

8 | How a Nationwide Campaign Would Be Run

This chapter addresses the question of how a presidential campaign would be run if every vote were equal and the winner were the candidate who received the most popular votes nationwide.

8.1. HOW PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS ARE CURRENTLY RUN

Because of the state-by-state winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes, candidates have no reason to solicit votes in the general-election campaign in states where the statewide outcome is a foregone conclusion.

Instead, almost all general-election campaign events are conducted in closely divided battleground states.

As Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker said while running for President in 2015:

“The nation as a whole is not going to elect the next president. Twelve states are.”¹

One of a presidential campaign’s most important strategic decisions under the current system is the allocation of the time of its presidential and vice-president candidates among the states. In practice, the allocation of candidate time closely parallels the expenditures for advertising and other campaign activities.

In 2012, all of the general-election campaign events (and almost all campaign expenditures) were concentrated in the 12 states where the outcome was between 45% and 51% Republican—that is, a six percentage-point spread. See section 1.2.3 and figure 1.11. Thirty-eight states were ignored, including 12 of the 13 smallest states and almost all rural, agricultural, Southern, Western, and Northeastern states.

Similarly, in 2016, 94% of the campaign events (375 of the 399) were in the 12 states where the outcome was between 43% and 51% Republican—an eight percentage-point spread. See section 1.2.2 and figure 1.10.

Altogether, there were 627 general-election campaign events in 2012 and 2016. Almost all (96%) of these events in the two campaigns were in 12 closely divided states (Florida,

¹ CNBC. 2015. 10 questions with Scott Walker. *Speakeasy*. September 1, 2015. Transcript of interview of Scott Walker by John Harwood <https://www.cnbc.com/2015/09/01/10-questions-with-scott-walker.html>. Video of quote is at timestamp 1:26 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNZp1g8oUOI>. The full quotation is: “The nation as a whole is not going to elect the next president. Twelve states are. Wisconsin’s one of them. I’m sitting in another one right now, New Hampshire. There’s going to be Colorado, where I was born, Iowa, where I lived, Ohio, Florida, a handful of other states. In total, it’s about 11 or 12 states that are going elect the next president.”

Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Arizona, Ohio, Virginia, Iowa, Colorado, New Hampshire, and Nevada).

After a presidential campaign decides how much attention (if any) to give to each particular state, the campaign then determines where to campaign within the state.

Inside each battleground state, every vote is equal. Everything that the state has to offer (that is, all of its electoral votes) goes to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in that state. As Governor Walker observed in 2016:

“Let’s be honest. ... You’re not running for President—**you’re running for Governor in twelve states.**”² [Emphasis added]

Campaign strategist David Plouffe described the 2024 race to *Politico* on September 3:

“Basically the presidential campaign is seven gubernatorial races and one congressional race. Yes, television ads are important. And yes, national coverage is important. But you’ve got to think about it that way, which is, you want to be in as many corners of the state as you can, communities large, medium and small.”

8.2. A NATIONWIDE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN WOULD BE DIFFERENT.

There would be no battleground states in a campaign for the presidency based on the national popular vote.

That is, state boundary lines would play no role in determining the importance of a vote to a presidential campaign in a nationwide campaign. The value of a vote would not depend on whether the voter lives in a red state, a blue state, or a closely divided state. Every voter in every state would be equally important in a nationwide campaign.

The best evidence as to how presidential candidates would campaign in an election in which every vote is equal, and in which the winner is the candidate receiving the most popular votes comes from the actual behavior of real-world presidential candidates *inside* the states where they currently campaign.

Thus, in this chapter, we examine how present-day candidates actually conduct presidential campaigns inside today’s battleground states.

In the process of examining how campaigns are run inside battleground states, we will answer some additional important questions.

For example, some have speculated that, in a nationwide campaign, candidates would concentrate disproportionately on heavily populated metropolitan areas and ignore rural areas.

The *Morning Telegraph* in Tyler, Texas, editorialized:

“The strongest argument against National Popular Vote [is that it] would shift the political battles ... to big cities. In a popular election, candidates would have to go where the voters are—and that means rural areas would be skipped.”³

² Quoted in Morrissey, Ed. 2016. *Going Red: The Two Million Voters Who Will Elect the Next President*. New York, NY: Crown Forum. Page 7.

³ Electoral College is still important. Editorial in *Tyler Morning Telegraph*. July 28, 2015. <http://www.tylerpa.com/TP-Editorials/222279/electoral-college-is-still-important>

John W. York, a policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, wrote in 2019:

“If the U.S. were to abandon the electoral college in favor of a national popular vote, the same few cities would be the focus of the battle for the White House every cycle. Given that they have limited time and money, **presidential candidates of both parties would be foolish to waste their energy anywhere but the most densely populated urban centers.** This is where the largest concentration of voters are, so racking up the votes in these areas would be the overwhelming focus of any election.

Under a national popular vote, cities like Los Angeles and New York ... would thoroughly and perpetually dominate electoral politics as well.”⁴ [Emphasis added]

If there were any tendency for a nationwide presidential campaign to overemphasize heavily populated metro areas or ignore rural areas, we would see evidence of it in the actual behavior of presidential candidates inside today’s battleground states.

Actual presidential campaigns—devised by the nation’s most astute political strategists—do not overemphasize the big metro areas or ignore rural areas inside battleground states.

In particular, an examination of the 627 general-election campaign events in the 12 battleground states of 2012 and 2016 shows:

- When presidential candidates campaign to win the electoral votes of a closely divided battleground state under the current system, they campaign throughout the state—big cities, suburbs, exurbs, and rural areas.
- Specifically, the percentage of general-election events in the biggest metro area of each battleground state closely match those areas’ share of the population. That is, candidates do not disproportionately concentrate on heavily populated metropolitan areas.
- Similarly, candidates campaign in each battleground state’s second-biggest metro area with a frequency that closely matched that area’s share of the state’s population.
- Moreover, candidates campaign in each battleground state’s third-biggest metro area with a frequency that closely matched that area’s share of the state’s population.

In short, there is nothing special or more valuable about a vote in a metro area compared to a vote elsewhere in the state in an election in which every vote is equal, and in which the winner is the candidate who receives the most popular votes.

⁴ York, John W. 2019. No, the electoral college isn’t ‘electoral affirmative action’ for rural states. *Los Angeles Times*. October 9, 2019. <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2019-10-09/electoral-college-affirmative-action-rural-states>

Metropolitan statistical areas

A Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget as follows:

“Metropolitan Statistical Areas have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties. ... Of 3,142 counties in the United States, 1,180 are in the 384 Metropolitan Statistical Areas.”⁵

An average of 33% of the people lived in the biggest metropolitan statistical area of the 12 battleground states of 2012 and 2016—places such as Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Miami, Phoenix, and Milwaukee.

Table 8.1 shows the population of each of the 2012 and 2016 battleground states, the population of each state’s biggest metropolitan statistical area, and the percentage of each state’s population living in the state’s biggest metro area according to the 2010 census.^{6,7,8}

The table shows that an average of 33% of the people lived in the state’s biggest metropolitan statistical area (and, of course, that an average of two-thirds of the people live outside the state’s biggest metropolitan statistical area).

Table 8.1 Biggest metro areas of the 2012 and 2016 battleground states

State	State's population	Biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area in the state	Biggest MSA's population	Biggest MSA as % of state's population
AZ	6,392,017	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	4,192,887	66%
CO	5,029,196	Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO	2,543,482	51%
FL	18,801,310	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	5,564,635	30%
IA	3,046,355	Des Moines-West Des Moines, IA	476,865	16%
MI	9,883,640	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI	4,296,250	43%
NC	9,535,483	Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC	1,881,147	20%
NH	1,316,470	Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	418,366	32%
NV	2,700,551	Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	1,951,269	72%
OH	11,536,504	Cleveland-Elyria, OH	2,077,240	18%
PA	12,702,379	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	4,008,994	32%
VA	7,994,802	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	2,677,141	33%
WI	5,686,986	Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	1,555,908	27%
	94,625,693	Total	31,644,184	33%

⁵ See *United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin 20-01*. March 6, 2020. Page 2. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Bulletin-20-01.pdf>

⁶ If a Metropolitan Statistical Area extends into an adjacent state, the population shown in the table is the population living in the battleground state. For example, Camden, New Jersey, and Wilmington, Delaware, are in the Philadelphia metro area; however, the population shown in the table is only the population living in Pennsylvania.

⁷ About a third of Virginia’s population lives in the Washington D.C. metro area. Similarly, about a third of New Hampshire’s population lives in the Boston metro area.

⁸ Note that the state’s biggest metro area does not necessarily contain the state’s biggest city. For example, the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area does not contain the city of Jacksonville.

Table 8.2 shows that an average of 15% of the population of the 12 battleground states lived in their state's second-biggest metropolitan statistical area—places such as Pittsburgh, Grand Rapids, Columbus, and Madison.

Table 8.2 Second-biggest metro areas of 2012–2016 battleground states

State	State's population	Second-biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area in the state	Second-biggest MSA's population	Second-biggest MSA as % of state's population
AZ	6,392,017	Tucson, AZ	980,263	15%
CO	5,029,196	Colorado Springs, CO	645,613	13%
FL	18,801,310	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	2,783,243	15%
IA	3,046,355	Cedar Rapids, IA	257,940	8%
MI	9,883,640	Grand Rapids-Wyoming, MI	988,938	10%
NC	9,535,483	Raleigh, NC	1,069,871	11%
NH	1,316,470	Manchester-Nashua, NH	400,721	30%
NV	2,700,551	Reno, NV	425,417	16%
OH	11,536,504	Columbus, OH	1,901,974	16%
PA	12,702,379	Pittsburgh, PA	2,356,285	19%
VA	7,994,802	Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC	1,641,078	21%
WI	5,686,986	Madison, WI	548,602	10%
	109,617,271	Total	13,999,945	15%

Table 8.3 shows that an average of 9% of the population of the 12 battleground states lived in their state's third-biggest metropolitan statistical area—places such as Allentown, Lansing, Cincinnati, and Green Bay.⁹

Table 8.3 Third-biggest metro areas of 2012–2016 battleground states

State	State's population	Third-biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area in the state	Third-biggest MSA's population	Third-biggest MSA as % of state's population
AZ	6,392,017	Prescott Valley-Prescott, AZ	211,033	3%
CO	5,029,196	Fort Collins, CO	299,630	6%
FL	18,801,310	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL	2,134,411	11%
IA	3,046,355	Waterloo-Cedar Falls, IA	167,819	6%
MI	9,883,640	Lansing-East Lansing, MI	464,036	5%
NC	9,535,483	Greensboro-High Point, NC	723,801	8%
NH	1,316,470	Concord, NH Micropolitan Statistical Area	146,445	11%
NV	2,700,551	Carson City, NV	55,274	2%
OH	11,536,504	Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	1,625,406	14%
PA	12,702,379	Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA-NJ	712,481	6%
VA	7,994,802	Richmond, VA	1,208,101	15%
WI	5,686,986	Green Bay, WI	306,241	5%
	109,617,271	Total	8,054,678	9%

⁹ New Hampshire only has two Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Therefore, the Census Bureau's next largest grouping (the "micropolitan" statistical area) is included in this table, namely the Concord, New Hampshire, micropolitan statistical area. The Census Bureau defines a micropolitan statistical area as having "at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population, plus adjacent territory that has

8.3. ACTUAL PATTERN OF CAMPAIGNING IN THE BIGGEST METRO AREAS VERSUS THE REST OF THE STATE

How do candidates allocate their general-election campaign events to each battleground state's biggest metro area versus the rest of the state?

