

WHY KEEP THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE, WHY NOT
JUST USE THE POPULAR VOTE TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT?

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ABSTRACT

When the Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution, they thought that direct election by popular vote of a President would lead to all sorts of chaos. The Constitution therefore delegated the responsibility to the states to appoint a slate of electors, which in turn, have delegated that duty to the political parties by giving each state an elector for each member they had in the House of Representatives and one for each of their two Senators. Later, the District of Columbia was awarded three electoral votes, bringing the current total to 538 electors. When you vote for a presidential candidate you are actually voting for a slate of electors who were chosen because of their ties to that candidate's party.

To get rid of the Electoral College and elect the president by popular vote would require a Constitutional Amendment which requires passage by a two thirds vote by both Houses of Congress and ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the States.

This paper will discuss the pros and cons of conducting elections of the President by popular vote.