A photograph of the White House in Washington, D.C., viewed from a distance. The building is white with a prominent portico supported by columns. An American flag flies on a tall pole in front of the building. The foreground is a large, well-maintained green lawn with a row of colorful flowers (red, purple, and blue) in the distance. The sky is blue with some white clouds. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is overlaid on the image, containing the text.

Presidency 2012

An Electoral College Road Map to the White House

Ron Nehring

Road to the White House

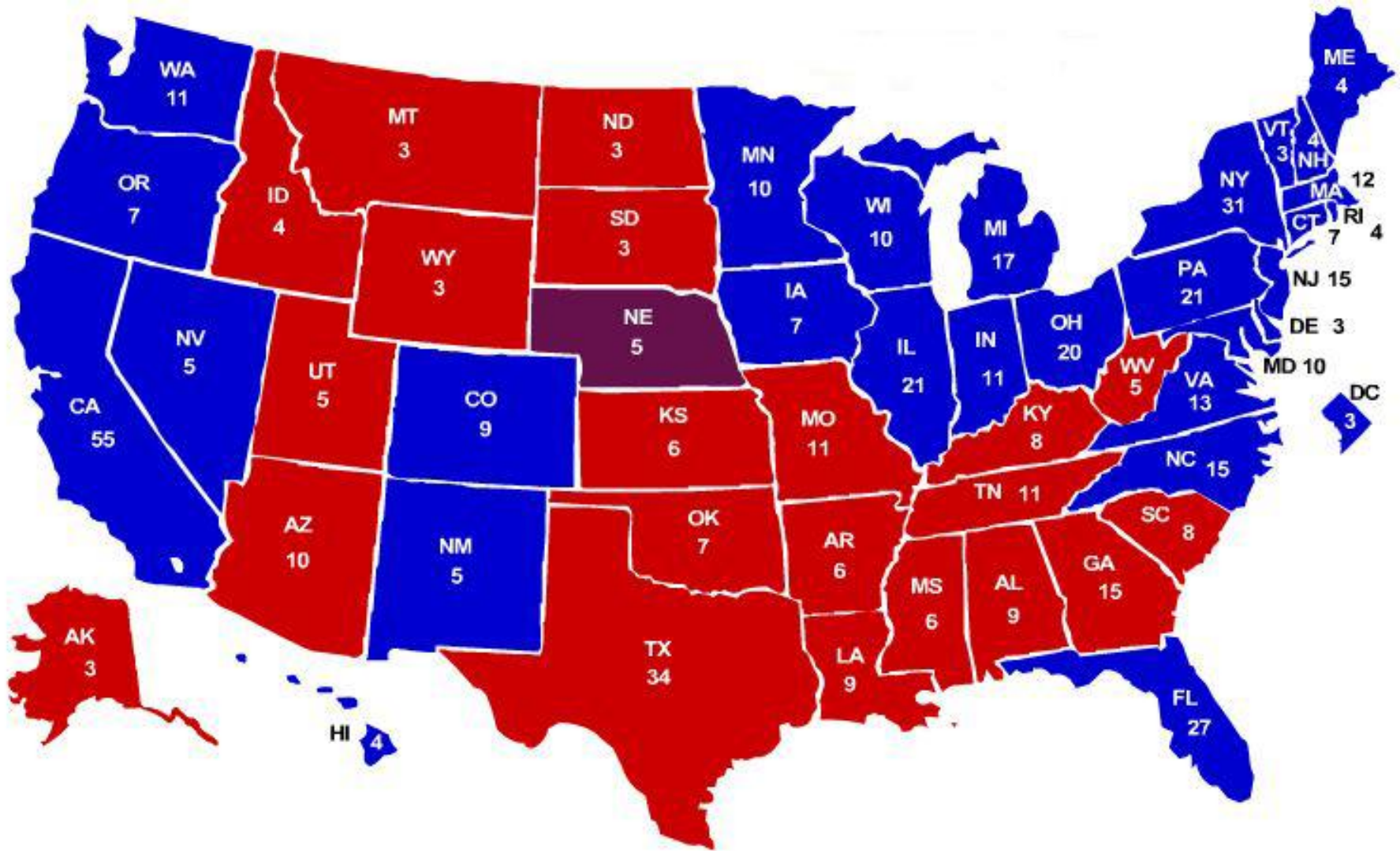


- Presidential candidates need 270 votes in the Electoral College to win. (538 total electors)
- Today's presentation: Historical election results by state, plus potential scenarios for Barack Obama and the Republican nominee for victory in 2012.