Specifically, do metro areas such as Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Miami, Phoenix, and Milwaukee, exercise any kind of intoxicating or magnetic attraction on presidential candidates?

Let's start with the 2012 general-election campaign for President.

In table 8.4:

- Column 2 shows the actual number of general-election campaign events in each state;
- Column 3 shows the actual number of general-election campaign events in each state's biggest metro area;
- Column 5 shows the percentage of the state's population living in the state's biggest metro area; and
- Column 6 shows the actual percentage of general-election campaign events in the state's biggest metro area.

Table 8.4 The biggest metro area's percentage of 2012 events closely matches the area's percent of the state's population.

State	Events in state	Events in biggest MSA	Biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area in the state	Percent of people living in biggest MSA	Actual percent of events in biggest MSA
AZ	0	0	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	66%	0%
CO	24	11	Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO	51%	46%
FL	40	9	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	30%	23%
IA	27	5	Des Moines-West Des Moines, IA	16%	19%
MI	1	1	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI	43%	100%
NC	3	1	Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC	20%	33%
NH	13	4	Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	32%	31%
NV	12	7	Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	72%	58%
OH	73	12	Cleveland-Elyria, OH	18%	16%
PA	5	2	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	32%	40%
VA	36	10	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	33%	28%
WI	18	5	Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	27%	28%
Total	252	67	Total for 2012	33%	27%

As can be seen from the table for 2012, the actual percentage of events in the battleground states' biggest metro areas (27%) approximately matched the share of the population of these states living in the state's biggest metro areas (33%).

Table 8.5 presents the same information for 2016.

a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties." *United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin 20-01*. March 6, 2020. Page 7. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Bulletin-20-01.pdf>

Table 8.5 The biggest metro area's percentage of 2016 events closely matches the area's percentage of the state's population.

State	Events in Events in biggest		Biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area in the state	Percent of people living in biggest MSA	Actual percent of events in biggest MSA
	state	MSA			
AZ	10	7	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	66%	70%
CO	19	6	Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO	51%	32%
FL	71	24	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	30%	34%
IA	21	7	Des Moines-West Des Moines, IA	16%	33%
MI	22	11	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI	43%	50%
NC	55	13	Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC	20%	24%
NH	21	10	Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	32%	48%
NV	17	9	Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	72%	53%
OH	48	11	Cleveland-Elyria, OH	18%	23%
PA	54	17	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	32%	31%
VA	23	7	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	33%	30%
WI	14	6	Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	27%	43%
Total	375	128	Total for 2016	33%	34%

As can be seen from the table for 2016, the actual percentage of events in the battleground states' biggest metro areas (34%) closely matched the share of the population of these states living in the state's biggest metro areas (33%).

Table 8.6 combines the facts for the 627 general-election campaign events of 2012 and 2016.

As can be seen from the table for 2012 and 2016, the actual percentage of events in each battleground state's biggest metro area (31%) closely matched the share of the population living in each state's biggest metro area (33%). In fact, the biggest metro areas of the battleground states received a tad less attention than their share of the population.

The reason for the close match is that there is nothing special, more valuable, or more influential about a vote in the state's biggest metro area compared to a vote elsewhere in

Table 8.6 The biggest metro area's percentage of 2012 and 2016 events closely matches the area's percentage of the state's population.

State	Events in Events in biggest		Biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area in the state	Percent of people living in biggest MSA	Actual percent of events in biggest MSA
	state	MSA			
AZ	10	7	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	66%	70%
CO	43	17	Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO	51%	40%
FL	111	33	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	30%	30%
IA	48	12	Des Moines-West Des Moines, IA	16%	25%
MI	23	12	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI	43%	52%
NC	58	14	Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC	20%	24%
NH	34	14	Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	32%	41%
NV	29	16	Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	72%	55%
OH	121	23	Cleveland-Elyria, OH	18%	19%
PA	59	19	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	32%	32%
VA	59	17	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	33%	29%
WI	32	11	Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	27%	34%
Total	627	195	Total for 2012 and 2016	33%	31%

the state in an election in which every vote is equal, and in which the winner is the candidate receiving the most popular votes.

Table 8.7 shows the data for 67% of the people in Ohio who lived in the rest of the state.

As can be seen, the actual percentage of 2012 and 2016 events outside each battleground state's biggest metro area (69%) closely matched the share of the population living outside each state's biggest metro area (67%)—in fact, it was a tad more.

Table 8.7 Outside the state's biggest metro area, the percentage of 2012 and 2016 events closely matches the area's percentage of the state's population.

State	Events outside			Percent of people living outside biggest MSA	Actual percent of events outside biggest MSA
	Events in state	biggest MSA	Area outside the state's biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area		
AZ	10	3	Outside Phoenix metro area	34%	30%
CO	43	26	Outside Denver metro area	49%	60%
FL	111	78	Outside Miami metro area	70%	70%
IA	48	36	Outside Des Moines metro area	84%	75%
MI	23	11	Outside Detroit metro area	57%	48%
NC	58	44	Outside Charlotte metro area	80%	76%
NH	34	20	Outside metro area	68%	59%
NV	29	13	Outside Las Vegas metro area	28%	45%
OH	121	98	Outside Cleveland metro area	82%	81%
PA	59	40	Outside Philadelphia metro area	68%	68%
VA	59	42	Outside Washington metro area	67%	71%
WI	32	21	Outside Milwaukee metro area	73%	66%
Total	627	432	Total for 2012 and 2016	67%	69%

8.4. ACTUAL PATTERN OF CAMPAIGNING IN THE SECOND-BIGGEST METRO AREAS OF THE BATTLEGROUND STATES

Now let's consider the second-biggest metro areas of the battleground states—that is, metro areas such as Tampa, Grand Rapids, Pittsburgh, Madison, Tucson, Raleigh, and Columbus.

Table 8.8 shows the data for the second-biggest metro area of each state.

As can be seen from the table, the actual percentage of 2012 and 2016 events in the battleground states' second-biggest metro areas (20%) approximately matched the share of the population of these states living in these areas (15%).

8.5. ACTUAL PATTERN OF CAMPAIGNING IN THE THIRD-BIGGEST METRO AREAS OF THE BATTLEGROUND STATES

Now let's consider the third-biggest metro areas of the battleground states—that is, metro areas such as Orlando, Allentown, Lansing, Green Bay, Prescott, Greensboro, and Cincinnati.

Table 8.9 shows the data for the third-biggest metro area of each state.

As can be seen from the table, the actual percentage of 2012 and 2016 events in the battleground states' third-biggest metro areas (10%) closely matched the share of the population of these states living in these areas (9%).

Table 8.8 The second-biggest metro area's percentage of 2012 and 2016 events closely matched the area's percentage of the state's population.

State	Events in second-biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area			Percent of people living in second-biggest MSA	Actual percent of events in second-biggest MSA
	Events in state	biggest MSA	Second-biggest in the state		
AZ	10	2	Tucson, AZ	15%	20%
CO	43	9	Colorado Springs, CO	13%	21%
FL	111	17	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	15%	15%
IA	48	7	Cedar Rapids, IA	8%	15%
MI	23	5	Grand Rapids-Wyoming, MI	10%	22%
NC	58	8	Raleigh, NC	11%	14%
NH	34	16	Manchester-Nashua, NH	30%	47%
NV	29	12	Reno, NV	16%	41%
OH	121	21	Columbus, OH	16%	17%
PA	59	13	Pittsburgh, PA	19%	22%
VA	59	13	Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC	21%	22%
WI	32	3	Madison, WI	10%	9%
Total	627	126	Total for 2012 and 2016	15%	20%

Table 8.9 The third-biggest metro area's percentage of 2012 and 2016 events closely matched the area's percentage of the state's population

State	Events in third-biggest Metropolitan Statistical Area			Percent of people living in third-biggest MSA	Actual percent of events in third-biggest MSA
	Events in state	biggest MSA	Third-biggest in the state		
AZ	10	1	Prescott Valley-Prescott, AZ	3%	10%
CO	43	2	Fort Collins, CO	6%	5%
FL	111	14	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL	11%	13%
IA	48	1	Waterloo-Cedar Falls, IA	6%	2%
MI	23	2	Lansing-East Lansing, MI	5%	9%
NC	58	6	Greensboro-High Point, NC	8%	10%
NH	34	2	Concord, NH Micropolitan Statistical Area	11%	6%
NV	29	1	Carson City, NV	2%	3%
OH	121	15	Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	14%	12%
PA	59	2	Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA-NJ	6%	3%
VA	59	12	Richmond, VA	15%	20%
WI	32	6	Green Bay, WI	5%	19%
Total	627	64	Total for 2012 and 2016	9%	10%

8.6. ACTUAL CAMPAIGNING IN THE 12 BATTLEGROUND STATES

We now present detailed data about the 2012 and 2016 campaigns in the battleground states on which the above conclusions are based. We examine the states in order of their number of 2012 general-election campaign events.

8.6.1. Ohio

In 2012, Ohio received more general-election campaign events than any other state. In fact, in 2012, Ohio received the largest percentage of the nation's general-election campaign events than any single state received in recent decades.

Specifically, Ohio has about 3% of the nation's population, but it received 29% (73 of 253) of the entire nation's general-election campaign events in 2012.

