The Fractional Proportional (Lodge-Gossett) Method of Awarding Electoral Votes

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Summary

● Under the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method of awarding electoral votes, a state's electoral votes would be divided proportionally according to the percentage of popular votes received in the state by each presidential candidate—with this *fractional calculation carried out to three decimal places*. Note that this fractional calculation is what distinguishes this method from the very different *whole-number* proportional method.

● Because the fractional proportional method involves fractional electoral votes, a federal constitutional amendment would be required.

● In 1950, the U.S. Senate approved a federal constitutional amendment implementing the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method by a 64–27 vote, but the House defeated it.

● The fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method would not accurately reflect the national popular vote. for example, if this method is applied to the 2000 election returns, George W. Bush would have been elected President. Al Gore would have received fewer electoral votes than Bush—even though Gore received 537,179 more popular votes nationwide. This outcome is the consequence of the substantial built-in disparities in the value of a vote that are inherent in this method (discussed next).

● The fractional proportional method would not make every vote equal. There are four sources of inequality inherent in the fractional proportional method, and each is substantial.

   ● 3.6-to-one inequality because of senatorial electoral votes
   ● 1.75-to-1 inequality because of the process of apportioning U.S. House seats among the states
   ● 1.67-to-1 inequality because of voter turnout differences at the state level
   ● 1.27-to-1 inequality because of population changes during the decade-long period after each census.

● The fractional proportional method would definitely improve upon the current state-by-state winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes, which results in three out of four states and three out of four voters in the United States being ignored in the general-election campaign for President.

Description and history of the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method

Under the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method of awarding electoral votes, a state's electoral votes would be divided proportionally according to the percentage of popular votes received in the state by each presidential candidate—with this fractional calculation *carried out to three decimal places*.

Note that the fractional proportional method discussed here differs significantly from the *whole-number* proportional method.[1]

Because the fractional proportional method involves fractional electoral votes, a federal constitutional amendment would be required.

On February 1, 1950, the U.S. Senate approved a federal constitutional amendment implementing the fractional proportional method by a 64–27 vote. The amendment was sponsored by Massachusetts Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (R) and Texas Representative Ed Gossett (D). The Lodge-Gossett amendment was defeated in the U.S. House shortly after passage by the Senate. [2,3,4,5,6]

The passage of the Lodge-Gossett amendment by the Senate in 1950 was one of only six occasions when a federal constitutional amendment to change the method of electing the President has passed a house of Congress since the 12th Amendment in 1803.[7]

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[1] Under the *whole-number* proportional method a state's electoral votes would be divided proportionally based on the percentage of popular votes received by each presidential candidate in the state—*rounded off to the nearest whole number*. The whole-number proportional method does not require a federal constitutional amendment, and therefore could be implemented by state legislation on a state-by-state basis.

[2] United States Senate. 1949. Election of President and Vice President: Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, 81st Congress, 1st Session, on S.J. Res. 2. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112119853536&view=1up&seq=5

[3] Bennett, Emmett L. 1950. The reform of presidential elections: The Lodge amendment. *American Bar Association Journal*. Volume 37. February 1951. Page 89ff.

[4] Morley, Felix. 1961. Democracy and the Electoral College. *Modern Age*. Fall 1961. Pages 373–388.

[5] Editorial: Giving the minority vote a voice. *St. Petersburg Times*. August 6, 1951.

[6] Silva, Ruth C. 1950. The Lodge-Gossett resolution: A critical review. *The American Political Science Review*. Volume 44. Number 1. March 1950. Pages 86–99.

[7] The other five occasions include the passage in 1969 of the Celler-Bayh amendment for direct nationwide population election of the President and the passage in 1813, 1819, 1820, and 1822 of various versions the district system for electing presidential electors. Keyssar, Alexander. 2020. *Why Do We Still Have the Electoral College?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Page 62.

Professor Alexander Keyssar recounted the history of the Senate passage and House defeat of the Lodge-Gossett Amendment in discussing his 2020 book *Why Do We Still Have the Electoral College?* at a lecture in Cambridge, Massachusetts.[8]

> "[Senator Lodge] really believed in the national popular vote.… And he also wanted to help the Republican party maybe make some inroads in the South.…
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> "His cosponsor was a guy named Ed Lee Gossett who was a very right-wing congressman from Texas.… Gossett's argument was very different. He wanted to have a proportional system. And he gave speeches on the floor of Congress about this. Because he **wanted to limit the power of Jews, Blacks, and Italians in New York state, who he thought were in effect determining American presidential elections**. Basically he wanted to break up the power of large cities. And he gave these extraordinary speeches about the Communists, the New York Labor Party, and then these Jews, and then the Italians, and Black people.
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> "Remarkably, this Amendment gets passed by the Senate in 1950.… The liberals were asleep at the switch about what was going on here. And then after it gets passed they start paying attention.…
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> "And then the liberal members of Congress, coupled with some important outside African-American advisors, recognized that what this is really aimed at, from Gossett's point of view, is killing the civil rights movement, in killing Northern support for the civil rights movement, by diminishing the power of key Northern states, and in effect making the South the strongest wing of the Democratic Party.
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> "So in the period of 6 weeks, this whole thing turns around. It's a remarkable political moment, where you go from a constitutional amendment which is passed by a two-thirds vote in the Senate, and six weeks later, or seven weeks later maybe, it is voted down by about a two-thirds vote in the House of Representatives.…

[8] Keyssar, Alexander. 2020. *Why Do We Still Have the Electoral College?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

> "But the anti-Communism, the racism, all that feeding into this says something about the anxiety attached to our politics in our discussions of political institutions."[9]

In 1950, New York state was monumentally important in electing the President. New York not only had the largest number of electoral votes of any state (47 of 531), but it was also a closely divided battleground state. That is, New York played a role similar to that of Florida in recent years, except that New York had considerably more electoral votes than Florida has today.

In the two presidential elections prior to the 1950 debate on the Lodge-Gossett Amendment, New York was not only a closely divided battleground state, but it was a battleground state with a history of recently switching between parties. It voted

- Democratic (for Roosevelt) in 1944 by a narrow 52%–47% margin, and
- Republican (Dewey) in 1948 by an even narrower 45%–46% margin.

Thus, New York played a pivotal role in deciding the Presidency under the winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes.

If there had been a proportional division of New York's electoral votes in the 1944 and 1948 elections, New York would have provided the state's winner with a lead of only two electoral votes in 1944 and one electoral vote in 1948—instead of the whooping 47–0 lead that it delivered under the winner-take-all method.

Representative Gosset also frequently highlighted other large closely divided Northern industrial states such as Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Michigan.