2008 Presidential Election Results

Barack Obama (D): 365 John McCain (R): 173





Starting point:

What if Barack Obama won the same states in 2012 as in 2008?

Republican nominee
180 votes

AK, AL, AR, AZ, GA, ID, KS, KY, LA, MO, MS, MT, ND, NE,
NE, OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY

Barack Obama (D)
358 votes

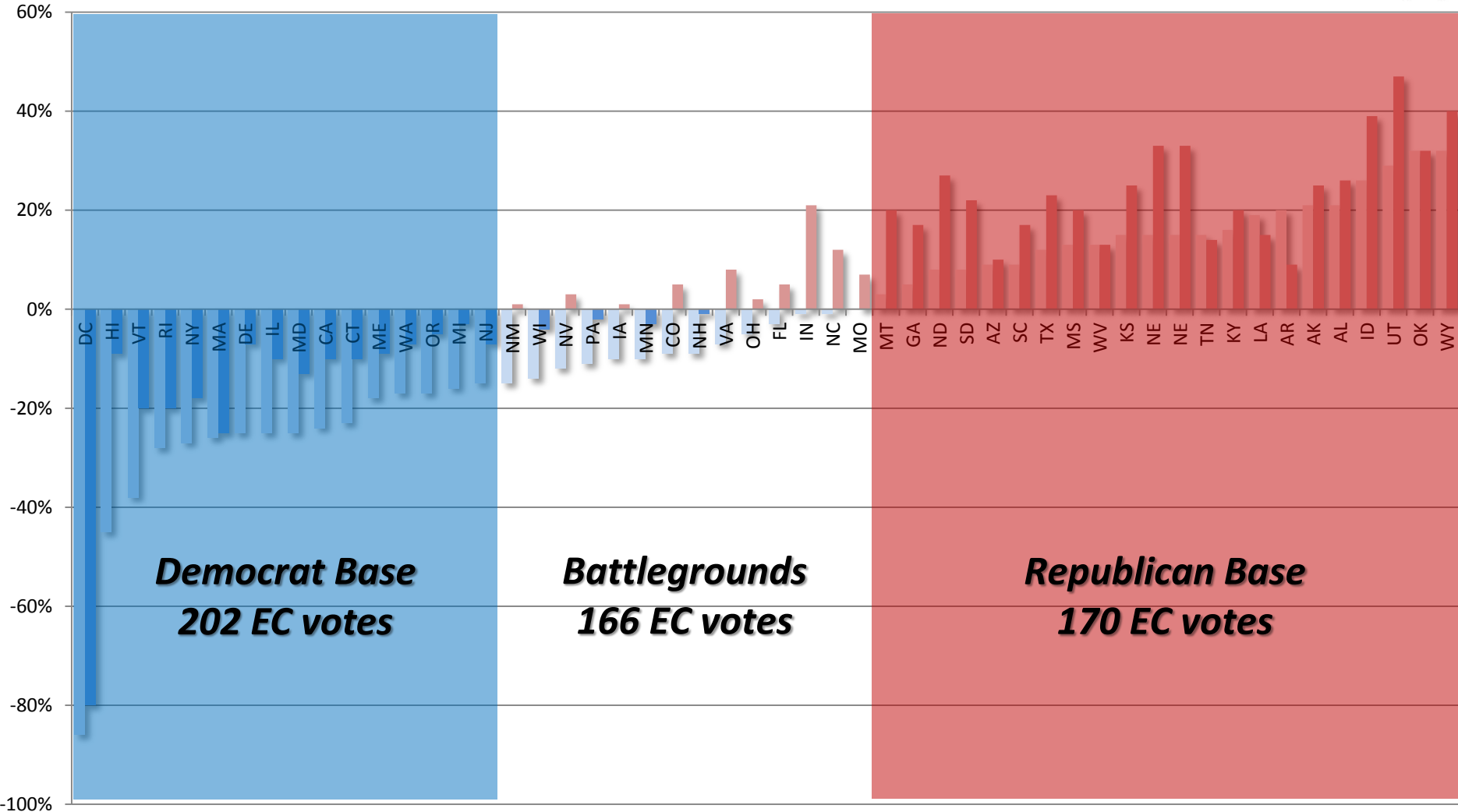
CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, HI, IA, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, MI,
MN, NC, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, VA, VT, WA,
WI

