

We negate resolved: The United States ought to replace the electoral college with a direct national popular vote.

### **Contention one is the Two Party System.**

The popular vote destroys the two party system for two reasons.

1. Cross-regional appeal. While the electoral college forces political parties to appeal to diverse voters across the country, Hans Spakovsky of the FEC concludes in 2011 that the popular vote would create “numerous fringe parties... appealing solely to” specific regions. He continues that even if these candidates aren’t successful at first, they would divide the votes of the major parties, snowballing our elections into chaotic European style multicandidate races.
2. Run-offs. Lawyer Tara Ross explains in 2004 that the popular vote would create a run-off system, which will make voters more likely to support minor parties because the fear that their vote will contribute to the success of an opposing candidate will now be quelled because they can recast their ballot if their top choice candidate doesn’t make the run-off.

Thus, Gettysburg college professor Allen Guelzo concludes in 2016 that under the popular vote, there could be up to a dozen candidates who only need 10% of the vote.

The impact is political extremism. Because fringe parties take on extremist positions to differentiate themselves, political science professor William Downs explains in 2013 that fringe parties build support through intolerance, xenophobia, and racism. Even if the extremists don’t win, Tali Mendelberg of Princeton concludes in 1997 that because presidential campaigns set the public agenda, racist undertones in national campaigns shift public opinion against minorities and increase resistance to pro minority policies.

### **Contention two is voting restrictions.**

Under the electoral college, Attorney Sean Rosenthal explains in 2015 states that are tilted heavily to one side have no incentive to restrict voting rights since the outcome of their vote won’t change, and swing states are unable to restrict voting because their legislatures are divided. Thus, Bradley Jones of Pew writes in 2016 that only 10 states have the strictest level of voter ID laws.

However, Sean Rosenthal continues that the popular vote would gives Republicans in deep red states a powerful incentive to ramp up voting restrictions to affect national totals.

The impact is racism. Wendy Weiser at the American Prospect explains in 2014 that voting restrictions such as voter ID, cutbacks to early voting and same day registration primarily prevent African Americans and Latinos from voting, causing millions of votes to be lost per year. Empirically, Chris Ingraham at the Washington Post explains in 2016 that strict voter ID laws

double the participation gap between whites and minorities, decrease Latino turnout by 10.8%, and decrease overall Democrat turnout by 7.7%.

### **Contention three is increasing the influence of wealthy donors.**

Under the electoral college, spending is isolated to just a few swing states, keeping demand for donations low. Indeed, the New York Times reports in 2012 that campaigns have completely oversaturated the ad markets and reached the point of diminishing returns in key swing states. Thus, Max Galka of the University of Pennsylvania finds in 2016 that presidential spending decreased in 2016, and when controlling for inflation, income growth, and population growth, campaign spending has roughly flatlined for the past few decades.

The popular vote changes this for two reasons.

1. A bigger market. USA Today writes in 2016 that popular vote puts the whole nation in play, setting off “a scramble for even more campaign money, leaving candidates more beholden to special interests.”
2. A more expensive market. Ryan Beckwith of Time Magazine writes in 2016 that “candidates would need... a lot more money to air ads [and rent campaign offices] in more expensive... [urban] markets.”

The impact is distorted policy. Peter Enns of Cornell finds in a 2016 study that the more reliant candidates become on campaign contributions, the more they try to attract donations by tailoring their agenda to problems donors prioritize. Lee Drutman of the Sunlight Foundation furthers in 2012 that while presidents pander to the voting pool in election years, when they take office, their promises quickly fade in favor of donor interests.

Problematically, Sean McElwee of Demos explains in 2016 that because, of the top 500 donors, only 12 were people of color and only 8% of the money came from women, donor influence is an impediment to all forms of equality, with donors condemning affirmative action, abortion, and economic redistribution. Empirically, Adam Lioz of Demos writes in 2014 that campaign contributions created and continue to perpetuate mass incarceration, deregulated markets, and a low minimum wage.