vs. front-runners and willingness to support in general election

### Candidates

Joe Biden (D)	Amy Klobuchar (D)
Donald Trump (R)	Gavin Newsom (D)
Ron DeSantis (R)	Glenn Youngkin (R)
Gretchen Whitmer (D)	Larry Hogan (R/I)
Robert Kennedy, Jr. (I)	Joe Manchin (D/I)
Nikki Haley (R)	Jill Stein (Green)
Michelle Obama (D)	Cornel West (I)

### Alternative Tickets

John Huntsman/Joe Manchin  
Bill Gates/Liz Cheney  
Oprah Winfrey/Mitt Romney  
Jamie Dimon/Gina Raimondo  
Robert Kennedy Jr./TBD  
Cornel West/TBD  
Jill Stein/TBD

# Response Overview

- 297 responses from 33 states
  - Submitted January 3 – February 18
  - Non-scientific – email and social media distribution; requested broad forwarding
    - Majority of submissions from four states – New York, Missouri, Illinois and California
  - Republicans under-represented
    - Right-wing further under-represented

## Party Affiliation

Republican	48	16.2%
Democrat	121	40.7%
Independent	120	40.4%
Other Party	3	1.0%
No Answer	5	1.7%
Total	<u>297</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

## Republican 1st Choice Votes

Haley	24	8.1%
Trump	8	2.7%
DeSantis	7	2.4%
Youngkin	4	1.3%
Kennedy	2	0.7%
Biden	1	0.3%
Hogan	1	0.3%
Manchin	1	0.3%
Total	<u>48</u>	<u>16.2%</u>

# Simulation 1 – Current Method

With this group of voters, 2024 election looks like this:

Democrat Primary		
	<u>Votes</u>	<u>%</u>
Biden	81	44%
M.Obama	35	19%
Whitmer	31	17%
Klobuchar	26	14%
Newsom	12	6%
	<u>185</u>	

Republican Primary		
	<u>Votes</u>	<u>%</u>
Haley	112	59%
Trump	38	20%
DeSantis	12	6%
Youngkin	27	14%
	<u>189</u>	

General Election		
	<u>Votes</u>	<u>%</u>
Biden	168	39%
Haley	157	36%
Hogan	47	11%
Kennedy	32	7%
West	16	4%
Stein	15	3%
	<u>435</u>	

- Winner does not achieve a majority
- Popular vote plurality may not decide election (Electoral College effect)
- Potential for election thrown to House\*

\*Per the 12<sup>th</sup> amendment, if no candidate receives a majority of electoral college votes, the election is decided in the House of Representatives in a vote wherein which each state's delegation has a single vote.

# *Reform “Whys” and Principles*

## Why’s – Issues with Status Quo

- In current system, most-partisan 10-20% of voters decide elections
- Candidates and officials motivated only to satisfy their demands
- As a result, no real action on biggest issues facing the nation

## Principles Guiding Reform

- All voters should be able to participate in any election paid for by taxpayers
- Voters can support most preferred candidate without “wasting” their vote or risking a “spoiler” effect
- There should be competition and real choices in every general election

# *Key Reform Techniques Simulated*

- Voting and Counting Systems
  - Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV, also called “Automatic Run-off”)
    - Voter ranks all candidates on the ballot (first-choice, second-choice, third-choice...)
    - Ballots are processed in rounds
      - Round 1 – First-choice votes counted, if a candidate’s 1<sup>st</sup> choice votes >50% of total, they win
      - If no candidate has >50%, last place finisher in Round 1 is eliminated, and another round ensues
      - Round 2 – Second choice on ballots with Round 1 loser as 1<sup>st</sup> choice now become the first choice for that ballot
      - Process continues until a candidate achieves a majority of total votes
  - Approval Voting
    - Voters signify approval or disapproval for candidates on the ballot
    - Candidate(s) receiving highest number of “approval” votes win
  - Condorcet Voting
    - Voter ranks all candidates as in RCV
    - Ballots processed by running head-to-head contests for all combinations of two candidates
    - Candidate who wins most head-to-head contests wins
- Non-partisan Primaries
  - All candidates run in a single primary – top 2-5 vote-getters go to general election
  - Creates incentive for all voters to participate, eliminating scenarios where <15% of voters effectively decide elections
  - Parties could choose to endorse only one candidate – that process would be their own, not paid for by taxpayers