- *Republicans must add **90** Electoral College votes to the states won by McCain in 2008 to win in 2012. McCain picked up no Kerry 2004 states in 2008.*
- *2010 reapportionment shifted 6 votes to Bush/McCain states from Obama states.*

State Performance in 2008 and 2004 Presidential Elections

GOP Candidate Margin of Victory/Defeat by State

Positive margin = GOP victory, First bar = 2008, Second bar = 2004



Democrat Base
202 EC votes

Battlegrounds
166 EC votes

Republican Base
170 EC votes

270 Electoral College votes needed to win the Presidency



Republican base

170 EC votes in 21 states

AK, AL, AR, AZ, GA, ID, KS, KY, LA, MS, MT, ND, NE,
OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY

Democrat base

202 EC votes in 16 states

CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, MA, MD, ME, MI, NJ, NY, OR,
RI, VT, WA

Battleground

166 EC votes in 14 states

CO, FL, IA, IN, MN, MO, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, PA, VA,
WI

2012 Battleground States

GOP needs 100 of 166 votes from this group, plus all base states, to reach 270



Northeast

New Hampshire
Pennsylvania

Midwest

Iowa	Missouri
Indiana	Ohio
Minnesota	Wisconsin

West

Colorado
New Mexico
Nevada

South

Florida
North Carolina
Virginia



2012 Battleground States: Northeast

New Hampshire (4)

Closely divided state voted for Kerry from nearby MA in 2004, Bush won by 1% in 2000.



Pennsylvania (20)

State has voted for Democrats for President in each election since 1988, but Bush only lost it by 2% in 2004.





2012 Battleground States: Midwest

Iowa (6)

Competitive state, usually votes Democrat since 1988 but Bush won by 1% in 2004 and lost by 1% in 2000.



Indiana (11)

Obama won this reliably Republican state by 1% in 2008. Bush won by 21% in 2004.



Minnesota (10)

Voted for Dems since 1976, but Bush only lost by 3 in 2004.





2012 Battleground States: Midwest

Missouri (10)

Competitive state, Bush won in 2000, 2004. McCain won by <1%.



Ohio (18)

Clinton won both times, as did Bush. Obama won by 5%.



Wisconsin (10)

Voted for Dems since 1988, but Bush lost by under 1% in 2000.





2012 Battleground States: West

Colorado (9)

Voted Republican since 1972 except 1992 and 2008.



New Mexico (5)

Obama won big, but Bush carried it by 1% in 2004.



Nevada (6)

Bush carried it both times. Obama won by 12%, but his attacks on Las Vegas have not helped his standing.





2012 Battleground States: South

Florida (29)

Usually votes Republican, but Clinton won it (96) and Obama took it by just 3%.



North Carolina (15)

Obama was the first Democrat to win here since 1976, but only by 1%



Virginia (13)

Usually Republican, Obama won here by 7%, largely due to liberal Northern Virginia.



2012 Battleground States

GOP needs 100 of 166 votes from this group, plus all base states, to reach 270



		2008	2008	2008	2004	2004	2004	Change in
	<u>ECV</u>	<u>McCain</u>	<u>Obama</u>	<u>Margin</u>	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Kerry</u>	<u>Margin</u>	<u>Margin</u>
CO	9	45%	54%	-9%	52%	47%	5%	-14%
FL	29	48%	51%	-3%	52%	47%	5%	-8%
IA	6	44%	54%	-10%	50%	49%	1%	-11%
IN	11	49%	50%	-1%	60%	39%	21%	-22%
MN	10	44%	54%	-10%	48%	51%	-3%	-7%
MO	10	49%	49%	0%	53%	46%	7%	-7%
NC	15	49%	50%	-1%	56%	44%	12%	-13%
NH	4	45%	54%	-9%	49%	50%	-1%	-8%
NM	5	42%	57%	-15%	50%	49%	1%	-16%
NV	6	43%	55%	-12%	51%	48%	3%	-15%
OH	18	47%	52%	-5%	51%	49%	2%	-7%
PA	20	44%	55%	-11%	49%	51%	-2%	-9%
VA	13	46%	53%	-7%	54%	46%	8%	-15%
WI	10	42%	56%	-14%	45%	49%	-4%	-10%



Six Scenarios

The following scenarios present alternatives based on across-the-board improvements in Republican performance compared to 2008, plus several state-specific possibilities.