- Pennsylvania had 35 electoral votes at the time, and voted 51%–48% Democratic in 1944 and 47%–51% Republican in 1948.
- Illinois had 28 electoral votes, and voted 52%–48% Democratic in 1944 and 50%–49% Democratic in 1948.
- Michigan had 19 electoral votes, and voted 50%-49% Democratic in 1944 and 48%–49% Republican in 1948.

Under the fractional proportional method of awarding electoral votes, these three states would have delivered a lead of *only one electoral vote*

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[9] Keyssar, Alexander. 2020. Author talk at Harvard Book Store in Cambridge, Massachusetts on the book *Why Do We Still Have the Electoral College? C-SPAN*. July 21, 2020. Timestamp 52:58–55:12 https://www.c-span.org/video/?473814-1/why-electoral-college

each in 1944 and 1948 to whichever candidate won the state, instead of leads of 35–0, 28–0, and 19–0.

These four states together had 129 electoral votes at the time.

However, under the fractional proportional method of awarding electoral votes, a total of only four or five electoral votes would have been in play in all these four states.

Meanwhile, as shown in table below, the 11 Southern states had a combined total of 127 electoral votes. In 1944, these states delivered an average of 76% of their popular vote and 100% of their electoral votes in support of the region's dominant party (the Democratic Party) and in support of the region's hallmark governmental policy (segregation).

1944 Democratic vote for President in 1944 in 11 Southern states

State	Democratic percent	Electoral votes
Alabama	81%	11
Arkansas	70%	9
Florida	70%	8
Georgia	82%	12
Louisiana	81%	10
Mississippi	94%	9
North Carolina	67%	14
South Carolina	88%	8
Tennessee	71%	12
Texas	71%	23
Virginia	62%	11
Total		**127**

If the South's 127 electoral votes were divided proportionately, the South was in a position to deliver a 97–30 lead in electoral votes to a presidential candidate—that is, a net 67-vote lead.

While a net lead of 67 electoral votes is not quite as large as the 127-vote lead that could be produced by winner-take-all, it would have been far greater than the lead of four or five electoral votes that New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Michigan might together deliver under a proportional division of electoral votes.

Representative Gossett detailed the political role of the Negroes, Jews, Italians, Irish, Poles, labor, and Communists in New York and the era's other closely divided northern industrial states.

> "The electoral college permits and invites irresponsible control and domination by **small organized minority groups, within the large pivotal States**. It aggravates and accentuates the building up and solidification within these States of **religious, economic, and racial blocs**. Small, definable, minority groups, organized along religious or economic or racial lines, by voting together, can and do hold a balance of power within these pivotal States. As a result, the political strategists in both parties make special appeals to these various groups as such. These groups have become more and more politically

conscious. They know their power. In many instances, they have no political alignments or philosophy as such, but are simply up for sale to the highest bidder. To encourage economic, racial, and religious group consciousness and group action, is a dangerously undemocratic practice, aside from its other evil consequences.

"At the danger of stepping on some toes, let's get down to specific cases. Let's take a look at the political platforms of both major parties in the Presidential campaigns of 1964 and 1948 and see how they were built and designed to appeal to minority groups and blocs in the large pivotal States. First, both parties wrote the FEPC[10] [Federal Employment Practices Committee] into their platforms. **The platform makers of both parties will tell you frankly, off the record of course, that this was done as a bid for the Negro vote. There are enough Negroes in New York City, when voting in bloc, to determine often how the entire electoral vote of the State of New York is cast; enough in Philadelphia if cast in bloc to probably determine the result of an election in the State of Pennsylvania; enough in Detroit to perhaps decide the vote of the State of Michigan; enough in Chicago to carry the State of Illinois**. Hence, a dangerous and radical proposal in which a majority of neither party believes was written into both platforms as political bait for a minority vote within the large pivotal States.

"A second minority group that was wooed by the platform makers of both parties was **the radical wing of organized labor**. In the large pivotal States above mentioned, the votes controlled by the political action committee of the CIO was a tremendous, potential, political threat. The votes allegedly controlled by this organization in the large pivotal States, if cast in bloc, would be sufficient to swing the votes of such States and perhaps elect a President. Hence, both parties generally speaking wrote platitudinous provisions into their platforms concerning industrial-management relations.

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[10] In 1941, the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC), was established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to help prevent discrimination against African Americans in defense and government jobs. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Fair-Employment-Practices-Committee

Both parties pussyfooted on the labor question because of organized labor's power through the electoral college.

"**Now, with all due deference to our many fine Jewish citizens**, they constitute a third group, to whom a specific overt appeal was made in the platforms of both major parties. There are 2 million Jews in the city of New York alone. When they vote even substantially in bloc, it means the balance of power in our largest State. The candidate for whom they vote carries New York State and probably the Presidency. What did the platform makers of 1944 do? Both of them wrote into their platforms specifically and without equivocation the so-called Palestine resolution, calling upon Great Britain to immediately open Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration. Regardless of the merits of the Zionists' cause in Palestine, this was political demagoguery and dangerous meddling with British foreign policy in the Holy Land. As a result of platform endorsements by both major parties, we passed a resolution through the Seventy-ninth Congress calling upon England to open up Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration. Within a few weeks after this resolution was passed, England asked us if we were ready and willing to back up our request with the Army and the Navy if she got into war. We stuck our noses into British foreign policy for purely political reasons and to the detriment of all of our citizens, Jewish and otherwise.

"Then there are numerous other minorities pressure groups within these large pivotal States to whom continuous political overtures are made by the strategists of both parties. There are more than **1,000,000 Italians in New York City. There are 2,000,000 Irish**, many of whom are still politically conscious where Ireland is concerned. **There are 500,000 Poles** and other large racial groups. Because of the electoral college, **the American Labor Party and the Communist Party in the State of New York** have power and trading position out of all proportion to their numbers, to say nothing of their merit. It is entirely possible that because of this political strait-jacket, the electoral college system, that said American Labor Party or the Communist Party will determine someday soon who will be the President of the United States. Of late, we have become rightly alarmed over the activities of the Communist Party in the United

States. Strange to say, this party has its greatest following and influence in the aforesaid large pivotal States. This party and its fellow-travelers are shrewd political manipulators. What grim irony it would be if they should swing the balance of power and be responsible for the election of a President of the United States. Again, mention might be made of the undue power and influence given to the big city political machines through the electoral college. Through, and because of the electoral college, a few big cities have elected and will probably continue to elect Presidents of the United States. It is largely within these big cities that the racial, religious, and economic blocs are found and in which they operate."[11]

African-Americans played a unique additional role in this debate because at the time, Jim Crow laws denied them the vote throughout the South.