Ohio thus presents the opportunity to see—in much finer detail than elsewhere—how real-world presidential candidates actually allocate their limited campaign resources among various parts of a state.

Although some people believe that candidates concentrate their campaigns in heavily populated metropolitan areas and ignore rural areas, a glance at the list of places in Ohio that the presidential candidates actually visited indicates that they campaigned in communities of all sizes and that they campaigned throughout the state.

Presidential and vice-presidential candidates campaigned in places as small as Belmont (population 447) and Owensville (population 794).

They simultaneously campaigned in all eight of the state's medium-sized metropolitan statistical areas (Akron, Canton, Dayton, Lima, Mansfield, Springfield, Toledo, and Youngstown).

They campaigned in Ohio's biggest metropolitan statistical areas (Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati).

Table 8.10 shows the locations of the 73 general-election campaign events in Ohio in 2012, the population of each place visited, the date of the candidate's visit, the county, and the congressional district.¹⁰

Figure 8.1 shows the geographic distribution of Ohio's 73 general-election campaign events among the state's 16 congressional districts in 2012. As can be seen from the map (and the 5th column of the table), each of the state's 16 congressional districts received attention during the campaign.

Another way to look at Ohio is to divide the state into three major parts as follows:

- The three biggest MSAs (Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati) have 49% of the state's population.
- The eight medium-sized MSAs (Akron, Canton, Dayton, Lima, Mansfield, Springfield, Toledo, and Youngstown) have 29% of the state's population.
- The 53 remaining counties (i.e., the rural counties outside the 11 MSAs) have 22% of the state's population.

Table 8.11 shows the distribution of Ohio's 73 campaign events in 2012 among these three major parts of the state.

As can be seen, the percentage of campaign events that each of these three major parts actually received in 2012 closely matched the area's percentage of the state's population.

In short, the facts from the actual campaign show that presidential candidates did not overemphasize Ohio's three biggest metro areas and did not ignore Ohio's rural areas.

An alternative way to look at the same data is to compare the number of events that a particular part of the state actually received versus the number of events that part of the state would have received if the allocation had been made strictly on the basis of population, as shown in table 8.12.

¹⁰ The 2020 census population figures come from Census Bureau. 2012. Census Bureau. 2012. *Ohio: 2010 Population and Housing Unit Counts*. August 2012. CPH 2-37. <https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/cph-2-37.pdf>. For the occasional cases when a city, town, or township lies in more than one county for Ohio and each other state in this chapter, the table shows the place's total population and name of the county with the largest portion of the place's population.

Table 8.10 Locations of Ohio's 73 campaign events in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Belmont	453	Ryan (10/20)	Belmont	6
Owensville	794	Ryan (9/12)	Clermont	2
Sabina	2,564	Ryan (10/27)	Clinton	15
Yellow Springs	3,487	Ryan (10/27)	Greene	10
Swanton	3,690	Ryan (10/8)	Fulton	5
Vienna	650	Ryan (11/5)	Trumbull	13
Milford	6,709	Biden (9/9)	Clermont	2
Celina	10,400	Romney (10/28)	Mercer	5
Bedford Heights	10,751	Romney (9/26)	Cuyahoga	11
Circleville	13,314	Ryan (10/27)	Pickaway	15
Worthington	13,575	Romney (10/25)	Franklin	12
Marietta	14,085	Ryan (11/3)	Washington	6
Vandalia	15,246	Romney (9/25)	Montgomery	10
Etna	1,215	Romney (11/2)	Licking	12
Fremont	16,734	Biden (11/4)	Sandusky	4
Mount Vernon	16,990	Romney (10/10)	Knox	7
Defiance	16,494	Romney (10/25)	Defiance	5
New Philadelphia	17,288	Ryan (10/27)	Tuscarawas	7
North Canton	17,488	Romney (10/26)	Stark	16
Berea	19,093	Ryan (10/17)	Cuyahoga	9
Painesville	19,563	Romney (9/14)	Lake	14
Portsmouth	20,226	Biden (9/9), Romney (10/13)	Scioto	2
Lebanon	20,033	Romney (10/13)	Warren	1
Sidney	21,229	Romney (10/10)	Shelby	4
Avon Lake	22,581	Romney (10/29)	Lorain	9
Athens	23,832	Obama (10/17), Biden (9/8)	Athens	15
Zanesville	25,487	Biden (9/8), Ryan (10/27)	Muskingum	12
Kent	28,904	Obama (9/26)	Portage	13
Hilliard	28,435	Obama (11/2)	Franklin	15
Bowling Green	30,028	Obama (9/26)	Wood	5
Delaware	34,753	Romney (10/10)	Delaware	12
Marion	36,837	Biden (10/24), Romney (10/28)	Marion	4
Westerville	36,120	Romney (9/26)	Franklin	12
Lima	38,771	Obama (11/2), Ryan (9/24)	Allen	4
Lancaster	38,780	Biden (11/4), Romney (10/12)	Fairfield	15
Findlay	41,202	Romney (10/28)	Hancock	5
Mentor	47,159	Obama (11/3)	Lake	14
Mansfield	47,767	Romney (9/10), Ryan (11/4)	Richland	12
Cuyahoga Falls	49,652	Romney (10/9)	Summit	13
Lakewood	52,131	Biden (11/4)	Cuyahoga	9
Kettering	56,163	Romney (10/30)	Montgomery	10
Springfield	60,608	Obama (11/2)	Clark	8
West Chester	60,958	Romney (11/2)	Butler	8
Lorain	64,097	Biden (10/22)	Lorain	9
Youngstown	66,982	Biden (10/29), Ryan (10/12)	Mahoning	13
Canton	73,007	Biden (10/22)	Stark	7
Dayton	141,527	Obama (10/23), Biden (9/12)	Montgomery	10
Toledo	287,208	Biden (10/23), Romney (9/26)	Lucas	9
Cincinnati	296,943	Obama (9/17, 11/4), Romney (10/25), Ryan (9/25, 10/15)	Hamilton	1
Cleveland	396,815	Obama (10/5, 10/25), Romney (11/4, 11/6), Ryan (10/24)	Cuyahoga	11
Columbus	787,033	Obama (9/17, 10/9, 11/5), Romney (11/5), Ryan (9/29)	Franklin	3

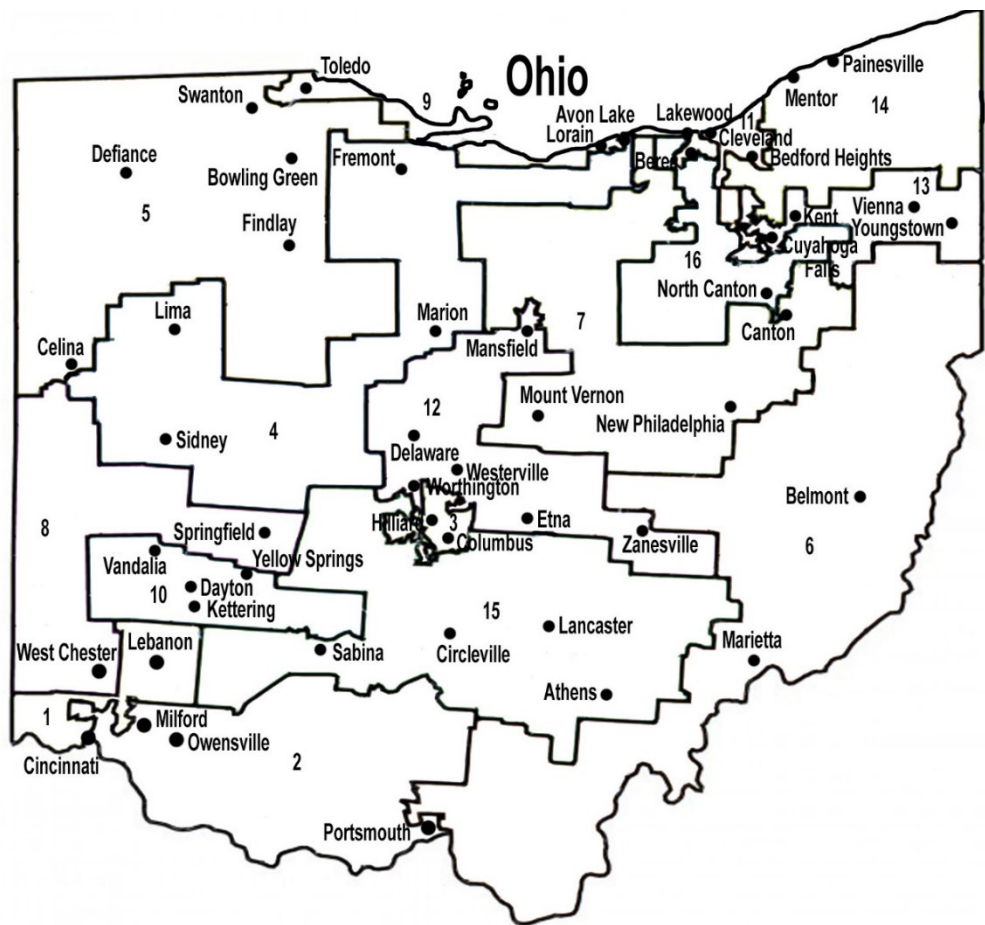


Figure 8.1 Events by congressional district in Ohio in 2012

Table 8.11 2012 candidates campaigned in Ohio’s three biggest metro areas, eight medium-sized metro areas, and 53 rural counties in proportion to population

Part of state	Population	Percent of people living in that part of the state	Percent of events in that part of the state
3 biggest MSAs	5,604,620	49%	47%
8 medium sized MSAs	3,335,129	29%	27%
53 remaining counties (rural)	2,596,755	22%	27%
Total	11,536,504	100%	100%

Table 8.12 Number of 2012 campaign events in Ohio’s three biggest metro areas, eight medium-sized metro areas, and 53 rural counties

Part of state	Number of events if based on population	Actual number of events
3 biggest MSAs	35.5	34
8 medium-sized MSAs	21.1	21
53 remaining counties (rural)	16.4	18
Total	73.0	73

Again, there is a near-surgical match.

Yet another way to dissect Ohio is to divide the state into four artificial quadrants—each containing four of the state’s 16 congressional districts (and, therefore, a quarter of the state’s population). Figure 8.2 shows that each of these four equally populous quadrants received almost exactly a quarter of Ohio’s 73 general-election campaign events in 2012.