# Simulation 1 – General Election Reform Alternatives

**Ranked-Choice General Election**

Round	Haley	Biden	Hogan	Kennedy	West	Stein
1	157 36.1%	168 38.6%	47 10.8%	32 7.4%	16 3.7%	15 3.4%
2	158 36.3%	172 39.5%	51 11.7%	35 8.0%	19 4.4%	
3	167 38.4%	174 40.0%	53 12%	41 9.4%		
4	190 43.7%	180 41.4%	65 14.9%			
5	227 52.2%	208 47.8%				

## Approval Voting General Election

Haley	221	51%
Biden	212	49%
Hogan	144	33%
Kennedy	73	17%
Stein	42	10%
West	37	9%

All three reforms generate different winner than traditional system

**Condorcet Voting (Head-to-Heads)**

vs.	Haley Wins	Biden Wins	Hogan Wins	Kennedy Wins	West Wins
Biden	52.2%-47.8%				
Hogan	59.1%-40.9%	53.3%-46.7%			
Kennedy	80.5%-19.5%	64.1%-35.9%	68.7%-31.3%		
West	72.6%-27.4%	71.7%-28.3%	69.7%-30.3%	51.0%-49.0%	
Stein	77.2%-22.8%	72.4%-27.6%	70.3%-29.7%	50.3%-49.7%	50.6%-49.4%

## Simulation 2 – Partisan “Approval” Primaries with General Election Alternatives

Democrat Primary		
	Votes	%
Klobuchar	151	81%
Biden	148	80%
Whitmer	139	75%
M.Obama	126	68%
Newsom	120	65%

Republican Primary		
	Votes	%
Haley	139	74%
DeSantis	99	52%
Youngkin	93	49%
Trump	57	30%

Vote-for-One General		
	Votes	%
Klobuchar	177	40.7%
Haley	157	36.1%
Hogan	42	9.7%
Kennedy	32	7.4%
West	16	3.7%
Stein	11	2.5%

Approval Voting General		
	Votes	%
Klobuchar	248	57.0%
Haley	221	50.8%
Hogan	144	33.1%
Kennedy	73	16.8%
Stein	42	9.7%
West	37	8.5%

Ranked-Choice General Election						
	Haley	Klobuchar	Hogan	Kennedy	West	Stein
Round 1	157 36.1%	177 40.7%	42 9.7%	32 7.4%	16 3.7%	11 2.5%
Round 2	158 36.3%	182 41.8%	44 10.1%	35 8.0%	16 3.7%	
Round 3	166 38.2%	186 42.8%	45 10.3%	38 8.7%		
Round 4	188 43.2%	194 44.6%	53 12.2%			
Round 5	218 50.1%	217 49.9%				

Approval Voting in Primaries generates a different general election

Condorcet Voting (Head-to-Heads)					
vs.	Haley	Klobuchar	Hogan	Kennedy	West
Klobuchar	50.1%-49.9%				
Hogan	59.1%-40.9%	61.8%-38.2%			
Kennedy	80.5%=19.5%	70.1%-29.9%	68.7%-31.3%		
West	72.6%-27.4%	82.3%-17.7%	69.7%-30.3%	51.0%-49.0%	
Stein	77.2%-22.8%	82.1%-17.9%	70.3%-29.7%	50.3%-49.7%	50.6%-49.4%

# Non-Partisan Primaries – Equal Voices, Better Choices

## General Election Options by Primary System

### Partisan Vote-for-One System (Current)\*

Democrat Primary			Republican Primary		
Biden	81	44%	Haley	112	59%
M.Obama	35	19%	Trump	38	20%
Whitmer	31	17%	DeSantis	12	6%
Klobuchar	26	14%	Youngkin	27	14%
Newsom	12	6%			
	<u>185</u>			<u>189</u>	

Biden
Haley
Stein (Green)
Kennedy (Ind.)
Hogan (Ind.)
West (Ind.)