Representative Gossett obliquely noted the absence of African-American voters in the South:

"Under our proposal, **it's of no concern** to Texas how many vote in New York and of no concern **to New York how many vote in Texas**. New York would still have 47 electoral votes, divided, however, in the exact ratio in which they were cast. Texas would still have 23 electoral votes, divided, however, in the exact ratio in which they were cast."[12]

Thus, African-Americans were especially concerned about preserving the political clout of Northern states where they were able to cast votes.

If there was any doubt as to whether the concern of African-Americans was well-placed, Representative Gossett made it very clear why he objected to the winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes at a congressional hearing in 1949:

"Now, please understand, **I have no objection to the Negro in Harlem voting**, and to his vote being counted, but I do resent that fact that **both parties will spend a hundred times as much money to get his vote, and that**

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[11] Hearings before Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States House of Representatives, 81st Congress, 1949. Pages 16–18. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pst.000045412301&view=1up&seq=21

[12] Hearings before Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States House of Representatives, 81st Congress, 1949. Pages 19. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pst.000045412301&view=1up&seq=21

his vote is worth a hundred times as much in the scale of national politics as is the vote of a white man in Texas. I have no objection to a million folks who cannot speak English voting, or to their votes being counted, but I do resent the fact that because they happen to live in Chicago, or Detroit, or New York, that **their vote is worth a hundred times as much as mine because I happen to live in Texas**. Is it fair, is it honest, is it democratic, is it to the best interest of anyone in fact, to place **such a premium on a few thousand labor votes, or Italian votes, or Irish votes, or Negro votes, or Jewish votes, or Polish votes, or Communist votes, or big-city-machine votes**, simply because they happen to be located in two or three large, industrial pivotal States? Can anything but evil come from placing such temptation and such power in the hands of political parties and political bosses? They, of course, will never resist the temptation of making undue appeals to these minority groups whose votes mean the balance of power and the election of Presidents. Thus, both said groups and said politicians are corrupted and the Nation suffers."[13] [Emphasis added]

Professor Alexander Keyssar's book *Why Do We Still Have the Electoral College?* provides additional detail on Representative Gossett's extensive, and explicitly racist, campaign for his amendment and on the amendment's defeat in the House.[14]

The Lodge-Gossett amendment had several elements.

- It would have retained the existing distribution of electoral votes among the states—that is, each state would have a number of electoral votes equal to its number of U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators.
- It would have eliminated the position of presidential elector and made the process of awarding of the fractional electoral votes into an entirely automatic numerical calculation.
- It would have made a plurality of electoral votes sufficient for election. That is, in the event that no candidate

[13] Hearings before Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States House of Representatives, 81st Congress, 1949. Pages 17–18. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pst.000045412301&view=1up&seq=21

[14] Keyssar, Alexander. 2020. *Why Do We Still Have the Electoral College?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

received an absolute majority of the electoral votes, the Lodge-Gossett amendment would have eliminated the so-called "contingent election" in which U.S. House would choose the President (with each state having one vote), and the Senate would separately choose the Vice President.

The 1950 Lodge-Gossett amendment (Senate Joint Resolution 2 of the 81st Congress) is as follows:

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring there-in), That an amendment is hereby proposed to the Constitution of the United States which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by three-fourths of the legislatures of the several States. Said amendment shall be as follows:

"ARTICLE —

"Section 1. The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and together with the Vice-President, chosen for the same term, be elected as herein provided.

"The Electoral College system for electing the President and Vice President of the United States is hereby abolished. The President and Vice President shall be elected by the people of the several States. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislature. Congress shall determine the time of such election, which shall be the same throughout the United States. Until otherwise determined by the Congress, such election shall be held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November of the year preceding the year in which the regular term of the President is to begin. Each State shall be entitled to a number of electoral votes equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which such State may be entitled in the Congress.

"Within forty-five days after such election, or at such time as the Congress shall direct, the official custodian of the election returns of each State shall make distinct lists of all persons for whom votes were cast for President and the number of votes for each, and the total vote of the electors of the State for all persons for President, which

lists he shall sign and certify and transmit sealed to the seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives open all certificates and the votes shall then be counted. **Each person for whom votes were cast for President in each State shall be credited with such proportion of the electoral votes thereof as he received of the total vote of the electors therein for President.** In making the computations, fractional numbers less than one one-thousandth shall be disregarded. **The person having the greatest number of electoral votes for President shall be President.** If two or more persons shall have an equal and the highest number of such votes, then the one for whom the greatest number of popular votes were cast shall be President.

"The Vice-President shall be likewise elected, at the same time and in the same manner and subject to the same provisions, as the President, but no person constitutionally ineligible for the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

"Section 2. Paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of section 1, article II, of the Constitution and the twelfth article of amendment to the Constitution, are hereby repealed.

"Section 3. This article shall take effect on the tenth day of February following its ratification.

"Section 4. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the States within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress." [Emphasis added]

In 1969, Senator Howard Cannon (D–Nevada) introduced a variation of the 1950 Lodge-Gossett amendment when Congress intensively debated several alternative constitutional amendments, including the congressional-district method and direct popular election.

The proposed 1969 Cannon amendment differed from the 1950 Lodge-Gossett amendment in several respects.

- It required a 40% minimum plurality of the electoral votes in order to win.
- In the absence of this 40% plurality, it called for a contingent election for President and Vice President in a joint session of Congress in which each member of the House and Senate cast one vote. That is, Cannon's

proposed contingent election differed from the current system in which the House separately chooses the President (with each state's House delegation sharing one vote) and the Senate separately chooses the Vice President by majority vote.

- Because the District of Columbia had acquired electoral votes in 1961 under the 23rd Amendment, the Cannon amendment retained and incorporated the main elements of the 23rd Amendment.

The proposed 1969 Cannon amendment (Senate Joint Resolution 33 in the 91st Congress) is as follows:

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein),

That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution if ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States:

'Article—

'SECTION 1. The Executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same term, be elected as provided in this article. No person constitutionally ineligible for the office of President shall be eligible for the office of Vice President.

'SECTION 2. The President and Vice President shall be elected by the people of the several States and the District of Columbia. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislature, except that the legislature of any State may prescribe lesser qualifications with respect to residence therein. The electors of the District of Columbia shall have such qualifications as the Congress may prescribe. The places

and manner of holding such election in each State shall be prescribed by the legislature thereof, but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations. The place and manner of holding such election in the District of Columbia shall be prescribed by the Congress. The Congress shall determine the time of such election, which shall be the same throughout the United States. Until otherwise determined by the Congress, such election shall be held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November of the year preceding the year in which the regular term of the President is to begin.