Scenario #1:

All base states hold for respective party.

Battleground states w/ Obama margin $\leq 5\%$ go to GOP

Republican base
170 EC votes

AK, AL, AR, AZ, GA, ID, KS, KY, LA, MS, MT, ND, NE, NE,
OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY

Democrat base
202 EC votes

CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, MA, MD, ME, MI, NJ, NY, OR, RI, VT,
WA

Battleground
166 EC votes

GOP:
FL, IN, MO, NC, OH

83 votes

OBAMA:
CO, IA, MN, NH, NM,
NV, PA, VA, WI
83 votes

Result: Obama: 285 (WINNER), GOP: 253



Scenario #2:

All base states hold for respective party.

Battleground states w/ Obama margin $\leq 7\%$ go to GOP

Republican base

170 EC votes

AK, AL, AR, AZ, GA, ID, KS, KY, LA, MS, MT, ND, NE, NE,
OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY

Democrat base

202 EC votes

CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, MA, MD, ME, MI, NJ, NY, OR, RI, VT,
WA

Battleground

166 EC votes

GOP:

FL, IN, MO, NC, OH,
VA

96 votes

OBAMA:

CO, IA, MN, NH, NM,
NV, PA, WI

70 votes

Result: Obama: 272 (WINNER), GOP: 266

Scenario #3:

All base states hold for respective party.

Battleground states w/ Obama '08 margin $\leq 10\%$ to GOP,
except MN and OH



Republican base
170 EC votes

AK, AL, AR, AZ, GA, ID, KS, KY, LA, MS, MT, ND, NE, NE,
OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY

Democrat base
202 EC votes

CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, MA, MD, ME, MI, NJ, NY, OR, RI, VT,
WA

Battleground
166 EC votes

GOP:
CO, FL, IA, IN, MO,
NC, NH, VA
97 votes

OBAMA:
MN, NM, NV, OH,
PA, WI
69 votes

Result: Obama (WINNER): 271, GOP: 267

Scenario #4:

All base states hold for respective party.

Battleground states w/ Obama '08 margin $\leq 10\%$ to GOP, except MN and OH. Nevada to GOP.



Republican base
170 EC votes

AK, AL, AR, AZ, GA, ID, KS, KY, LA, MS, MT, ND, NE, NE,
OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY

Democrat base
202 EC votes

CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, MA, MD, ME, MI, NJ, NY, OR, RI, VT,
WA

Battleground
166 EC votes

GOP:
CO, FL, IA, IN, MO,
NC, NH, VA
103 votes

OBAMA:
MN, NM, NV, OH,
PA, WI
63 votes

Result: Obama 265, *GOP (WINNER): 273*



Scenario #5:

All base states hold for respective party.

Battleground states w/ Obama margin $\leq 10\%$ go to GOP

Republican base
170 EC votes

AK, AL, AR, AZ, GA, ID, KS, KY, LA, MS, MT, ND, NE, NE,
OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY

Democrat base
202 EC votes

CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, MA, MD, ME, MI, NJ, NY, OR, RI, VT,
WA