### Partisan Approval Voting System

Democrat Primary			Republican Primary		
Klobuchar	151	81%	Haley	139	74%
Biden	148	80%	Trump	99	52%
Whitmer	139	75%	DeSantis	93	49%
M.Obama	126	68%	Youngkin	57	30%
Newsom	120	65%			

Klobuchar
Haley
Stein (Green)
Kennedy (Ind.)
Hogan (Ind.)
West (Ind.)

### Non-Partisan Primary Vote for One

	Votes	%
Biden	86	19.8%
Haley	86	19.8%
M.Obama	50	11.5%
Trump	40	9.2%
Klobuchar	36	8.3%
Whitmer	33	7.6%
Hogan	25	5.7%
DeSantis	17	3.9%
Newsom	16	3.7%
Kennedy	14	3.2%
Youngkin	13	3.0%
Manchin	8	1.8%
Stein	6	1.4%
West	5	1.1%
	<u>435</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

### Non-Partisan Primary Approval Voting

	Votes	%
Klobuchar	248	57.0%
Haley	221	50.8%
Whitmer	221	50.8%
Biden	212	48.7%
M.Obama	187	43.0%
Manchin	176	40.5%
Newsom	169	38.9%
Youngkin	122	28.0%
Hogan	144	33.1%
DeSantis	118	27.1%
Kennedy	73	16.8%
Trump	66	15.2%
Stein	42	9.7%
West	37	8.5%

Partisan primaries advancing only one candidate drive polarization (small turnout of most entrenched partisans).

Non-partisan primaries allows all potential candidates a path to general election and requires candidates (and elected officials) to appeal broadly.

\* In this data set, Partisan Ranked-Choice primaries generate same finalists as Vote-for-One

## Simulation 3 – Vote-for-One Non-partisan Primary (Top 5)

Non-Partisan Primary Vote for One		
	Votes	%
Biden	86	19.8%
Haley	86	19.8%
M.Obama	50	11.5%
Trump	40	9.2%
Klobuchar	36	8.3%
Whitmer	33	7.6%
Hogan	25	5.7%
DeSantis	17	3.9%
Newsom	16	3.7%
Kennedy	14	3.2%
Youngkin	13	3.0%
Manchin	8	1.8%
Stein	6	1.4%
West	5	1.1%
	<b>435</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Ranked-Choice General Election*					
Round	Haley	Biden	Klobuchar	M.Obama	Trump
1	133 30.6%	110 25.3%	65 14.9%	65 14.9%	62 14.3%
2	192 44.1%	110 25.3%	67 15.4%	66 15.2%	
3	209 48.0%	130 29.9%	96 22.1%		
4	227 52.2%	208 47.8%			

Approval Voting General		
	Votes	%
Klobuchar	248	57.0%
Haley	221	50.8%
Biden	212	48.7%
M.Obama	187	43.0%
Trump	66	15.2%

\* Vote-for-One outcome same as RCV Round 1

## Simulation 4 – Approval Voting Non-partisan Primary (Top 5)

Non-Partisan Primary Approval Voting		
	Votes	%
Klobuchar	248	57.0%
Haley	221	50.8%
Whitmer	221	50.8%
Biden	212	48.7%
M.Obama	187	43.0%
Manchin	176	40.5%
Newsom	169	38.9%
Youngkin	122	28.0%
Hogan	144	33.1%
DeSantis	118	27.1%
Kennedy	73	16.8%
Trump	66	15.2%
Stein	42	9.7%
West	37	8.5%

Ranked-Choice General Election*					
Round	Haley	Biden	Whitmer	M.Obama	Klobuchar
1	180	97	54	58	46
	41.4%	22.3%	12.4%	13.3%	10.6%
2	181	111	80	63	
	41.6%	25.5%	18.4%	14.5%	
3	193	127	115		
	44.4%	29.2%	26.4%		
4	227	208			
	52.2%	47.8%			

Condorcet Voting (Head-to-Heads)				
vs.	Klobuchar	Haley	Whitmer	Biden
Klobuchar		50.1%-49.9%		
Haley			51.5%-48.5%	
Whitmer	57.2%-42.8%			
Biden	57.5%-42.5%	52.2%-47.8%	55.6%-44.4%	
M.Obama	69.2%-30.8%	52.9%-47.1%	68.7%-31.3%	61.6%-38.4%