'SECTION 3. Each state shall be entitled to a number of electoral votes equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which each State may be entitled in the Congress. The District of Columbia shall be entitled to a number of electoral votes equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which such District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State.

'SECTION 4. Within forty-five days after such election, or at such time as Congress shall direct, the official custodian of the election returns of each State and the District of Columbia shall make distinct lists of all persons for whom votes were cast for President and the number of votes cast for each person, and the total vote cast by the electors of the State of the District for all persons for President, which lists he shall sign and certify and transmit sealed to the seat of Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. On the 6th day of January

following the election, unless the Congress by law appoints a different day not earlier than the 4th day of January and not later than the 10th day of January, the President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all certificates and the votes shall then be counted. **Each person for whom votes were cast shall be credited with such proportion of the electoral votes thereof as he received of the total vote cast by the electors therein for President.** In making the computation, fractional numbers less than one one-thousandth shall be disregarded. **The person having the greatest aggregate number of electoral votes of the States and the District of Columbia for President shall be President, if such number be at least 40 per centum of the whole number of such electoral votes**, or if two persons have received an identical number of such electoral votes which is at least 40 per centum of the whole number of electoral votes, then from the persons having the two greatest number of such electoral votes for President, the Senate and the House of Representatives sitting in joint session shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. A majority of the votes of the combined membership of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be necessary for a choice.

'SECTION 5. The Vice President shall be likewise elected, at the same time, in the same manner, and subject to the same provisions as the President.

'SECTION 6. The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate and the House of

Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of death of any of the persons from whom the Senate and the House of Representatives may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

'SECTION 7. The following provisions of the Constitution are hereby repealed: paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4 of section 1, Article II; the twelfth article of amendment; section 4 of the twentieth article of amendment; and the twenty-third article of amendment.

'SECTION 8. This article shall take effect on the 1st day of February following its ratification, except that this article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.' " [Emphasis added]

We now analyze how the fractional proportional method (that is, the 1950 Lodge-Gossett amendment and 1969 Cannon amendment) would perform in terms of the following three criteria:

- **Accuracy:** Would the method accurately reflect the national popular vote?

- **Making Every Vote Equal:** Would the method make every vote equal?

- **Making Every Voter in Every State Politically Relevant in Every Election:** Would the method improve upon the current situation in which three out of four states and three out of four voters in the United States are ignored in the general-election campaign for President?

The fractional proportional method would not accurately reflect the national popular vote

We start by considering accuracy.

In a landslide election, almost any plausible electoral system will result in the election of the candidate who receives the most popular votes nationwide. Thus, the test of accuracy of an electoral system is how well it works in close elections.

Accordingly, we turn to the 2000 election—the closest recent presidential election.

As will be seen below, if the fractional proportional method of awarding electoral votes is applied to the 2000 election returns, Al Gore would have received *fewer* electoral votes than George W. Bush—even though Gore received 537,179 more popular votes nationwide.

In other words, George W. Bush would have been elected President under the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method of awarding electoral votes.

The table below shows the result of applying the fractional proportional method to the 2000 election returns.

- Column 2 shows the number of electoral votes (EV) for each state and the District of Columbia in 2000.
- Columns 3, 4, and 5 show, for each state and the District of Columbia, the number of popular votes received by the three leading candidates, namely Vice President Al Gore, Texas Governor George W. Bush, and Ralph Nader.[15]
- Column 6 shows, for each state, the number of electoral votes that Gore would have received if the fractional proportional method is applied to 2000 election returns. This number of electoral votes is obtained by dividing Gore's popular vote in the state by the total popular vote received by Gore, Bush, and Nader together, multiplying this quotient by the number of electoral votes possessed by the state, and rounding the result off to three decimal places.[16]
- Columns 7 and 8 show the same information for Bush and Nader.

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[15] The 13 other candidates who ran for President in 2000 (that is, were on the ballot in one or more states) received too few votes to affect the conclusions shown in this table. They included Pat Buchanan (who received 0.43% of the national popular vote), Harry Browne (who received 0.36% of the national popular vote), and the 11 remaining candidates (who together received 0.22% of the national popular vote), various write-in candidates, and votes cast in Nevada for "none of the above."

[16] It is not entirely clear what the Lodge-Gossett amendment and the Cannon amendment meant by the wording "fractional numbers less than one one-thousandth shall be *disregarded*." In making this table, we interpreted this ambiguous word to call for *rounding off* to three decimal places (as opposed to *truncated* at three decimal places).

2000 election under the fractional proportional method

State	EV	Gore (D)	Bush (R)	Nader (G)	Gore-EV	Bush-EV	Nader-EV
Alabama	9	695,602	944,409	18,349	3.775	5.125	0.100
Alaska	3	79,004	167,398	28,747	0.861	1.825	0.313
Arizona	8	685,341	781,652	45,645	3.625	4.134	0.241
Arkansas	6	422,768	472,940	13,421	2.790	3.121	0.089
California	54	5,861,203	4,567,429	418,707	29.178	22.737	2.084
Colorado	8	738,227	883,745	91,434	3.447	4.126	0.427
Connecticut	8	816,015	561,094	64,452	4.529	3.114	0.358
Delaware	3	180,068	137,288	8,307	1.659	1.265	0.077
D.C.	3	171,923	18,073	10,576	2.571	0.270	0.158
Florida	25	2,912,253	2,912,790	97,488	12.293	12.295	0.412
Georgia	13	1,116,230	1,419,720	13,432	5.692	7.240	0.068
Hawaii	4	205,286	137,845	21,623	2.251	1.512	0.237
Idaho	4	138,637	336,937	12,292	1.137	2.763	0.101
Illinois	22	2,589,026	2,019,421	103,759	12.087	9.428	0.484
Indiana	12	901,980	1,245,836	18,531	4.996	6.901	0.103
Iowa	7	638,517	634,373	29,374	3.432	3.410	0.158
Kansas	6	399,276	622,332	36,086	2.265	3.530	0.205
Kentucky	8	638,898	872,492	23,192	3.331	4.548	0.121
Louisiana	9	792,344	927,871	20,473	4.097	4.797	0.106
Maine	4	319,951	286,616	37,127	1.988	1.781	0.231
Maryland	10	1,145,782	813,797	53,768	5.691	4.042	0.267
Massachusetts	12	1,616,487	878,502	173,564	7.269	3.950	0.780
Michigan	18	2,170,418	1,953,139	84,165	9.285	8.355	0.360
Minnesota	10	1,168,266	1,109,659	126,696	4.858	4.615	0.527
Mississippi	7	404,964	573,230	8,126	2.874	4.068	0.058
Missouri	11	1,111,138	1,189,924	38,515	5.224	5.595	0.181
Montana	3	137,126	240,178	24,437	1.024	1.794	0.182
Nebraska	5	231,780	433,862	24,540	1.679	3.143	0.178
Nevada	4	279,978	301,575	15,008	1.877	2.022	0.101
New Hampshire	4	266,348	273,559	22,198	1.895	1.947	0.158
New Jersey	15	1,788,850	1,284,173	94,554	8.471	6.081	0.448
New Mexico	5	286,783	286,417	21,251	2.412	2.409	0.179
New York	33	4,107,907	2,403,374	244,060	20.067	11.741	1.192
North Carolina	14	1,257,692	1,631,163	0	6.095	7.905	0.000
North Dakota	3	95,284	174,852	9,497	1.022	1.876	0.102
Ohio	21	2,186,190	2,351,209	117,857	9.862	10.606	0.532
Oklahoma	8	474,276	744,337	0	3.114	4.886	0.000
Oregon	7	720,342	713,577	77,357	3.337	3.305	0.358
Pennsylvania	23	2,485,967	2,281,127	103,392	11.740	10.772	0.488
Rhode Island	4	249,508	130,555	25,052	2.464	1.289	0.247
South Carolina	8	566,039	786,426	20,279	3.299	4.583	0.118

