



The ELECTORAL COLLEGE

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WHAT IS THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE?

- *-noun (often initial capital letters)* a body of electors chosen by the voters in each state to elect the President and Vice President of the U.S. (www.dictionary.com)
- The number of electors is based on the number of representatives a state has in Congress.

Example: MI has 14 House Reps and 2 Senators
= 16 Electoral votes

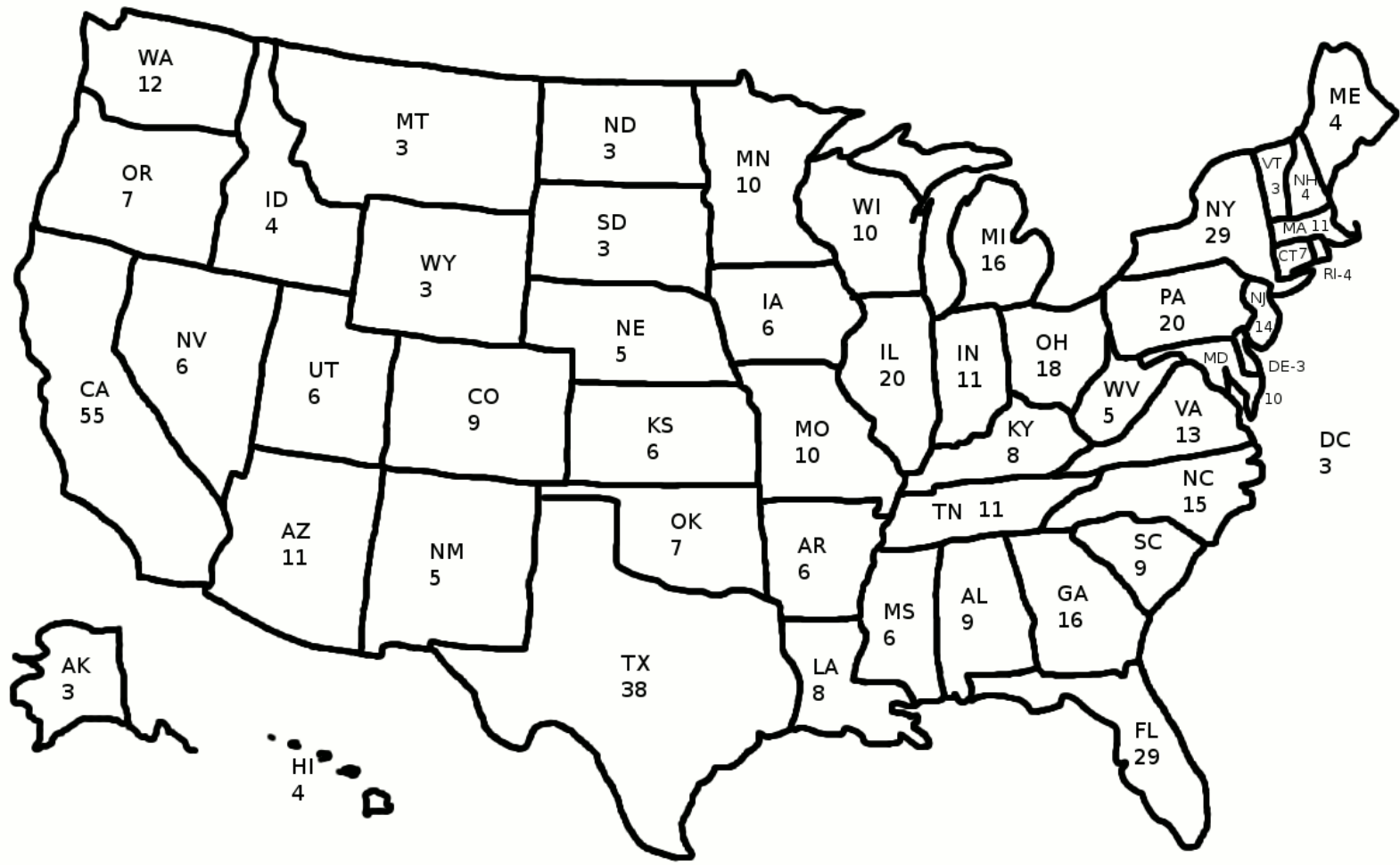
History

- Article II of the Constitution and the 12th Amendment refer to "electors," but not to the "electoral college." In the Federalist Papers (No. 68), Alexander Hamilton refers to the process of selecting the Executive, and refers to "the people of each State (who) shall choose a number of persons as electors," but he does not use the term "electoral college."