Battleground
166 EC votes

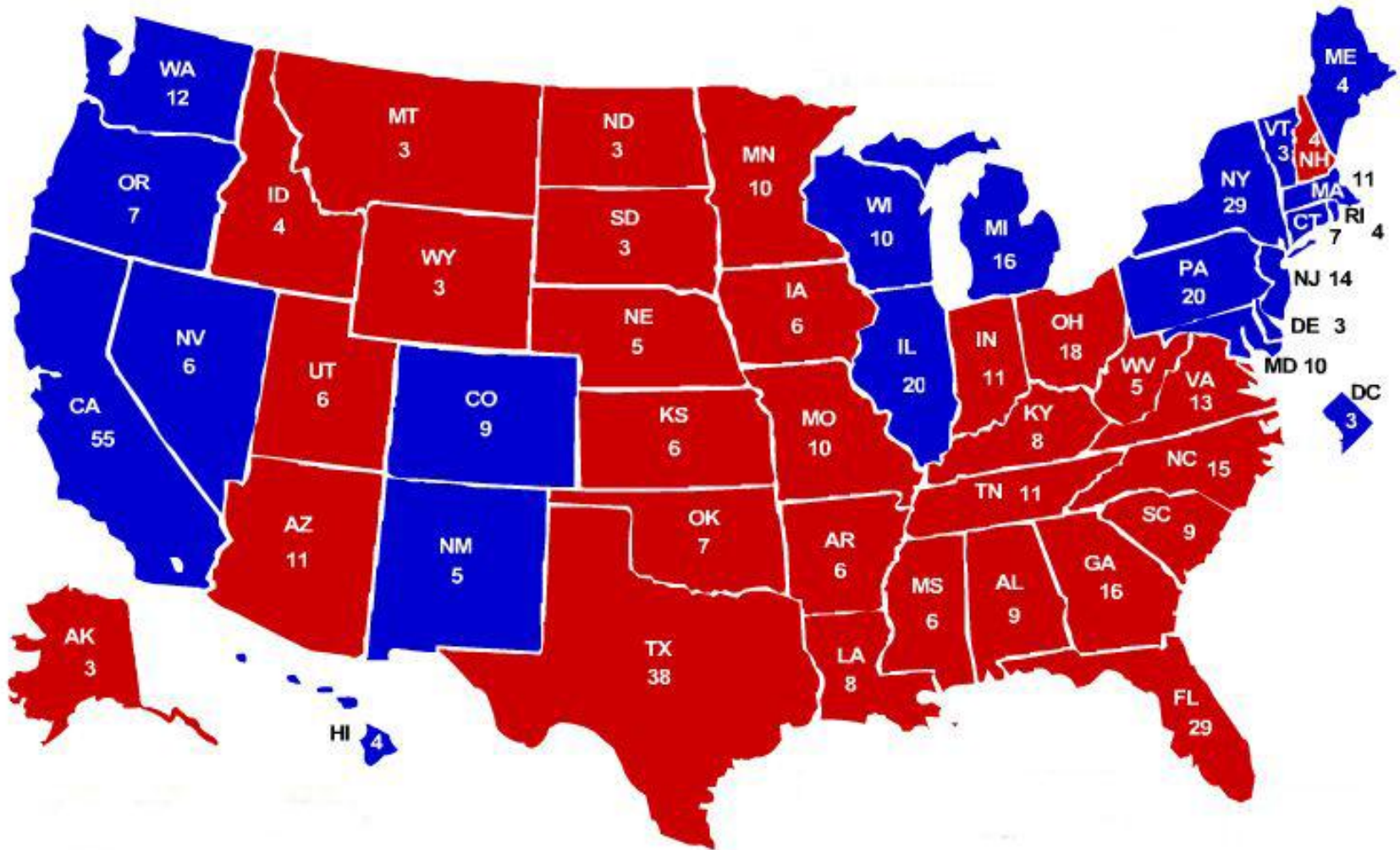
GOP:
FL, IA, IN, MN, MO,
NC, NH, OH, VA
116 votes

OBAMA:
CO, NM, NV, PA, WI
50 votes

Result: Obama: 252, *GOP (WINNER): 286*

2012 Presidential Election Scenario #5

Scenario: Base states hold, GOP picks up battleground states with Obama 2008 margin $\leq 10\%$. **Barack Obama (D): 252** **GOP (R): 286**





Factors That May Put a State in Play in 2012

Home state/region

Barack Obama won his home state of Hawaii by an additional 36% compared to Kerry in 2004.

Issues

Coal helped put West Virginia in play in 2000. Clinton had won the state in 1996 by 15%, but Bush won it in 2000 by 6%.