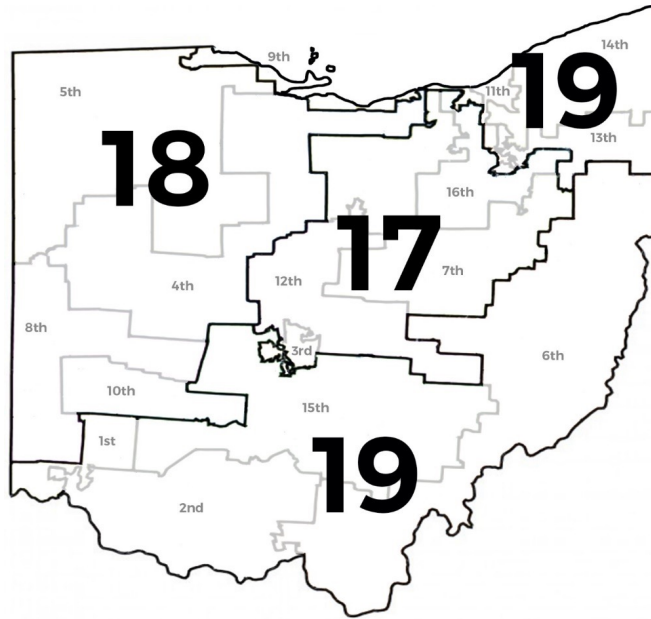


Figure 8.2 Events in each quadrant of Ohio in 2012

Now let’s look at Ohio in 2016.

Although Ohio was a battleground state in both the 2012 and 2016 elections, it was much more closely divided in 2012 than in 2016. Generally, the closer the margin in a given battleground state, the more attention the state gets.¹¹ In 2012, Obama ultimately won Ohio by only a three percentage-point margin of the two-party vote in 2012, whereas Trump won by an eight percentage-point margin in 2016.

Thus, in 2016, Ohio received less attention than it did in 2012 (although still a very considerable amount).

Specifically, in 2016, Ohio received only 12% (48 of 399) of the nation’s total general-election campaign events, compared to 29% (73 of 253) of the nation’s total in 2012.¹²

Table 8.13 shows the locations of the 48 general-election campaign events in Ohio in 2016 and the population of each place visited.

¹¹ See the discussion of the “3/2 rule” in section 9.1.6.

¹² Note that Ohio received only 13 campaign events in 2020 as it transitioned from the nation’s most critical battleground state to a Republican-leaning second-tier battleground.

Table 8.13 Locations of Ohio's 48 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Leetonia	1,959	Pence (9/28)	Columbiana
Gambier	2,391	Kaine (10/27)	Knox
Swanton	3,690	Pence (10/25)	Fulton
Geneva	6,215	Trump (10/27)	Ashtabula
Rossford	6,293	Pence (10/7)	Wood
Canfield	7,515	Trump-Pence (9/5)	Mahoning
Cambridge	10,635	Pence (8/10)	Guernsey
Wilmington	12,520	Trump (9/1, 11/4)	Clinton
Circleville	13,314	Pence (10/22)	Pickaway
Marietta	14,085	Pence (10/25)	Washington
Ashland	20,362	Pence (10/25)	Ashland
Kent	28,904	Clinton (10/31)	Portage
Mason	30,712	Pence (10/17)	Warren
Upper Arlington	33,771	Kaine (10/19)	Franklin
Delaware	34,753	Trump (10/20)	Delaware
Lima	38,771	Pence (7/29)	Allen
Strongsville	44,750	Pence (10/7)	Cuyahoga
Cleveland Heights	46,121	Trump-Pence (9/21)	Cuyahoga
Springfield	60,608	Kaine (10/19), Trump (10/27)	Clark
Lorain	64,097	Kaine (10/27)	Lorain
Youngstown	66,982	Clinton-Kaine (7/30), Trump-Pence (8/15)	Mahoning
Canton	73,007	Trump (9/14)	Stark
Dayton	141,527	Pence (8/10), Kaine (9/12)	Montgomery
Akron	199,110	Trump (8/22), Clinton (10/3)	Summit
Toledo	287,208	Trump (7/27, 10/27), Trump-Pence (9/21), Clinton (10/3)	Lucas
Cincinnati	296,943	Trump (10/13), Clinton (10/31)	Hamilton
Cleveland	396,815	Clinton (8/17, 10/21, 11/4, 11/6), Clinton-Kaine (7/31, 9/5), Trump (9/8), Trump-Pence (10/22)	Cuyahoga
Columbus	787,033	Clinton-Kaine (7/31), Trump (8/1, 10/13), Clinton (10/10), Franklin Pence (10/17)	Franklin

Table 8.14 shows the distribution of Ohio's 48 campaign events in 2016 among the three biggest MSAs, the eight medium-sized MSAs, and the 53 rural counties.

As can be seen, the percentage of campaign events that each of these three major parts of the state actually received in 2016 closely matched each area's percentage of the state's population.

Combining the data from 2012 and 2016, table 8.15 shows the distribution of Ohio's 121 campaign events (73 from 2012 and 48 from 2016) among the three biggest MSAs, the eight medium-sized MSAs, and the 53 rural counties.

8.6.2. Florida

Florida received the second-largest number of general-election campaign events in 2012.

Table 8.16 shows the locations of the 40 general-election campaign events in Florida in 2012, the population of each place visited, the date of the candidate's visit, the county, and the congressional district.

Table 8.14 2016 candidates campaigned in Ohio's three biggest metro areas, eight medium-sized metro areas, and 53 rural counties in lockstep with population.

Part of state	Population	Percent of people living in that part of the state	Percent of events in that part of the state
3 biggest MSAs	5,604,620	49%	46%
8 medium-sized MSAs	3,335,129	29%	37%
53 remaining counties (rural)	2,596,755	22%	17%
Total	11,536,504	100%	100%

Table 8.15 2012 and 2016 candidates campaigned in Ohio's three biggest metro areas, eight medium-sized metro areas, and 53 rural counties in lockstep with population.

Part of state	Population	Percent of people living in that part of the state	Percent of events in that part of the state
3 biggest MSAs	5,604,620	49%	46%
8 medium sized MSAs	3,335,129	29%	32%
53 remaining counties (rural)	2,596,755	22%	22%
Total	11,536,504	100%	100%

Table 8.16 Locations of Florida's 40 campaign events in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Fernandina Beach	11,487	Ryan (10/29)	Nassau	4
St. Augustine	12,975	Biden (10/20)	St. Johns	6
Oldsmar	13,591	Ryan (9/15)	Pinellas	12
Sun City Center	19,258	Biden (10/19)	Hillsborough	17
Land O'Lakes	31,996	Romney (10/27)	Pasco	12
Panama City	36,484	Ryan (11/3)	Bay	2
Fort Pierce	41,590	Biden (10/19)	St. Lucie	18
Apopka	41,542	Romney (10/6)	Orange	5
Coral Gables	46,780	Obama (10/11), Romney (10/31)	Miami-Dade	26
Pensacola	51,923	Romney (10/27)	Escambia	1
Sarasota	51,917	Biden (10/31), Romney (9/20)	Sarasota	16
Sanford	53,570	Romney (11/5)	Seminole	5
Ocala	56,315	Biden (10/31), Ryan (10/18)	Marion	11
Daytona Beach	61,005	Romney (10/19)	Volusia	6
Delray Beach	60,522	Obama (10/23)	Palm Beach	22
Tamarac	60,427	Biden (9/28)	Broward	20
Kissimmee	59,682	Obama (9/8), Romney (10/27)	Osceola	9
Fort Myers	62,298	Biden (9/29), Ryan (10/18)	Lee	19
Melbourne	76,068	Obama (9/9)	Brevard	8
Boca Raton	84,392	Biden (9/28)	Palm Beach	22
West Palm Beach	99,919	Obama (9/9)	Palm Beach	22
Hollywood	140,768	Obama (11/4)	Broward	23
Port St. Lucie	164,603	Romney (10/7)	St. Lucie	18
St. Petersburg	244,769	Obama (9/8), Romney (10/5)	Pinellas	14
Orlando	238,300	Ryan (9/22)	Orange	7
Tampa	335,709	Obama (10/25), Romney (10/31), Ryan (10/19)	Hillsborough	14
Miami	399,457	Obama (9/20), Romney (9/19 x 2), Ryan (9/22)	Miami-Dade	27
Jacksonville	821,784	Romney (9/12, 10/31)	Duval	5

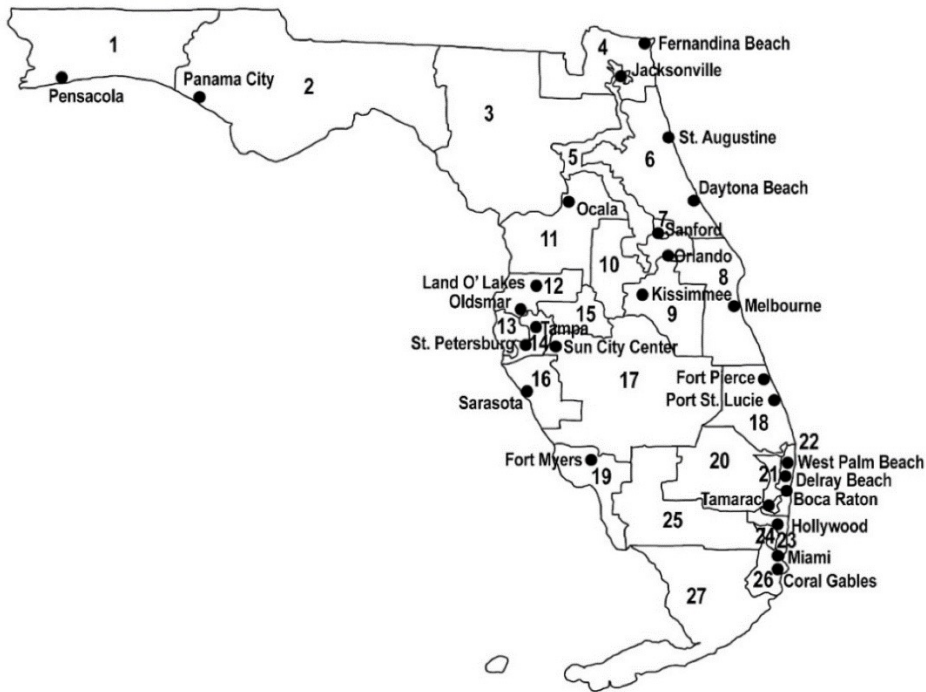


Figure 8.3 Events by congressional district in Florida in 2012

Figure 8.3 shows the geographic distribution of general-election campaign events among Florida's 27 congressional districts in 2012.