3-way tie; Klobuchar has most narrow loss

\* Vote-for-One outcome same as RCV Round 1

## Simulation 5 – Approval/Disapproval Voting Non-partisan Primary (Top 5)

	Approve	Neutral	Disapprove	Net	
Klobuchar	248	91	96	152	34.9%
Haley	221	96	118	103	23.7%
Whitmer	221	95	119	102	23.4%
Manchin	176	142	117	59	13.6%
Hogan	144	200	91	53	12.2%
Biden	212	45	178	34	7.8%
Obama	187	86	162	25	5.7%
Newsom	169	106	160	9	2.1%
Youngkin	122	157	156	-34	-7.8%
DeSantis	118	44	273	-155	-35.6%
Stein	42	183	210	-168	-38.6%
West	37	180	218	-181	-41.6%
Kennedy	73	93	269	-196	-45.1%
Trump	66	37	332	-266	-61.1%

Per Voter	4.68	3.57	5.74
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	Whitmer	Haley	Klobuchar	Manchin	Hogan
Round 1	102 23.4%	155 35.6%	102 23.4%	40 8.3%	36 9.2%
Round 2	116 26.7%	168 38.6%	102 23.4%	49 11.3%	
Round 3	127 29.2%	195 44.8%	113 26.0%		
Round 4	224 51.5%	211 48.5%			

# Conclusions – Voting Systems

- All the proposed reforms are intended to make candidates and elected officials accountable to the electorate at large
  - Current incentives are NOT to achieve “art of the possible” – just grandstand
- A single, non-partisan primary is the most powerful reform for improving the quality of ballot options and increasing primary turn-out
- Voting/counting reforms (RCV, Approval, Condorcet) enhance incentives to serve all citizens
  - Given limited experience in the U.S., ideally many different versions are experimented with state by state
- Rabid partisans will object to these reforms – opposition from both parties suggests we’re on to something

Primary Method (Finalists)	General Election Voting System (Winners)			
	Vote for One	Ranked-Choice	Approval	Condorcet
<b>Non-Partisan Primaries</b> <u>Vote for One Top 5</u> Biden Haley Obama Trump Klobuchar	Biden/Haley Tie	Haley	Klobuchar	Haley
<u>Approval Voting - Top 5</u> Klobuchar Haley Whitmer Biden Obama	Klobuchar	Haley	Klobuchar	Klobuchar (tie break)
<u>Approval/Disapproval - Top 5</u> Klobuchar Haley Whitmer Manchin Hogan	Haley	Whitmer	Klobuchar	Klobuchar (tie break)
<b>Partisan Primaries</b> <u>Vote for One</u> Biden Haley Stein Green/Independents Stein Hogan Kennedy West	Biden	Haley	Haley	Haley
<u>Approval Voting</u> Klobuchar Haley Stein Green/Independents	Klobuchar	Haley	Klobuchar	Haley
<u>Ranked-Choice Voting</u> Biden Haley Stein Green/Independents	Haley	Haley	Haley	Haley



## Other Survey Findings (cont.)

	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	Weighted for National Party Affiliation
<b>Strategy</b>	N=37	N=75	N=99	
Would vote for favorite	35%	4%	17%	<b>18%</b>
Would not vote for favorite	16%	35%	18%	<b>23%</b>
Only if did not help Trump	16%	<b>60%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>47%</b>
Only if did not help Biden	32%	1%	9%	<b>12%</b>
<b>Reform Support</b>	N=46	N=109	N=113	
Ranked Choice	45%	75%	66%	<b>63%</b>
Run-offs	40%	54%	51%	<b>50%</b>
Approval	8%	35%	35%	<b>29%</b>
None	<b>21%</b>	6%	9%	<b>11%</b>
Other	4%	6%	10%	<b>8%</b>

2. “Spoiler” concerns likely to stop Democrats and Independents from voting for a 3<sup>rd</sup> party
3. Majority support for Automatic or actual run-offs (higher support for RCV)
4. 29% support for Approval Voting despite low awareness
5. Significant minority of Republicans skeptical of all reforms