The 12th amendment

- In 1804, the 12th amendment separated the ballot/voting process for electors, so that each elector cast 2 votes, 1 for President and 1 for Vice President.



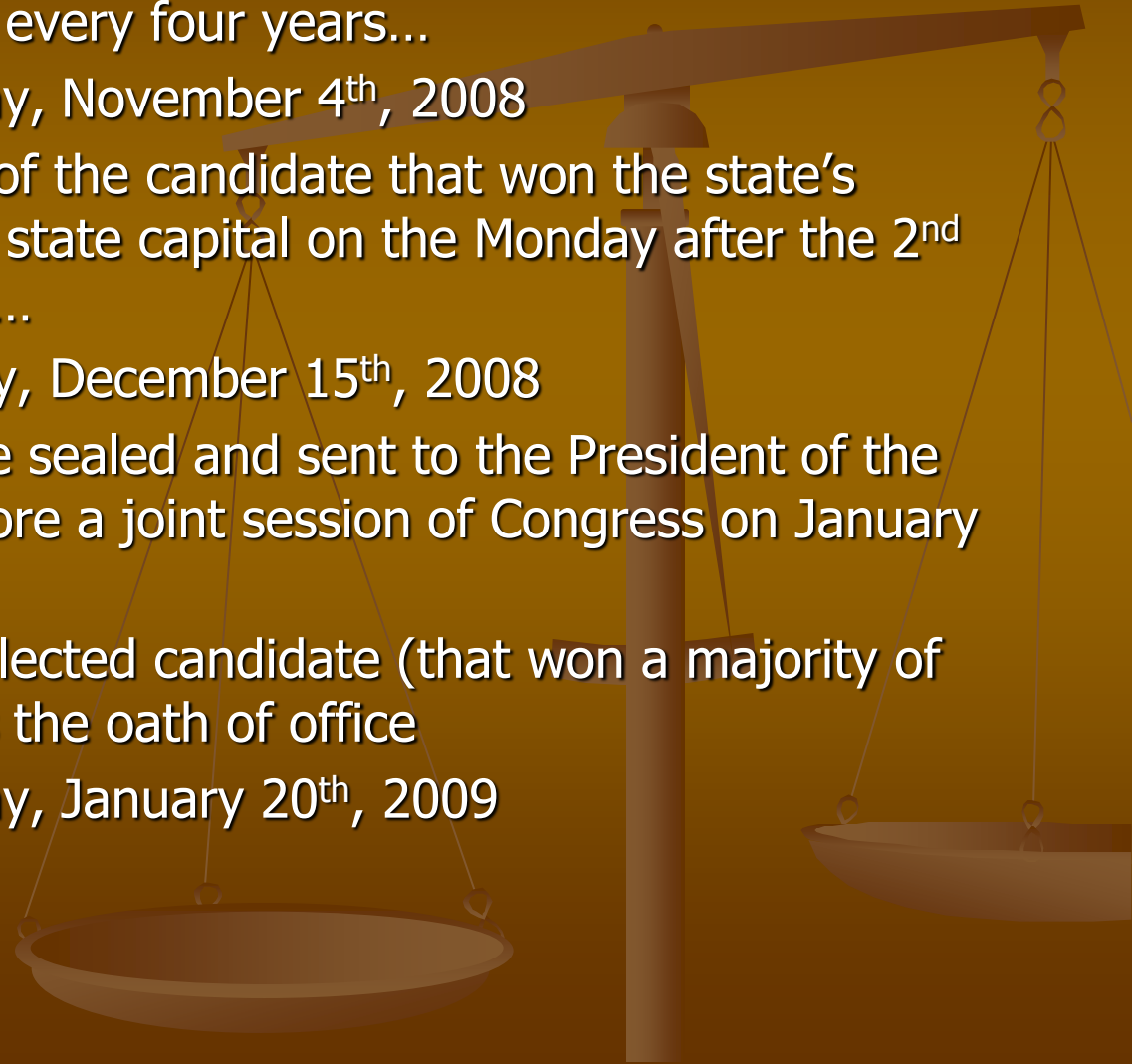


Make up

- The Electoral College is comprised of 538 people, known as electors, chosen nationwide to meet in their home states and cast one vote per person for president and vice president. Michigan has 16 electors to reflect the number of senators and representatives it has in the U.S. Congress. Presidential candidates on the Michigan ballot submit a list of 16 qualified electors to the Secretary of State's Office. The 1 electors whose candidate wins Michigan's popular vote will participate in the Electoral College at the State Capitol in December