Table 8.17 shows the locations of the 71 general-election campaign events in Florida in 2016, and the population of each place visited.

8.6.3. Virginia

Virginia received the third-largest number of campaign events of any state in 2012.

Table 8.18 shows the locations of the 36 general-election campaign events in Virginia in 2012.¹³

Figure 8.4 shows the geographic distribution of general-election campaign events among Virginia's 11 congressional districts in 2012.

Table 8.19 shows the locations of the 23 general-election campaign events in Virginia in 2016 and the population of each place visited.

¹³ Note that election results in Virginia are reported for 38 cities separately from their respective counties.

Table 8.17 Locations of Florida's 71 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Dade City	6,437	Clinton (11/1)	Pasco
Wilton Manors	11,632	Clinton (10/30)	Broward
Panama City Beach	12,018	Pence (11/6)	Bay
St. Augustine	12,975	Trump (10/24)	St. Johns
Maitland	15,751	Pence (10/31)	Orange
Cocoa	17,140	Pence (10/31)	Brevard
Naples	19,537	Trump (10/23)	Collier
Estero	22,612	Trump (9/19)	Lee
Lake Worth	34,910	Clinton (10/26)	Palm Beach
Panama City	36,484	Trump (10/11)	Bay
Fort Pierce	41,590	Clinton (9/30)	St. Lucie
Doral	45,704	Trump (7/27)	Miami-Dade
The Villages	51,442	Pence (9/17)	Sumter
Sarasota	51,917	Pence (8/31), Trump (11/7)	Sarasota
Pensacola	51,923	Trump (9/9, 11/2), Pence (10/14)	Escambia
Coconut Creek	52,909	Clinton (10/25)	Broward
Sanford	53,570	Trump (10/25), Clinton (11/1)	Seminole
Ocala	56,315	Trump (10/12)	Marion
Kissimmee	59,682	Clinton (8/8), Trump (8/11)	Osceola
Daytona Beach	61,005	Kaine (8/2), Clinton (10/29), Trump (8/3)	Volusia
Fort Myers	62,298	Kaine (11/5)	Lee
Melbourne	76,068	Trump (9/27), Kaine (11/4)	Brevard
Sunrise	84,439	Kaine (10/16)	Broward
Lakeland	97,422	Kaine (9/26), Trump (10/12)	Polk
West Palm Beach	99,919	Trump (10/13), Kaine (10/24)	Palm Beach
Clearwater	107,685	Pence (10/31)	Pinellas
Coral Springs	121,096	Clinton (9/30)	Broward
Gainesville	124,354	Kaine (10/23)	Alachua
Pembroke Pines	154,750	Kaine (8/27), Clinton (11/5)	Broward
Fort Lauderdale	165,521	Trump (8/10), Clinton (10/30, 11/1)	Broward
Tallahassee	181,376	Kaine (8/26), Trump (10/25), Kaine (10/28)	Leon
Orlando	238,300	Clinton (9/21), Kaine (9/26, 10/23), Trump (11/2)	Orange
St. Petersburg	244,769	Clinton (8/8), Kaine (11/5)	Pinellas
Tampa	335,709	Trump (8/24, 10/24, 11/5), Clinton (9/6, 10/26)	Hillsborough
Miami	399,457	Clinton (8/9, 10/11, 10/29), Trump (9/16, 10/25, 11/2), Kaine (9/25, 10/15, 10/16, 10/24), Pence (11/4)	Miami-Dade
Jacksonville	821,784	Trump (8/3, 11/3), Pence (9/18)	Duval

Table 8.18 Locations of Virginia's 36 campaign events in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Doswell	2,126	Romney (11/1)	Hanover	7
Woodbridge	4,055	Obama (9/21)	Prince William	11
Lexington	6,998	Romney (10/8)	Rockbridge	6
Fishersville	7,462	Romney (10/4)	Augusta	6
Abingdon	8,188	Romney (10/5)	Washington	9
Bristow	15,137	Obama (11/3)	Prince William	1
Bristol	17,662	Ryan (10/25)	Bristol city	9
Fairfax	23,461	Obama (10/5, 10/19), Romney (9/13, 11/5)	Fairfax	11
Fredericksburg	27,307	Ryan (10/16)	Fredericksburg city	1
Sterling	27,822	Biden (11/5)	Loudoun	10
Springfield	30,484	Romney (11/2)	Fairfax	8
Danville	42,996	Ryan (9/19)	Danville city	5
Charlottesville	43,956	Ryan (10/25)	Albemarle	5
Leesburg	45,936	Romney (10/17)	Loudoun	10
Harrisonburg	50,981	Ryan (9/14)	Rockingham	6
Lynchburg	77,113	Biden (10/27), Romney (11/5), Ryan (10/16)	Lynchburg city	6
Roanoke	97,469	Romney (11/1)	Roanoke city	6
Newport News	180,726	Romney (10/8, 11/4), Ryan (9/18)	Newport News city	2
Richmond	210,309	Obama (10/25), Biden (11/5), Romney (9/8, 10/12), Ryan (11/3, 11/6)	Richmond city	3
Chesapeake	228,417	Romney (10/17)	Chesapeake city	4
Chesterfield	323,856	Biden (9/25)	Chesterfield	4
Virginia Beach	447,021	Obama (9/27), Romney (9/8, 11/1)	Virginia Beach	2

**Figure 8.4** Events by congressional district in Virginia in 2012

Table 8.19 Locations of Virginia's 23 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Paris	281	Pence (9/10)	Fauquier	5
Providence Forge	5,175	Kaine (9/24)	New Kent	1
Ashland	7,225	Pence (10/3)	Hanover	1
Purcellville	7,727	Pence (8/27)	Loudoun	10
Abingdon	7,963	Trump (8/10)	Washington	9
Williamsburg	14,068	Pence (9/20)	Williamsburg city	2
Fairfax	22,565	Pence (11/5), Kaine (11/7)	Fairfax	11
Fredericksburg	24,286	Trump (8/20)	Fredericksburg city	1
Salem	24,802	Pence (10/12)	Salem city	9
Leesburg	42,616	Trump (11/6)	Loudoun	10
Ashburn	43,511	Trump (8/2)	Loudoun	10
Harrisonburg	48,914	Pence (10/5)	Harrisonburg city	6
Lynchburg	75,568	Pence (10/12)	Lynchburg city	6
Roanoke city	97,032	Trump-Pence (7/25), Trump (9/24)	Roanoke city	6
Richmond city	204,214	Kaine (8/1, 11/7)	Richmond city	4
Norfolk city	242,803	Pence (8/4), Kaine (9/9)	Norfolk city	3
Virginia Beach city	437,994	Pence (8/4), Trump (9/6, 10/22)	Virginia Beach city	2

8.6.4. Iowa

Iowa received the fourth-largest number of campaign events in 2012.

Table 8.20 shows the locations of the 27 general-election campaign events in Iowa in 2012.

Table 8.20 Locations of Iowa's 27 campaign events in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Van Meter	1,016	Romney (10/9)	Dallas	3
Mount Vernon	4,506	Obama (10/17)	Linn	1
Orange City	6,004	Romney (9/7)	Sioux	4
Grinnell	9,218	Biden (9/18)	Poweshiek	1
Muscatine	22,886	Biden (11/1), Ryan (10/2)	Muscatine	2
Fort Dodge	25,206	Biden (11/1)	Webster	4
Ottumwa	25,023	Biden (9/18)	Wapello	2
Burlington	25,663	Biden (9/17), Ryan (10/2)	Des Moines	2
Clinton	26,885	Ryan (10/2)	Clinton	2
Cedar Falls	39,260	Ryan (11/2)	Black Hawk	1
Dubuque	57,637	Obama (11/3), Romney (11/3), Ryan (10/1)	Dubuque	1
Ames	58,965	Romney (10/25)	Story	4
Council Bluffs	62,230	Biden (10/4), Ryan (10/21)	Pottawattamie	3
Iowa City	67,862	Obama-Biden (9/7)	Johnson	2
Sioux City	82,684	Ryan (10/21)	Woodbury	4
Davenport	99,685	Obama (10/24), Romney (10/29)	Scott	2
Cedar Rapids	126,326	Romney (10/24)	Linn	1
Des Moines	203,433	Obama (11/5), Romney (11/3), Ryan (9/17, 11/5)	Polk	3

Figure 8.5 shows the geographic distribution of general-election campaign events among Iowa's four congressional districts in 2012.

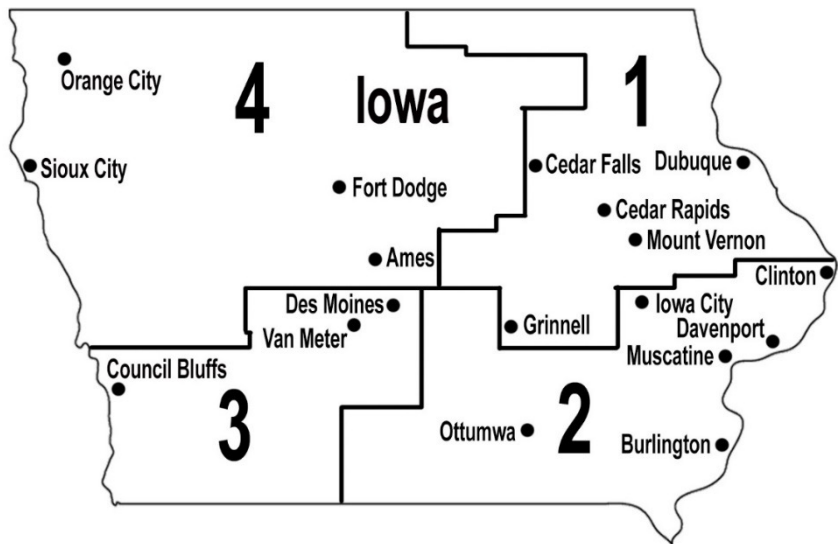


Figure 8.5 Events by congressional district in Iowa in 2012

Table 8.21 shows the locations of the 21 general-election campaign events in Iowa in 2016 and the population of each place visited.