South Dakota	3	118,804	190,700	0	1.152	1.848	0.000
Tennessee	11	981,720	1,061,949	19,781	5.233	5.661	0.105
Texas	32	2,433,746	3,799,639	137,994	12.223	19.084	0.693
Utah	5	203,053	515,096	35,850	1.347	3.416	0.238
Vermont	3	149,022	119,775	20,374	1.546	1.243	0.211
Virginia	13	1,217,290	1,437,490	59,398	5.830	6.885	0.284
Washington	11	1,247,652	1,108,864	103,002	5.580	4.959	0.461
West Virginia	5	295,497	336,475	10,680	2.299	2.618	0.083
Wisconsin	11	1,242,987	1,237,279	94,070	5.311	5.287	0.402
Wyoming	3	60,481	147,947	4,625	0.852	2.083	0.065
Total	**538**	**51,003,926**	**50,460,110**	**2,883,105**	**260.937**	**261.992**	**15.071**

As can be seen from the bottom line of the table, Al Gore would have received 1.055 *fewer* electoral votes than Bush even though Gore led by 537,179 popular votes nationwide. Specifically, Gore would have received 260.937 electoral votes; George W. Bush would have received 261.992 electoral votes if the fractional proportional method is applied to the 2000 election returns.

Bush would have been elected President under the terms of the 1950 Lodge-Gossett amendment because he received the greatest number of electoral votes (i.e., a plurality). Similarly, Bush would have been elected President under the terms of the 1979 Cannon amendment because he received a plurality of the electoral votes and his percentage of the votes exceeded 40%.

A number of variations on the 1979 Cannon amendment have been suggested over the years, including one with a requirement of 45%, instead of 40%.

Another variation that has been suggested would exclude the votes cast for minor-party candidates receiving less than some specified threshold of the national popular vote (say, 5%). Under this variation, Ralph Nader (who received 2.7% of the national popular vote in 2000) would have received no electoral votes (instead of the 15.071 electoral votes shown in table above).

The table below shows the results of applying the fractional proportional method with a 5% threshold to 2000 election returns. Column 2 shows Gore's popular vote percentage for each state and the District of Columbia. Columns 3 and 4 show the electoral votes (rounded off to three decimal places) that Gore and Bush would have received, respectively.

2000 election under the fractional proportional method with a 5% threshold

State	Gore percent	Gore EV	Bush EV
Alabama	42.393058%	3.815	5.185
Alaska	32.063051%	0.962	2.038
Arizona	46.717401%	3.737	4.263
Arkansas	47.199310%	2.832	3.168
California	56.202990%	30.350	23.650
Colorado	45.514080%	3.641	4.359
Connecticut	59.255658%	4.740	3.260
Delaware	56.740065%	1.702	1.298
D.C.	90.487694%	2.715	0.285
Florida	49.995391%	12.499	12.501
Georgia	44.016246%	5.722	7.278
Hawaii	59.827296%	2.393	1.607
Idaho	29.151510%	1.166	2.834
Illinois	56.180010%	12.360	9.640
Indiana	41.995217%	5.039	6.961
Iowa	50.162779%	3.511	3.489
Kansas	39.083093%	2.345	3.655
Kentucky	42.272213%	3.382	4.618
Louisiana	46.060754%	4.145	4.855
Maine	52.747842%	2.110	1.890
Maryland	58.470825%	5.847	4.153
Massachusetts	64.789344%	7.775	4.225
Michigan	52.634606%	9.474	8.526
Minnesota	51.286412%	5.129	4.871
Mississippi	41.394515%	2.898	4.102
Missouri	48.288051%	5.312	5.688
Montana	36.343638%	1.090	1.910
Nebraska	34.820519%	1.741	3.259
Nevada	48.143162%	1.926	2.074
New Hampshire	49.332200%	1.973	2.027
New Jersey	58.211409%	8.732	6.268
New Mexico	50.031926%	2.502	2.498
New York	63.087885%	20.819	12.181
North Carolina	43.536003%	6.095	7.905
North Dakota	35.272603%	1.058	1.942
Ohio	48.181568%	10.118	10.882
Oklahoma	38.919329%	3.114	4.886
Oregon	50.235892%	3.517	3.483
Pennsylvania	52.148479%	11.994	11.006
Rhode Island	65.649116%	2.626	1.374

South Carolina	41.846973%	3.348	4.652
South Dakota	38.385287%	1.152	1.848
Tennessee	48.037133%	5.284	5.716
Texas	39.043730%	12.494	19.506
Utah	28.274495%	1.414	3.586
Vermont	55.440351%	1.663	1.337
Virginia	45.852764%	5.961	7.039
Washington	52.944771%	5.824	5.176
West Virginia	46.757926%	2.338	2.662
Wisconsin	50.115068%	5.513	5.487
Wyoming	29.017694%	0.871	2.129
Total	**50.268045%**	**268.766**	**269.234**

As can be seen in the table, even if minor-party candidates such as Nader are squeezed out by imposing a 5% threshold, Al Gore would still have received *fewer* electoral votes than George W. Bush—even though Gore received 537,179 more popular votes nationwide than Bush. Specifically, Gore would have received only 268.766 electoral votes, whereas George W. Bush would have received 269.234 electoral votes.

In other words—with or without a 5% threshold—George W. Bush would have been elected President under the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method of awarding electoral votes.