The Election Process

- “Election Day” – popular vote ... the Tuesday after the 1st Monday in November every four years...
Tuesday, November 4th, 2008
- Electoral Vote – electors of the candidate that won the state’s popular vote meet at the state capital on the Monday after the 2nd Wednesday in December...
Monday, December 15th, 2008
- Ballots are cast, votes are sealed and sent to the President of the Senate to be opened before a joint session of Congress on January 6th.
- Inauguration Day – the elected candidate (that won a majority of 270 votes or more) takes the oath of office
Tuesday, January 20th, 2009



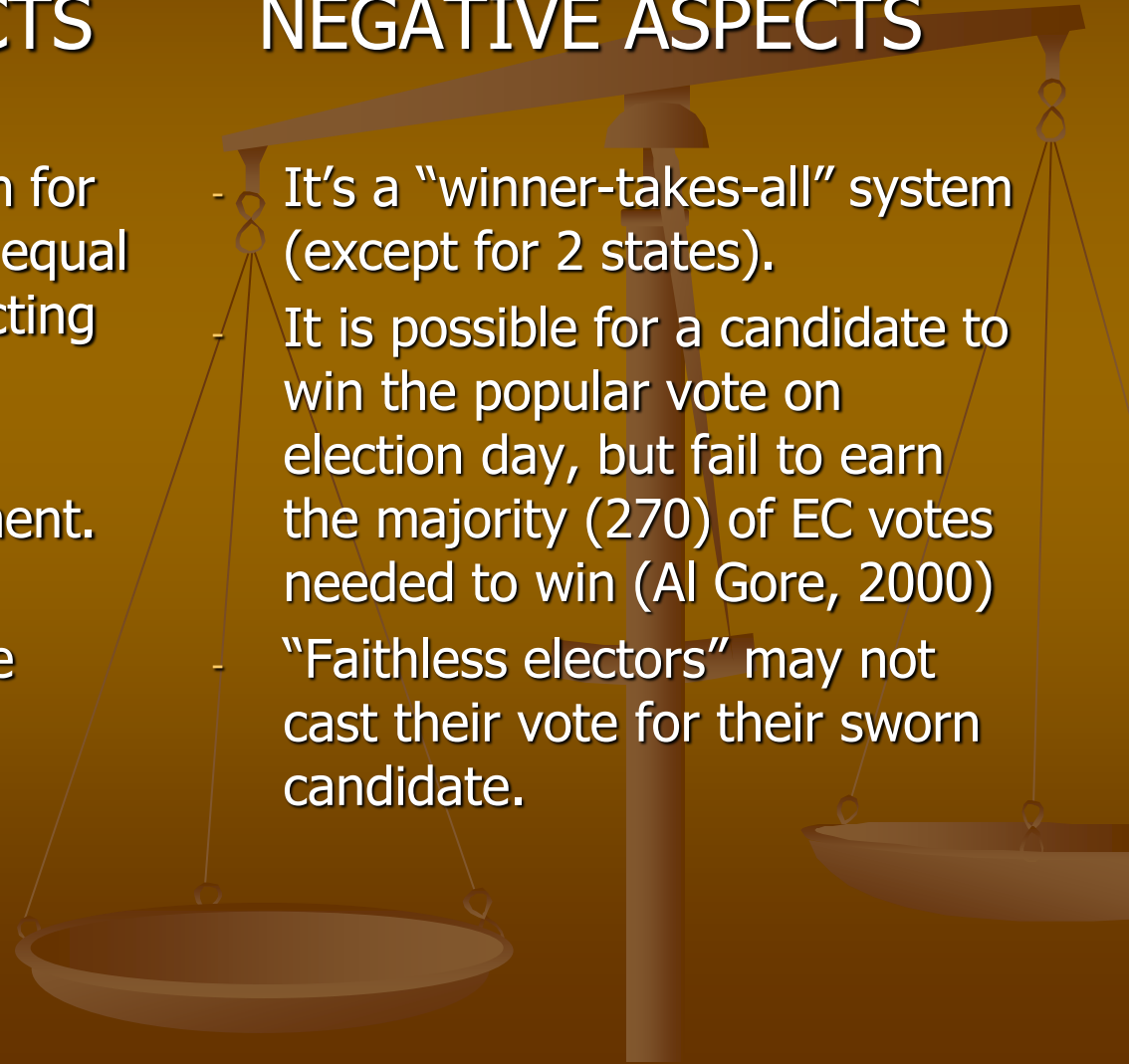
ASPECTS OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