Table 8.21 Locations of Iowa's 21 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Prole	878	Pence (11/3)	Warren
Newton	15,254	Pence (10/11)	Jasper
Fort Dodge	25,206	Pence (10/27)	Webster
Mason City	28,079	Pence (9/19)	Cerro Gordo
Dubuque	57,637	Pence (9/19), Kaine (11/2)	Dubuque
Ames	58,965	Kaine (9/19)	Story
Council Bluffs	62,230	Trump (9/28)	Pottawattamie
Sioux City	82,684	Trump (11/6)	Woodbury
Davenport	99,685	Trump (7/28)	Scott
Cedar Rapids	126,326	Trump (7/28, 10/28), Kaine (8/17), Pence (8/22), Clinton (10/28)	Linn
Des Moines	203,433	Trump-Pence (8/5), Clinton (8/10, 9/29, 10/28), Trump (8/27, 9/13)	Polk

8.6.5. Colorado

Colorado received the fifth-largest number of general-election campaign events in 2012.

Table 8.22 shows the locations of the 24 general-election campaign events in Colorado in 2012.

Table 8.22 Locations of Colorado's 24 campaign events in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Morrison	428	Romney & Ryan (10/23)	Jefferson	2
Johnstown	9,887	Ryan (11/5)	Weld	4
Durango	16,887	Ryan (10/22)	La Plata	3
Golden	18,867	Obama (9/13)	Jefferson	7
Montrose	19,132	Ryan (11/2)	Montrose	3
Pueblo West	29,637	Ryan (10/22)	Pueblo	3
Englewood	30,255	Romney (11/3)	Arapahoe	1
Castle Rock	48,231	Ryan (11/4)	Douglas	5
Greeley	92,889	Biden (10/17), Ryan (11/1)	Weld	4
Arvada	106,433	Biden (11/3)	Jefferson	7
Pueblo	106,595	Biden (11/3), Romney (9/16, 9/24)	Pueblo	3
Fort Collins	143,986	Ryan (9/26)	Larimer	4
Aurora	325,078	Obama (11/4)	Arapahoe	6
Colorado Springs	416,427	Romney (11/3), Ryan (9/26), 10/21)	El Paso	5
Denver	600,158	Obama (10/4,10/24,11/1), Romney (9/23,10/1)	Denver	1

Figure 8.6 shows the locations of general-election events in Colorado in 2012.

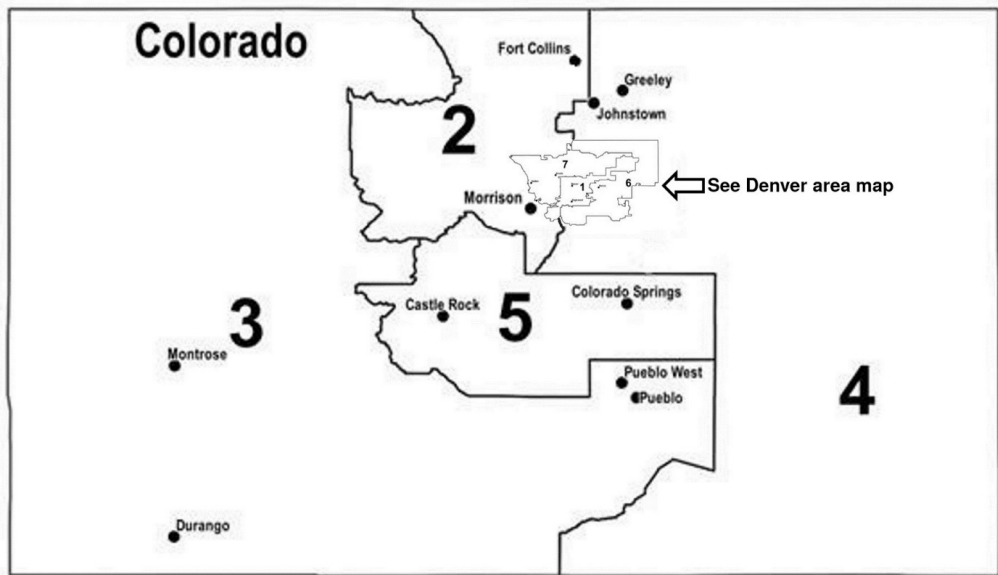


Figure 8.6 Events by congressional district in Colorado in 2012

Figure 8.7 shows the locations of general-election events in the Denver area of Colorado in 2012.

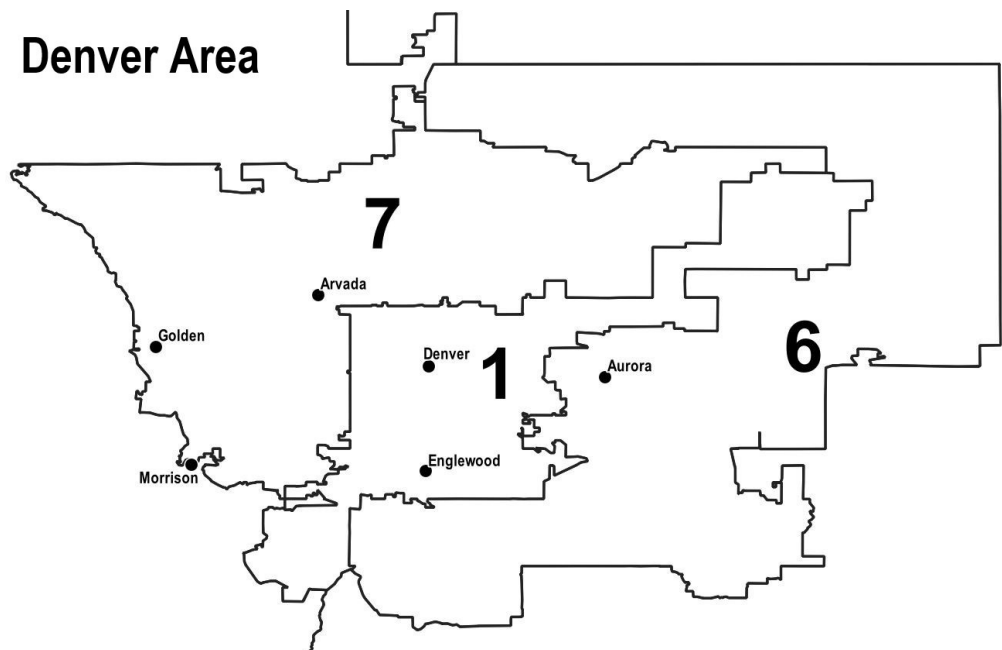


Figure 8.7 Events by Denver-area congressional district in Colorado in 2012

Table 8.23 shows the locations of the 19 general-election campaign events in Colorado in 2016 and the population of each place visited. s

Table 8.23 Locations of Colorado’s 19 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Durango	16,887	Pence (10/19)	La Plata
Golden	18,867	Trump (10/29)	Jefferson
Commerce City	45,913	Clinton (8/3)	Adams
Grand Junction	58,566	Trump (10/18)	Mesa
Loveland	66,859	Trump (10/3), Pence (11/2)	Larimer
Greeley	92,889	Trump (10/30)	Weld
Pueblo	106,595	Trump (10/3), Clinton (10/12)	Pueblo
Colorado Springs	416,427	Trump (7/29, 9/17, 10/18), Pence (8/3, 9/22, 10/26)	El Paso
Denver	600,158	Trump (7/29, 11/5), Pence (8/3), Kaine (10/10)	Denver

Table 8.25 Locations of Wisconsin's 14 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Mukwonago	7,355	Pence (11/5)	Waukesha
West Bend	31,078	Trump (8/16)	Washington
La Crosse	51,320	Pence (8/11), Kaine (11/6)	La Crosse
Eau Claire	65,883	Trump (11/1)	Eau Claire
Waukesha	70,718	Pence (7/27), Trump (9/28)	Waukesha
Appleton	72,623	Kaine (11/1)	Outagamie
Green Bay	104,057	Trump-Pence (8/5), Trump (10/17), Kaine (11/6)	Brown
Madison	233,209	Kaine (11/1)	Dane
Milwaukee	594,833	Kaine (8/5), Pence (8/11)	Milwaukee

Table 8.25 shows the locations of the 14 general-election campaign events in Wisconsin in 2016 and the population of each place visited.

Famously, the Democratic campaign neglected the closely divided battleground state of Wisconsin in the 2016 general-election campaign. Nine of the 14 general-election campaign events in 2016 were by the Republican presidential and vice-presidential nominees. Hillary Clinton, the Democratic presidential nominee, never visited Wisconsin during the entire general-election campaign. Moreover, four of the five Democratic general-election events (all by Kaine) were at the last minute in November (when the Clinton campaign began to realize that it was in trouble in Wisconsin).

8.6.7. New Hampshire

New Hampshire received 13 general-election campaign events in 2012.

Table 8.26 shows the location of the 13 general-election campaign events in New Hampshire in 2012.

Figure 8.9 shows the geographic distribution of campaign events among New Hampshire's two congressional districts in 2012.

Table 8.27 shows the locations of the 21 general-election campaign events in New Hampshire in 2016.

Table 8.26 Locations of New Hampshire's 13 campaign events in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Newington	753	Romney (11/3)	Rockingham	1
Hanover	11,260	Biden (9/21)	Grafton	2
Portsmouth	21,233	Obama & Biden (9/7)	Rockingham	1
Merrimack	25,494	Biden (9/22)	Hillsborough	1
Dover	29,987	Ryan (9/18)	Strafford	1
Derry	33,109	Ryan (9/29)	Rockingham	1
Concord	42,695	Obama (11/4), Biden (9/7)	Merrimack	2
Nashua	86,494	Obama (10/27), Romney (9/7)	Hillsborough	2
Manchester	109,565	Obama (10/18), Biden (9/22), Romney (11/5)	Hillsborough	1



Figure 8.9 Events by congressional district in New Hampshire in 2012

Table 8.27 Locations of New Hampshire’s 21 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Sandown	5,986	Trump (10/6)	Rockingham
Atkinson	6,751	Trump (11/4)	Rockingham
Windham	13,592	Trump (8/6), Pence (11/6)	Rockingham
Exeter	14,306	Kaine (9/15), Pence (10/21)	Rockingham
Durham	14,638	Clinton (9/28)	Strafford
Milford	15,115	Pence (9/26)	Hillsborough
Laconia	15,951	Trump (9/15)	Belknap
Bedford	21,203	Trump (9/29)	Hillsborough
Portsmouth	21,233	Kaine (9/15), Trump (10/15)	Rockingham
Rochester	29,752	Pence (10/30)	Strafford
Nashua	86,494	Pence (10/21)	Hillsborough
Manchester	109,565	Kaine (8/13), Pence (8/18), Trump (8/25, 10/28), Clinton (10/24, 11/6), Trump-Pence (11/7)	Hillsborough

8.6.8. Nevada

Nevada received 13 general-election campaign events in 2012.