Another way that has been suggested to squeeze out minor-party candidates under the fractional proportional method would be to award electoral votes only to the top two candidates nationwide. Kevin Johnson of the Election Reformers Network has advocated a variation of the Lodge-Gossett amendment that would "limit the proportional allocation to the top two vote-getters nationwide."[17]

In any event, whether the votes for minor-party candidates were included or excluded, when the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method is applied to the results of the 2000 election, the candidate receiving the most popular votes nationwide would not have become President.

About half of American presidential elections have been landslides (that is, elections with a margin of 10% or more in the national popular vote). Although landslide presidential elections were common in the 20th Century, the country currently appears to be in an era of consecutive relatively close presidential elections. In the eight presidential elections between 1992 and 2020, the margin of victory for the national popular vote winner has been modest—suggesting that the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method would have a substantial likelihood of giving the Presidency to a candidate who did not receive the most popular votes.

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[17] Johnson, Kevin. 2020. Bloc voting is a bigger problem than electors going rogue. Here's a fix. *The Fulcrum*. July 10, 2020.

The fractional proportional method would not make every vote equal

Voters would not have equal weight under the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method.

There are four built-in sources of inequality inherent in the fractional proportional method.

Each of these inequalities is substantial. In fact, each of these inequalities is, separately, considerably larger than the inequalities that the courts have found to be constitutionally tolerable when reviewing the fairness of redistricting.[18]

These inequalities arise from the

- **the two senatorial electoral votes** that each state receives above and beyond the number to which it would be entitled based on its population;
- **the process of apportioning U.S. House seats** among the states,
- **voter turnout differences** among the states, and
- **population changes during the 10-year period after each census**.

Depending on the state, these inequalities amount to as much as

- 3.6-to-one inequality because of the two senatorial electoral votes that each state receives above and beyond the number warranted by its population,
- 1.75-to-1 inequality because of the process of apportioning U.S. House seats among the states.
- 1.68-to-1 inequality because of voter turnout differences statewide, and
- 1.27-to-1 inequality because of population changes during the decade after each census.

We now consider these four inequalities one-by-one.

Inequalities because of the two senatorial electoral votes

First, under the fractional proportional method, a vote cast in a large state has less weight than a vote cast in a small state because of the two senatorial electoral votes that each state receives above and beyond the number warranted by the state's population.

For example, Wyoming (with a population of 568,300 according to the 2010 census) had three electoral votes in the 2012, 2016, and 2020 presidential elections, whereas California (population 37,341,989) had 55 electoral votes.

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[18] Because the fractional proportional method must necessarily be enacted in the form of a federal constitutional amendment, these four inequalities would be constitutionally entrenched, and therefore beyond judicial challenge.

The figure below shows the number of persons-per-electoral-vote in the 2012, 2016, and 2020 elections.[19]
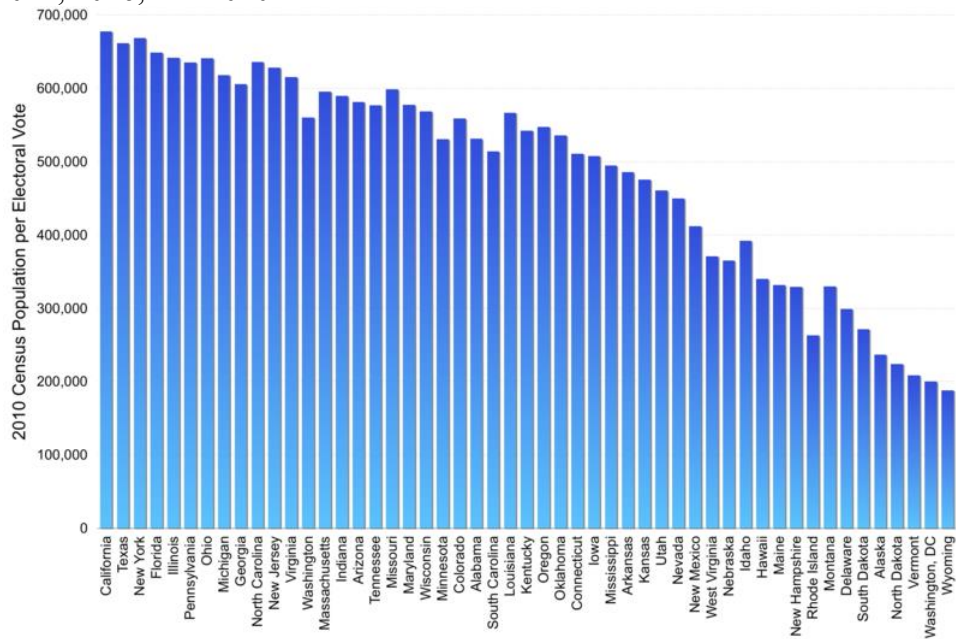
Persons per electoral votes

In the table below:

- column 2 shows the population of each state (2010 census);
- column 3 shows the state's number of electoral votes in the 2012, 2016, and 2020 elections;
- column 4 shows the number of people per electoral vote for each state; and
- column 5 shows the ratio of the number of persons-per-electoral-vote for each state compared to the number of persons-per-electoral-vote for the nation's smallest state (Wyoming). For example, the ratio of California's population per electoral vote to that of Wyoming is 3.6-to-1.

The table is sorted from the state with highest ratio (California) down to the state with the lowest ratio, namely 1.0 for Wyoming.

Ratio of number of persons-per-electoral-vote compared to nation's smallest state

