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Subject: As if we could pretend this wouldn't come around...

Posted by [Fabian](#) on Wed, 05 Jan 2005 22:52:56 GMT

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Keep in mind that I'm not trying to be hostile, I'm just presenting MY opinion as to why the Electoral College is a bad system.

An essay I had to write a long time ago:

America was founded on the notion that power should not rest in the elite, but that it should be held by the masses. The Government should have the consent from its people, and this consent comes from majority rule. With these ideas in mind, our country set forth into its experiment with democracy. Given the initial fragmented nature of the young nation, it fared relatively well.

It was decided, however, that the selection of our president would be conducted with an indirect election. While this wasn't a democracy per se, it was the best our country could do given the massive shortcomings of communications technology of that era. There were no radios, no televisions, and no national newspapers (in fact, most people were illiterate). The idea of "an

candidate on a national level would have been quite an undertaking. The Electoral College was a way of making this process more practical by allowing the counting to be done on a state level. It was also a way to keep the states unified (something that wasn't a guarantee at the time) so each could have a say in who would be the president. The Electoral College made sense at the time, even if it didn't maintain pure democratic ideals.

Times have changed though. We can travel to any point in the United States in hours, not weeks. We can send information to billions of people in under a second. We are now fully capable of holding a direct election for the United States presidency. We're more than ready to move beyond the outdated Electoral College, and embrace direct elections like we already do for so many other state and local positions. If Afghanistan can do it, so can we.

An indirect election is not a true democracy. The Government needs to have the consent of the people to rule as stated in our Constitution, but the Electoral College can create a situation where a president finds himself in power, but the majority of the nation did not vote him in there. In fact, this has happened four times in our nation's history. In electing a leader, one person's vote is not the same as someone from a different state. Yet, all US citizens are supposed to have an equal say. Something is amiss here.

Take as an example, a state with twenty electoral points and a voter population of ten million. Now, say 5,000,001 people vote for one candidate and 4,999,999 people vote for the other. Because of the way the Electoral College works, this state could very well turn the election even though it was a tie for all intents and purposes. Those 4,999,999 votes for the other guy are

toward one person. Not only is this counter-intuitive to a democratic mindset, it's needlessly complicated and illogical in this day and age. A possible solution would be to divvy out the electoral points in proportion to the percent the candidate won by (if someone gets 70% of the votes, they get 70% of the twenty points), but this would be a complicated version of a regular direct election, so why not go for the real deal? Another option is to make it so the winner of that

state gets his 70%, but instead of the opponent getting 30%, they get nothing. But again, this is just needlessly complicated, and is only another substitute for a direct election.

Additionally, electors have been known to vote for a candidate other than the one they pledged to vote for. Most recently, Reagan lost an electoral point and Nixon lost one twice thanks to these so out the middleman and just let the people speak?

The number of state representatives (which is based on the state's population) plus the number of state senators determine the number of electoral points any state is granted. Any state needs at least one representative, which means that any state will have a minimum of three

should be based on population. Voters in a state with a small population have more power than they deserve since they are guaranteed at least three electoral points.

Additionally, in the case of a tie under the Electoral College, the vote is thrown to the House. Having a very select and elite few decide an incredibly major part of our nation's future regardless of what the people want sounds a lot more like an oligarchy than a democracy.

As a Massachusetts resident, my vote is not worth the same as a resident in California or Rhode Island, for example. That's just not fair, period. America is old enough to graduate to a truer form of democracy.

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