# Reform Momentum

## Already Implemented

### Ranked Choice Voting

- RCV already in use in 62 jurisdictions across 16 states, including:
  - **Alaska** (GEs – Gov, State Leg, U.S. Senate and House)
  - **Maine** (U.S. House & Senate GEs and primaries; Statewide offices primaries)
  - **New York City** (in partisan primaries)
  - **San Francisco, CA, Minneapolis, MN, Cambridge, MA**
- In 2020, Democrats in four states used RCV for primaries (AL, HI, KS, WY). In 2021, Virginia Republicans used RCV for statewide office primaries (likely enabling a Youngkin victory)
- Internationally, RCV used in national elections in
  - Australia (since 1918)
  - Northern Ireland and Rep. of Ireland (since 1921)

### Non-Partisan Primaries

- **California** (Top 2)
- **Washington** (Top 2)
- **Nebraska** (Top 2 – for state legislative offices)
- **Alaska** (Top 4)
- **Louisiana** (no primary, but top two run-off if no candidate receives 50%)

## Upcoming

- **Nevada** – Final Five system passed in 2022 election. If affirmed in 2024, becomes law
- **Montana** – Final Four system ballot initiative on 2024 ballot
- **Oregon** – Statewide RCV ballot initiative on 2024 ballot
- **Arizona** – Non-Partisan primary (details of 2-5 “winners” to be determined by legislature) and mandatory use of RCV in General Election (if more than 2 on final ballot) 2024 ballot in signature raising phase
- **Idaho** – Final Four system 2024 ballot initiative in signature raising phase
- **South Dakota** – Non-partisan, top-two primary 2024 ballot initiative in signature raising phase
- **Wisconsin** – Legislative efforts to institute Final Five system ongoing
- More than a dozen other efforts to introduce voting reform legislation and DEFEND open primaries and viable ballot initiative hurdles against partisan efforts to rollback reforms already in place

# *Evidence of Reform Efficacy*

- Primary turnouts in states with non-partisan primaries
  - Switching from a closed, partisan primary system to a non-partisan, top two or four primary increases turnout 16% (Bi-partisan Policy Center, March 2023)
- Reduced extremism and increased bi-partisanship in legislatures elected using reformed methods
  - Top 2 Non-partisan primary linked to election of less extreme legislators (California – Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy, 2020, 1: 1–21, Reducing Legislative Polarization, “Top-Two and Open Primaries Are Associated with More Moderate Legislators,” Christian R. Grose)
  - Final 4 system (Top 4 non-partisan primary followed by RCV general election) linked to bi-partisanship (Alaska – Alaska Beacon, November 25, 2022, “In new bipartisan Alaska Senate majority of 17, members vow compromise and consensus,” by Yereth Rosen)
- An informative tale – career implications of the Trump impeachment vote

# Election Systems Matter

To understand the importance of election systems, look at the experience of the 20 legislators who stood against their parties on the subject of Trump’s impeachment.

- Of the 11 people from traditional states that stood against their party on Trump’s impeachment, all who had elections either lost, quit, or changed parties.\*
- Of the 8 from states with new voting systems, 7 won and only one lost.\*\*

Standing against one’s party in a traditional state was a political death sentence, and in a non-traditional state, it may have actually helped the Candidate.

States With Traditional Voting Systems				States with New Voting Systems			
Katko	(R)	N.Y.	Quit	Beutler	(R)	Wa.	Lost
Meijer	(R)	Mich	Lost	Valadao	(R)	Wa.	Won
Upton	(R)	Mich	Quit	Golden	(D)	Me.	Won
Kinsinger	(R)	Ill.	Quit	Newhouse	(R)	Ca.	Won
Gonzalez	(R)	Ohio	Quit	Cassidy	(R)	La.	Won
Chaney	(R)	Wy	Lost	Collins	(R)	Me.	Won
Peterson	(D)	Minn.	Lost	Murkowski	(R)	AK	Won
Van Drew	(D-R)	N.J.	Changed Parties	Sasse	(R)	Neb.	Won
Rice	(R)	S.C.	Lost				
Toomey	(R)	Pa.	Quit				
Burr	(R)	N.C.	Quit				
Romney	(R)	Ut.	None				
<b>Total</b>							
Won			0	Won			7
Lost			4	Lost			1
Quit			6				
Changed Parties			1				

\*Romney did not yet have an election and has announced his retirement.

\*\*Nebraska only has nonpartisan elections for state offices, but this system makes the state more nonpartisan.