State	Population	Electoral votes	Population per EV	Comparison to smallest state
California	37,341,989	55	678,945	3.6
New York	19,421,055	29	669,692	3.5
Texas	25,268,418	38	664,958	3.5
Florida	18,900,773	29	651,751	3.4
Illinois	12,864,380	20	643,219	3.4
Ohio	11,568,495	18	642,694	3.4
North Carolina	9,565,781	15	637,719	3.4
Pennsylvania	12,734,905	20	636,745	3.4
New Jersey	8,807,501	14	629,107	3.3
Michigan	9,911,626	16	619,477	3.3
Virginia	8,037,736	13	618,287	3.3
Georgia	9,727,566	16	607,973	3.2
Missouri	6,011,478	10	601,148	3.2
Massachusetts	6,559,644	11	596,331	3.1
Indiana	6,501,582	11	591,053	3.1
Arizona	6,412,700	11	582,973	3.1
Tennessee	6,375,431	11	579,585	3.1
Maryland	5,789,929	10	578,993	3.1
Wisconsin	5,698,230	10	569,823	3.0
Louisiana	4,553,962	8	569,245	3.0
Washington	6,753,369	12	562,781	3.0
Colorado	5,044,930	9	560,548	3.0
Oregon	3,848,606	7	549,801	2.9
Kentucky	4,350,606	8	543,826	2.9
Oklahoma	3,764,882	7	537,840	2.8
Alabama	4,802,982	9	533,665	2.8
Minnesota	5,314,879	10	531,488	2.8
South Carolina	4,645,975	9	516,219	2.7
Connecticut	3,581,628	7	511,661	2.7
Iowa	3,053,787	6	508,965	2.7
Mississippi	2,978,240	6	496,373	2.6
Arkansas	2,926,229	6	487,705	2.6
Kansas	2,863,813	6	477,302	2.5
Utah	2,770,765	6	461,794	2.4
Nevada	2,709,432	6	451,572	2.4
New Mexico	2,067,273	5	413,455	2.2
Idaho	1,573,499	4	393,375	2.1
West Virginia	1,859,815	5	371,963	2.0
Nebraska	1,831,825	5	366,365	1.9
Hawaii	1,366,862	4	341,716	1.8
Maine	1,333,074	4	333,269	1.8
Montana	994,416	3	331,472	1.7
New Hampshire	1,321,445	4	330,361	1.7
Delaware	900,877	3	300,292	1.6
South Dakota	819,761	3	273,254	1.4
Rhode Island	1,055,247	4	263,812	1.4
Alaska	721,523	3	240,508	1.3
North Dakota	675,905	3	225,302	1.2
Vermont	630,337	3	210,112	1.1
District of Columbia	601,723	3	200,574	1.1
Wyoming	568,300	3	189,433	1.0
Total	**309,785,186**	**538**	**575,809**	

The small states' advantage in the weight of a vote is only an *apparent* arithmetic advantage because almost all of the small states are one-party states in presidential elections. Thus, although a state such as Wyoming has this apparent 3.6-to-1 arithmetic advantage because of the senatorial electors, it actually has no political advantage because the current state-by-state winner-take-all system negates the influence of all non-battleground states.

However, the fractional proportional method would not negate the influence of non-battleground states. The voter's 3.6-to-1 advantage would become real.

Thus, the political effect of the fractional proportional method would be to substantially enhance the influence of small states (which, of course, already have out-sized influence over federal legislation because of the composition of the U.S. Senate).

Inequalities because of the process of apportioning U.S. House seats

Second, because of inequalities inherent in the process of apportioning U.S. House seats among the states, a vote cast in many states can have considerably less weight under the fractional proportional method than a vote cast in another state with the same number of electoral votes.

There are many combinations of states which illustrate this inequality.

Consider, for example, the seven states and the District of Columbia—each of which has three electoral votes.

Column 3 of table below shows the population (2010 census) that corresponds to one electoral vote for each state with three electoral votes in the 2012, 2016, and 2020 presidential elections. Column 4 shows the ratio of each state's population per electoral vote to Wyoming's population per electoral vote (189,433).

Comparison of weight of a popular vote cast in states with three electoral votes

State	Population	Population corresponding by one electoral vote	Comparison to lowest
Montana	994,416	331,472	1.75
Delaware	900,877	300,292	1.59
South Dakota	819,761	273,254	1.44
Alaska	721,523	240,508	1.27
North Dakota	675,905	225,302	1.19
Vermont	630,337	210,112	1.11
District of Columbia	601,723	200,574	1.06
Wyoming	568,300	189,433	1.00

As can be seen from the table, one electoral vote corresponds to 331,472 people in Montana, but only 189,433 in Wyoming—a 1.75-to-1 variation in the value of a vote under the fractional proportional method.

There are lesser (but still considerable) disparities in the value of a vote for each of the other six states in the table.

Similar disparities exist among numerous other groups of states.

Inequalities because of differences in voter turnout between states

Third, a voter in a low-turnout state has a greater voting power under the fractional proportional method than a voter in a high-turnout state.

The table below shows the percent of the population of each state that voted in the November 2018[20] mid-term elections using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.[21] The table is sorted from the highest percentage (52%) to lowest percentage (31%).

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[20] In presidential election years, voter turnout varies significantly depending on whether a state is a closely divided battleground state because of the current state-by-state winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes. Therefore, we use data from a midterm election in order to compare voter turnout between states.

[21] U.S. Census Bureau. *Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2018*. April 2019. table 4a. https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/p20-583.html There are, of course, numerous different ways to compute voter turnout. Nonetheless, each of these alternative calculations demonstrates considerable variation in voter turnout from state to state. The calculation in the table here is based on the state's population compared to the number of people who voted in that state. Alternatively, voter turnout can also be computed based on actual census data on voting-age population, estimates of citizens of voting age in each state, or number of registered voters. The spreadsheet cited above contains data for computing turnout in these three other ways.

Percent of population that voted in 2018

State	Population 2010	Total voters (thousands)	Percent of population that voted
Montana	994,416	518	52%
District of Columbia	601,723	313	52%
Maine	1,333,074	693	52%
Oregon	3,848,606	1,918	50%
North Dakota	675,905	335	50%
Wisconsin	5,698,230	2,776	49%
Washington	6,753,369	3,234	48%
Minnesota	5,314,879	2,523	47%
Colorado	5,044,930	2,342	46%
Michigan	9,911,626	4,418	45%
Utah	2,770,765	1,214	44%
Iowa	3,053,787	1,335	44%
Arizona	6,412,700	2,800	44%
New Hampshire	1,321,445	576	44%
Vermont	630,337	273	43%
Georgia	9,727,566	4,084	42%
Florida	18,900,773	7,918	42%
Missouri	6,011,478	2,509	42%
Massachusetts	6,559,644	2,731	42%
Virginia	8,037,736	3,319	41%
Delaware	900,877	369	41%
North Carolina	9,565,781	3,899	41%
Pennsylvania	12,734,905	5,173	41%
South Dakota	819,761	331	40%
Kansas	2,863,813	1,152	40%
Kentucky	4,350,606	1,746	40%
Maryland	5,789,929	2,320	40%
Mississippi	2,978,240	1,180	40%
South Carolina	4,645,975	1,836	40%
Ohio	11,568,495	4,538	39%
Tennessee	6,375,431	2,487	39%
Wyoming	568,300	220	39%
New Jersey	8,807,501	3,384	38%
Connecticut	3,581,628	1,370	38%
Rhode Island	1,055,247	403	38%
Alabama	4,802,982	1,830	38%
Idaho	1,573,499	587	37%
Nevada	2,709,432	1,006	37%
Nebraska	1,831,825	676	37%
Illinois	12,864,380	4,740	37%
Alaska	721,523	263	36%
Louisiana	4,553,962	1,656	36%
Indiana	6,501,582	2,364	36%
Oklahoma	3,764,882	1,350	36%
California	37,341,989	13,240	35%
Texas	25,268,418	8,886	35%
New York	19,421,055	6,775	35%
New Mexico	2,067,273	715	35%
West Virginia	1,859,815	610	33%
Arkansas	2,926,229	919	31%
Hawaii	1,366,862	427	31%
Total	**309,785,186**	**122,281**	**39%**

As can be seen from the table, the ratio of the highest to lowest percentage is 1.67-to-1.