Table 8.28 shows the locations of the 13 general-election campaign events in Nevada in 2012.

Table 8.28 Locations of Nevada’s 13 campaign events in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Sparks	90,264	Ryan (9/7)	Washoe	2
Reno	225,221	Biden (10/17), Romney (10/24), Ryan (11/1, 11/5)	Washoe	2
Henderson	257,729	Romney & Ryan (10/23)	Clark	3
Las Vegas	583,756	Obama (9/12, 9/30, 10/24, 11/1), Biden (10/18), Romney (9/21), Ryan (11/1)	Clark	1

Figure 8.10 shows the geographic distribution of campaign events among Nevada’s four congressional districts in 2012.

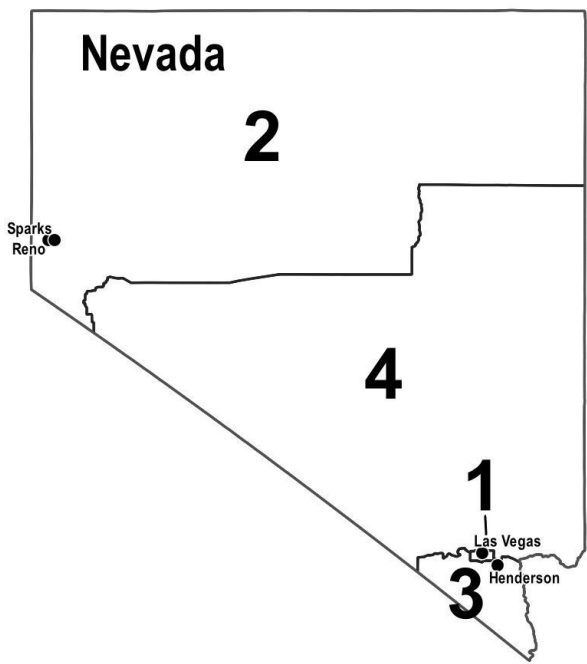


Figure 8. 10 Events by congressional district in Nevada in 2012

Table 8.29 shows the locations of the 17 general-election campaign events in Nevada in 2016.

Table 8.29 Locations of Nevada's 17 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Carson City	55,274	Pence (8/1)	Carson City
Reno	225,221	Pence (8/1, 10/20, 10/26), Clinton (8/25), Kaine (9/22), Washoe Trump (10/5, 11/5)	
Henderson	257,729	Trump (10/5), Kaine (10/7)	Clark
Las Vegas	583,756	Clinton (8/4, 10/12, 11/2), Pence (8/17), Kaine (8/22, 10/6), Trump (10/30)	Clark

8.6.9. Pennsylvania

The 2012 presidential campaign in Pennsylvania illustrates another important characteristic of the current state-by-state winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes—namely that battleground status is fleeting and fickle.

The Democratic ticket was comfortably ahead in Pennsylvania throughout the 2012 race. In fact, the Obama-Biden ticket ended up winning Pennsylvania by 323,931 votes—a 53%–47% margin in the two-party vote.

An eight percentage-point spread between the top two candidates is the outer boundary at which presidential campaigning usually occurs under the current winner-take-all system.

Thus, there was almost no general-election presidential campaigning in Pennsylvania in 2012. Pennsylvania received only five of the nation's 253 general-election campaign events, compared to 40 events in 2008, 54 events in 2016, and 47 events in 2020, when the race was much closer in the state.

Neither President Obama nor Vice President Biden bothered to visit Pennsylvania at all during the general-election campaign.

As the campaign drew to a close, Governor Romney and Congressman Ryan made five visits to Pennsylvania—four at the very end of the campaign.

The locations of the five Republican events are shown in table 8.30.

The situation in Pennsylvania was very different in 2016, when the state was hotly contested.

Table 8.31 shows the locations of the 54 general-election campaign events in Pennsylvania in 2016.

There is additional discussion about presidential campaigning in Pennsylvania in section 9.7.

Table 8.30 Locations of Pennsylvania's five campaign events in 2012

Place	Population	Campaign event	County
Morrisville	8,728	Romney (11/4)	Bucks
Middletown	45,436	Ryan (11/3)	Dauphin
Moon Twp	24,185	Ryan (10/20)	Allegheny
Wayne	31,531	Romney (9/28)	Delaware
Pittsburgh	305,704	Romney (11/6)	Allegheny

Table 8.31 Locations of Pennsylvania's 54 campaign events in 2016

Place	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Youngwood	3,050	Pence (11/1)	Westmoreland	18
Grantville	3,581	Pence (10/5)	Dauphin	11
Chester Twp.	3,940	Trump (9/22)	Delaware	7
Pipersville	6,212	Pence (8/23)	Bucks	8
Ambridge	7,050	Trump (10/10)	Beaver	12
Gettysburg	7,620	Pence (10/6), Trump (10/22)	Adams	4
Hanover Twp	10,866	Kaine (8/31)	Northampton	15
Hershey	14,257	Trump (11/4)	Dauphin	11
Aston	16,592	Trump (9/13)	Delaware	7
Hatfield Twp	17,249	Clinton-Kaine (7/29)	Montgomery	6
Newtown Twp	19,299	Kaine (10/26), Trump (10/21)	Bucks	8
King of Prussia	19,936	Pence (8/23)	Montgomery	7
Johnstown	20,978	Clinton-Kaine (7/30), Pence (10/6), Trump (10/21)	Cambria	12
East Hempfield	23,522	Trump (10/1)	Lancaster	16
Moon Twp	24,185	Pence (11/3), Trump (11/6)	Allegheny	14
Wilkes-Barre	41,498	Trump (10/10)	Luzerne	11
State College	42,034	Kaine (10/21)	Centre	5
York	43,718	Pence (9/29)	York	4
Altoona	46,320	Trump (8/12)	Blair	9
Haverford Twp	48,491	Clinton (10/4)	Delaware	7
Harrisburg	49,528	Clinton (10/4), Clinton-Kaine (7/29), Trump (8/1)	Dauphin	11
Lancaster	59,322	Pence (8/9), Kaine (8/30)	Lancaster	16
Bensalem	60,427	Pence (10/28)	Bucks	8
Scranton	76,089	Trump-Pence (7/27), Clinton (8/15), Pence (9/14), Trump (11/7)	Lackawanna	17
Erie	101,786	Trump (8/12), Kaine (8/30), Pence (11/7)	Erie	3
Allentown	118,032	Kaine (10/26)	Lehigh	15
Pittsburgh	305,704	Clinton-Kaine (7/30, 10/22), Pence (8/9), Kaine (9/5, 10/6), Clinton (11/4, 11/7)	Allegheny	14
Philadelphia	1,526,006	Clinton (8/16, 9/19, 11/5, 11/6, 11/7), Kaine (10/5), Clinton-Kaine (7/29, 10/22)	Philadelphia	2

8.6.10. North Carolina

North Carolina also illustrates the impermanent nature of battleground status in presidential campaigns.

In 2012, the state received only three of the nation's 253 general-election campaign events (compared to 98 in 2008 and 55 in 2016).

The reason for the small number of events in 2012 was that both major political parties concluded that the state was likely to go Republican—as indeed it did.

In fact, neither President Obama nor Republican nominee Mitt Romney bothered to campaign at all in the state in 2012.

In contrast, in 2016, North Carolina was a hotly contested battleground state, and it received a considerable amount of attention.

Table 8.32 shows the locations of the three general-election campaign events in North Carolina in 2012.

Table 8.32 Locations of North Carolina's three campaign events in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Asheville	83,393	Biden (10/2), Ryan (10/11)	Buncombe	10
Charlotte	731,424	Biden (10/2)	Mecklenburg	12

Table 8.33 shows the locations of the 55 general-election campaign events in North Carolina in 2016.

Table 8.33 Locations of North Carolina's 55 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Kenansville	855	Trump (9/20)	Duplin
Selma	6,073	Trump (11/3)	Johnston
Fletcher	7,187	Pence (10/10), Trump (10/21)	Henderson
Winterville	9,269	Clinton (11/3)	Pitt
Davidson	10,944	Kaine (10/12)	Iredell
Smithfield	10,966	Pence (10/28)	Johnston
Kinston	21,677	Trump (10/26)	Lenoir
Sanford	28,094	Kaine (10/31)	Lee
Salisbury	33,662	Pence (10/24)	Rowan
Hickory	40,010	Pence (11/6)	Catawba
Jacksonville	70,145	Pence (10/29), Kaine (10/31)	Onslow
Concord	79,066	Trump (11/3)	Cabarrus
Asheville	83,393	Kaine (8/15, 10/19), Trump (9/12)	Buncombe
Greenville	84,554	Trump (9/6), Pence (11/4)	Pitt
High Point	104,371	Kaine (8/3), Trump (9/20)	Guilford
Wilmington	106,476	Trump (8/9, 11/5), Pence (8/24, 10/18), Kaine (9/6, 11/7)	New Hanover
Fayetteville	200,564	Trump (8/9), Kaine (8/16), Pence (10/18)	Cumberland
Durham	228,330	Kaine (10/20), Clinton (10/23)	Durham
Winston-Salem	229,617	Trump-Pence (7/25), Pence (8/30), Clinton (10/27)	Forsyth
Greensboro	269,666	Kaine (8/3), Clinton (9/15), Trump (10/14), Pence (10/24)	Guilford
Raleigh	403,892	Clinton (9/27, 10/23, 11/3, 11/7), Pence (10/12), Trump (11/7)	Wake
Charlotte	731,424	Trump (8/18, 10/14, 10/26), Pence (8/24, 10/10), Clinton (9/8, 10/2, 10/23), Kaine (10/20, 11/7)	Mecklenburg

8.6.11. Michigan

Michigan is yet another example of the transitory nature of battleground status in presidential campaigns.