POSITIVE ASPECTS

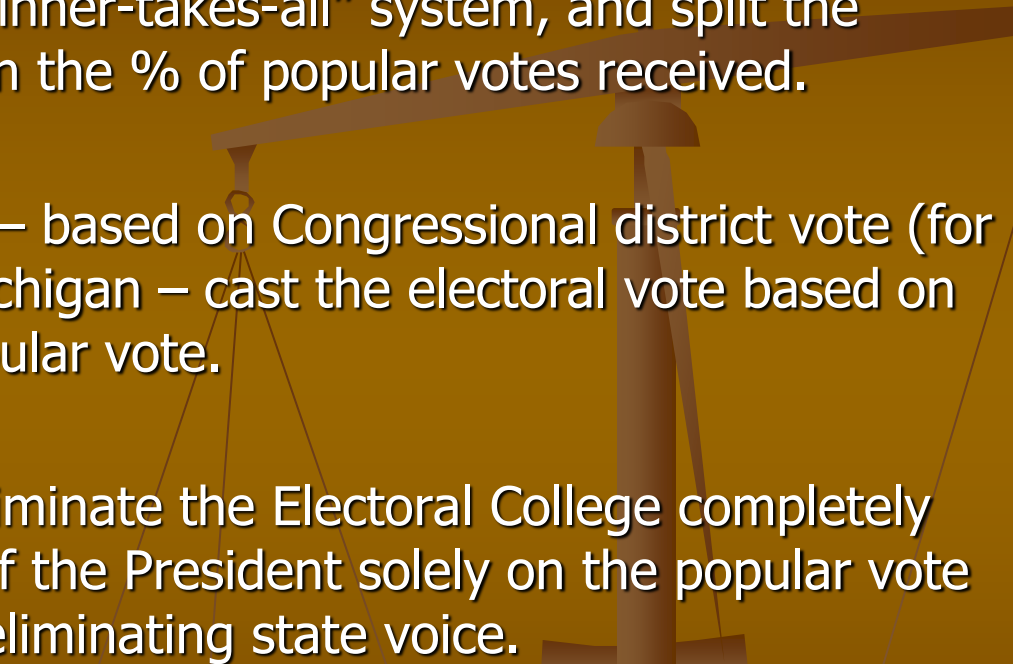
- It provides representation for the states, to have a say equal to their population in electing the President.
- It preserves the federal character of our government.
- It ensures that informed people are involved in the selection process.

NEGATIVE ASPECTS

- It's a "winner-takes-all" system (except for 2 states).
- It is possible for a candidate to win the popular vote on election day, but fail to earn the majority (270) of EC votes needed to win (Al Gore, 2000)
- "Faithless electors" may not cast their vote for their sworn candidate.



PROPOSED REFORMS

- 1) Move away from the “winner-takes-all” system, and split the electoral votes based on the % of popular votes received.
 - 2) Go to a district method – based on Congressional district vote (for example – Dist. 2 in Michigan – cast the electoral vote based on the districts overall popular vote.
 - 3) Direct popular vote – eliminate the Electoral College completely and base the election of the President solely on the popular vote of the nation, thereby eliminating state voice.
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RESOURCES

- Office of the Federal Register
(<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/about.html>)
- Federal Election Commission (www.fec.gov)
- 270towin.com (interactive map of the 2008 election)
- Michigan Secretary of State Office
(www.michigan.gov/sos)
- About.com
(<http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/thepoliticalsystem/a/electcollege.htm>)