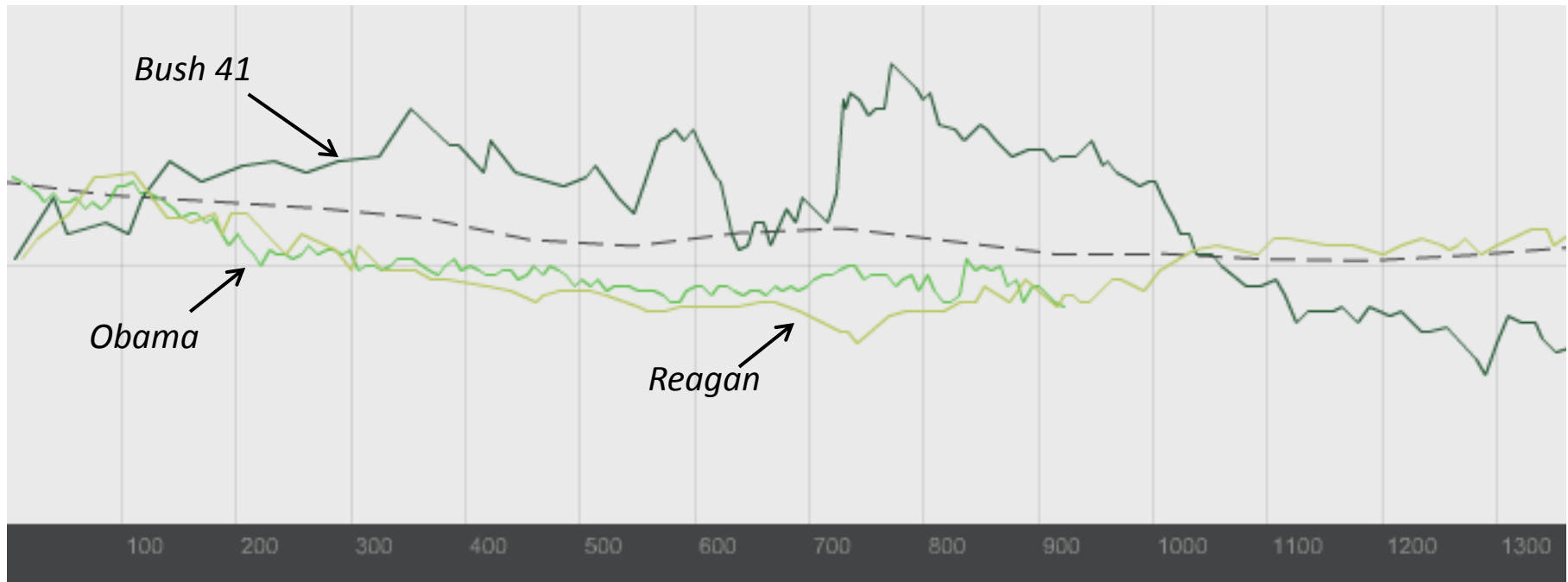
What impact will Barack Obama's negative comments toward Las Vegas have on Nevada's competitiveness in 2012?

Shifting political climate and demographics

Growth of more liberal Northern Virginia helped put that state in play in 2008.

Presidential Job Approval in the First Term (Gallup)

Presidents Reagan, Bush 41 and Obama





What if...

How important is California to the Democrats' national strategy?



Hypothetical California Scenario

Base States

If all base states remain with respective party, except California shifts to GOP...

...Democrat base shrinks from 202 to 147 EC votes.

Battleground states

To reach 270, Democrats would need to win 123 of 166 EC votes from these 14 battleground states:

CO, FL, IA, IN, MN, MO, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, PA, VA, WI



Additional Factors

- **While the GOP nominating contest appears divisive, history shows the major parties reunite very quickly.** (*See Democrats in 2008 following bitter Obama/Clinton contest*).
- **President Obama's approval rating remains low, but it rises along with positive economic numbers.** *The economy remains the top issue to voters.*
- **Hypothetical matchups between President Obama and an "unnamed Republican" always underestimate the President's strength** because an "unnamed Republican" has no liabilities.
- **Low Congressional approval numbers are a consequence of a divided Congress** (no one likes "Congress" because of what "the other party" is doing). Nonetheless, President Obama will continue to blame Congress when convenient.

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