Michigan received 10 events in 2008¹⁴ (out of 300 nationally), 22 events in 2016 (out of 399), and 21 events in 2020 (out of 212).

¹⁴ In 2008, the general-election campaign started with Michigan on the list of battleground states. Battleground status is so fleeting that a state can find itself jilted in the middle of the general-election campaign. On October 2, 2008, the McCain campaign (quite reasonably) decided it could not win Michigan and abruptly pulled out of the state.

In 2012, polling showed that the Democratic ticket was comfortably ahead in Michigan throughout the campaign. The Obama-Biden ticket ended up winning the state by a 55%–45% margin in the two-party vote.

Therefore, President Obama, Vice President Biden, and Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney did not bother to visit Michigan in 2012.

Instead, the state received one visit from Republican vice-presidential nominee Paul Ryan, as shown in table 8.34. Note that nearby Ohio (with approximately the same population as Michigan) received 73 general-election campaign events in 2012.

Table 8.34 Location of Michigan’s one campaign event in 2012

Location	Population	Campaign event	County	CD
Rochester	12,711	Ryan (10/8)	Oakland	8

In 2016, by contrast, Michigan was a hotly contested battleground state, and it received a considerable amount of attention, as shown in table 8.35.

Table 8.35 Locations of Michigan’s 22 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Dimondale	1,234	Trump (8/19)	Eaton
Traverse City	14,674	Pence (11/7)	Grand Traverse
Allendale	20,708	Clinton (11/7)	Ottawa
Holland	33,051	Pence (11/5)	Ottawa/Allegan
Portage	46,292	Pence (11/3)	Kalamazoo
Novi	55,224	Pence (7/28), Trump (9/30)	Oakland
Taylor	63,131	Kaine (10/30)	Wayne
Ann Arbor	113,934	Kaine (9/13)	Washtenaw
Lansing	114,297	Pence (11/4)	Ingham
Sterling Heights	129,699	Trump (11/6)	Macomb
Warren	134,056	Trump (10/31)	Macomb
Grand Rapids	188,040	Pence (7/28), Kaine (8/5), Trump (10/31), Trump-Pence (11/7)	Kent
Detroit	713,777	Trump-Pence (8/8), Clinton (8/11, 10/10, 11/4), Trump (9/3), Kaine (10/18)	Wayne

8.6.12. Arizona

In 2012, Arizona was not considered a battleground state and did not receive any general-election campaign events.

In 2016, Arizona emerged as a battleground state, and it received 10 general-election campaign events, as shown in table 8.36.

Arizona received comparatively less attention than other battleground states in 2016, because the state appeared to be safely Republican at the beginning of the general-election campaign. Trump and Pence visited the state in August, September, and October.

Then, toward the end of the campaign, Clinton and Kaine realized that Arizona was

Table 8.36 Locations of Arizona's 10 campaign events in 2016

Location	Population	Campaign event	County
Prescott Valley	38,822	Trump (10/4)	Yavapai
Tempe	161,719	Clinton (11/2)	Maricopa
Mesa	439,041	Pence (9/22, 11/2)	Maricopa
Tucson	520,116	Pence (8/2), Kaine (11/3)	Pima
Phoenix	1,445,632	Pence (8/2), Trump (8/31, 10/29), Kaine (11/3)	Maricopa

closer than previously recognized. They belatedly appeared on November 2 and 3, although their last-minute efforts did not yield a win.

Note that Arizona received far fewer campaign events (10) in relation to its population than the other 11 battleground states in 2016. For example, the closely divided state of New Hampshire (with only two congressional districts) and Iowa (with four congressional districts) each received 21 general-election campaign events in 2016—even though both states have considerably fewer people than Arizona (which has nine congressional districts). New Hampshire received 10.5 campaign events per congressional district. Iowa received 5.25 events per congressional district. However, Arizona received only 1.1 events per congressional district.

Even though Arizona received only 10 general-election campaign events in 2016, the presidential candidates allocated their appearances in different parts of Arizona closely in line with the population distribution in the state.

The state's biggest metropolitan statistical area (Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale) has 66% of the state's population, and it received seven of Arizona's 10 events.

The Tucson metropolitan statistical area has 15% of the state's population, and it received two of Arizona's 10 events.

Given that we are talking about a mere 10 events, the allocation of events in Arizona closely paralleled the state's population.

8.7. SAMPLE NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN

The maps and tables shown earlier in this chapter demonstrate that, *inside* the battleground states, presidential campaigns hew very closely to population in allocating their limited campaigning time to the various parts of the state.

They do this because every vote *inside* a battleground state is equal, and the candidate who receives the most popular votes *inside* the state wins everything that there is to win from that state.

In a nationwide campaign, candidates would campaign throughout the country in the same way as they do today inside battleground states—that is, they would allocate their campaign events to various areas based on population.

The total number of general-election campaign events conducted by the presidential and vice-presidential nominees of the two major parties varies from year to year.

Table 8.37 shows the number of general-election campaign events for the major-party nominees in the six elections between 2000 and 2020.

Because of the COVID pandemic, the number of 2020 campaign events (namely 212) was only about half of the 399 conducted in 2016.

Table 8.37 Number of general-election campaign events 2000–2020

Year	Number of general-election campaign events
2000	439
2004	431
2008	300
2012	253
2016	399
2020	212
Average	339

For the sake of illustration, let’s suppose that a future presidential campaign consists of the same number of general-election events as 2016—that is, 399.¹⁵

If the country’s current population (331,449,281 according to the 2020 census) is divided by 399, the result is one event for every 830,700 people.

Table 8.38 shows how 399 campaign events would be distributed among the states if candidates were to allocate their campaign events on the basis of population. That is, the number of campaign events for each state (shown in column 3) is obtained by dividing each state’s population by 830,700 and rounding off. For purposes of comparison, column 4 shows the actual distribution of 399 campaign events that each state received in 2016 under the current state-by-state winner-take-all system.

Figure 8.11 shows the same information as the table, namely the number of campaign events by state in a nationwide popular election for President.

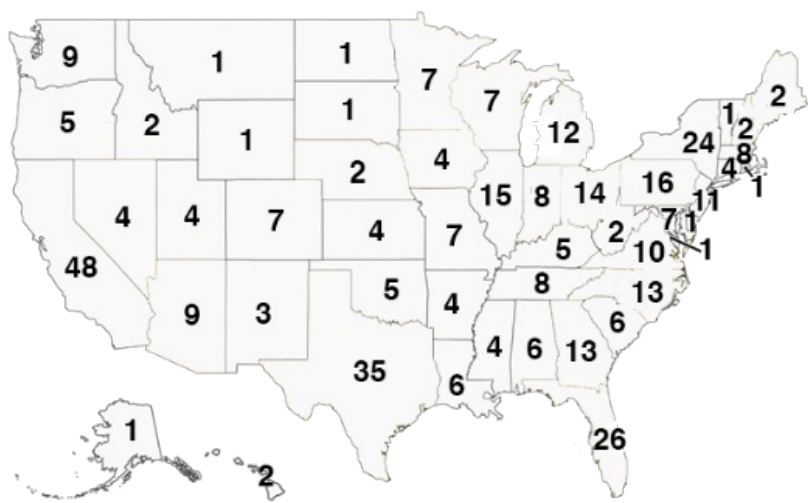


Figure 8.11 Number of campaign events by state in a nationwide popular election for President

¹⁵ By coincidence, 399 is very close to the number of congressional districts in the country (435). Thus, each congressional district in the country would likely receive an average of about one visit in the general-election campaign.

Table 8.38 Number of campaign events for each state in a national popular vote for President

State	Population	Number of events if based on population	Actual number of 2016 events
Alabama	5,024,279	6	
Alaska	733,391	1	
Arizona	7,151,502	9	10
Arkansas	3,011,524	4	
California	39,538,223	48	1
Colorado	5,773,714	7	19
Connecticut	3,605,944	4	1
Delaware	989,948	1	
D.C.	689,545	1	
Florida	21,538,187	26	71
Georgia	10,711,908	13	3
Hawaii	1,455,271	2	
Idaho	1,839,106	2	
Illinois	12,812,508	15	1
Indiana	6,785,528	8	2
Iowa	3,190,369	4	21
Kansas	2,937,880	4	
Kentucky	4,505,836	5	
Louisiana	4,657,757	6	
Maine	1,362,359	2	3
Maryland	6,177,224	7	
Massachusetts	7,029,917	8	
Michigan	10,077,331	12	22
Minnesota	5,706,494	7	2
Mississippi	2,961,279	4	1
Missouri	6,154,913	7	2
Montana	1,084,225	1	
Nebraska	1,961,504	2	2
Nevada	3,104,614	4	17
New Hampshire	1,377,529	2	21
New Jersey	9,288,994	11	
New Mexico	2,117,522	3	3
New York	20,201,249	24	
North Carolina	10,439,388	13	55
North Dakota	779,094	1	
Ohio	11,799,448	14	48
Oklahoma	3,959,353	5	
Oregon	4,237,256	5	
Pennsylvania	13,002,700	16	54
Rhode Island	1,097,379	1	
South Carolina	5,118,425	6	
South Dakota	886,667	1	
Tennessee	6,910,840	8	
Texas	29,145,505	35	1
Utah	3,271,616	4	1
Vermont	643,077	1	
Virginia	8,631,393	10	23
Washington	7,705,281	9	1
West Virginia	1,793,716	2	
Wisconsin	5,893,718	7	14
Wyoming	576,851	1	
Total	331,449,281	399	399

As can be seen in the figure and table, every state and the District of Columbia receives some attention in a nationwide campaign with 399 general-election campaign events.

An additional indication of the way that a nationwide presidential campaign would be run comes from the way that national advertisers (e.g., Ford, Coca-Cola) conduct their sales campaigns. National advertisers seek out customers in small, medium-sized, and large towns as well as rural areas in every state. National advertisers do not advertise exclusively in big cities. Instead, they go after every potential customer, regardless of where the customer is located.

In particular, national advertisers do not write off a particular state merely because a competitor already has a six percentage-point lead in market share in that state (whereas presidential candidates routinely do this as a result of the current state-by-state winner-take-all system).

Furthermore, a national advertiser with a six percentage-point edge in a particular state does not stop trying to make additional sales simply because they are already No. 1 in sales in that state (whereas presidential candidates routinely ignore a state if they have a six percentage-point or larger lead under the current system).