It is unclear what the justification would be to magnify the value of an individual's vote if fellow citizens in the state are apathetic.

Inequalities because of population changes during the decade after each census

Fourth, another source of variation in the value of a vote under the fractional proportional method arises from the fact that state populations change at different rates during the decade after each census. This inequality is generally relatively small for a presidential election held in the second year of a decade. It becomes particularly large when a presidential election coincides with the end of a decade—such as 2000 and 2020. In those years, the election is held using an allocation of electoral votes that is based on 10-year-old population data.

For example, the 1992, 1996, and 2000 presidential elections were conducted under the apportionment based on the 1990 census.

There are many combinations of states that illustrate this inequality.

Consider, for example, the four states that had five electoral votes in the 1992, 1996, and 2000 presidential elections.

The 2000 census was taken in the spring of 2000, but was not applicable to the November 2000 election.

As can be seen, Utah, a fast-growing state, had 510,319 more people in 2000 than it did in 1990.

New Mexico grew by over 200,000 and Nebraska grew by over 100,000 during the 1990s.

In contrast, West Virginia barely grew during the period, and had only 14,867 more people in 2000 than in 1990.

Because of the considerable time lag before electoral votes are redistributed, Utah, New Mexico, and Nebraska all had the same number of electoral votes as West Virginia in the 2000 presidential election.

In the table below:
- Column 2 shows the population of each state according to the 1990 census, and column 3 shows the population according to the 2000 census.[22]
- Column 4 shows the number of popular votes cast in the 2000 presidential election in the four states with five electoral votes at the time (Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and West Virginia).

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[22] Note that the census count in the spring of 2000 closely approximates a state's population at the time of the election in November.

- Column 5 shows the number of popular votes corresponding to one electoral vote.
- Column 6 shows the ratio of the number of votes representing one electoral vote in each state to that of the lowest in the table (New Mexico).

Comparison of weight of a popular vote cast in four states with five electoral votes

State	1990 population	2000 population	Votes cast in 2000 presidential election	Popular votes corresponding to one electoral vote in 2000	Comparison to lowest
Utah	1,722,850	2,233,169	753,999	150,800	1.27
Nebraska	1,578,385	1,711,263	690,182	138,036	1.16
West Virginia	1,793,477	1,808,344	642,652	128,530	1.08
New Mexico	1,515,069	1,819,046	594,451	118,890	1.00

As can be seen in column 5 of the table, one electoral vote corresponds to 118,890 popular votes in New Mexico but to 150,800 popular votes in Utah—a 1.27-to-1 variation.

The fractional proportional method would make every voter in every state politically relevant

In his testimony in 1949, Texas Representative Gossett observed:

> "The electoral college confines and largely restricts national campaigns to a half-dozen pivotal States. The national campaign committees and the political strategists of both parties sit down with a map of the Nation and decide where to do their work and where to spend their money."[23]

He added:

> "Most of our citizens outside of the great pivotal States never see a Presidential candidate or a campaign speaker, and never hear a campaign speech except by radio. Neither the platforms nor the speeches are designed to appeal to them. Furthermore, millions in these areas refrain from voting in general elections, knowing that to do so is futile, since their votes will have no bearing on results."[24]

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[23] Hearings before Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States House of Representatives, 81st Congress, 1949. Page 11. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pst.000045412301&view=1up&seq=21

[24] Hearings before Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States House of Representatives, 81st Congress, 1949. Page 18. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pst.000045412301&view=1up&seq=21

The Lodge-Gossett amendment (and 1969 Cannon amendment) would, in fact, address this problem. by calling for the calculation of fractional electoral votes to be carried out to three decimal places.

For example, in California, the nation's largest state in 2016, 0.001 electoral vote would correspond to about 240 popular votes (based on the number of votes cast in California in 2016). Thus, a candidate could earn an additional 0.001 electoral vote by winning 240 additional popular votes in California under the fractional proportional method. This number, 240, is miniscule in relation to the 137,125,484 popular votes cast in the 2016 election.

In the nation's smallest state (Wyoming), a candidate could earn an additional 0.001 electoral vote by winning about 77 additional popular votes.

Looking at the country as a whole, a candidate could earn an additional 0.001 electoral vote by winning somewhere between 77 and 240 popular votes.

Thus, for all practical purposes, every voter in every state would be politically relevant under the fractional proportional method, and candidates would have good reason to campaign in every state.

Note that if the calculation of fractional electoral votes were slightly modified by carrying out the calculation to *six* decimal places (instead of three), then a candidate could earn at least an additional 0.000001 electoral vote in *every* state by winning a *single* additional popular vote—thereby eliminating the qualification of "for all practical purposes" in the preceding statement.

With this slight adjustment, one could say that the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method would definitely improve upon the current state-by-state winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes in which three out of four states and three out of four voters the United States are ignored in the general-election campaign for President.

Political prospects for fractional proportional method (Lodge-Gossett)
The fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method would satisfy *only one of the three criteria* discussed in this section.

The most conspicuous shortcoming of the current system from the point-of-view of the general public is that the second-place candidate can become President. If the fractional proportional method had been applied to the results of the 2000 presidential election, it would not have prevented this outcome.

Moreover, the fractional proportional method would constitutionally entrench four different sources of inequality in the weight of a vote. In particular, it would constitutionally entrench not just the *apparent* advantage conferred on the small states by the senatorial electors, it convert this into an *actual* political advantage.

It is true that the fractional proportional method would, for all practical purposes, make every voter in every state politically relevant every in presidential elections and thereby give candidates good reason to solicit the votes of every voter in every state in every election.

However, given that approval of a federal constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds super-majority in both houses of Congress and a three-quarters super-majority of the states, it seems unlikely that this one benefit would generate sufficient political appetite to result in approval for the fractional proportional method.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the fractional proportional (Lodge-Gossett) method

- *would not* accurately reflect the nationwide popular vote;
- *would not* make every vote equal; but
- *would* improve upon the current upon the current state-by-state winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes in which three out of four states and three out of four voters in the United States are ignored in the general-election campaign for President.