

# Howard Schultz: NO PATH TO 270

A thought exercise in 2020 presidential race viability by Katie Connolly and Joel Benenson

# Howard Schultz Has No Credible Path To The Presidency But Poses A Clear Risk Of Re-electing Trump

Winning the presidency is not about winning a plurality of voters.

**Winning requires a plurality of voters in enough states to get you 270 electoral college votes (EVs).**

Every candidate must chart a path to 270 by figuring out which states they are viable in – no candidate is competitive in every single state. We decided to do this for Howard Schultz. **In doing so, we created cautious rules that yielded a very generously defined battleground to maximize the possibility of a credible third party candidacy.**

We did an historical analysis of each state's voting trends and then allocated the states to three categories based on a set of rules (see *following slide for rules*):

- ✓ Safe Democratic states
- ✓ Safe Republican states
- ✓ Battleground states – whose electoral votes are up for grabs by any candidate

According to this method, once the highly partisan states are removed there are only **267 remaining electoral votes in the battleground** where a third party candidate is viable.

Even if Schultz were to win every single one of those states – which would be an enormous feat – **he'd be short of 270 and would have denied other candidates 270.**

The election would then be decided by the House of Representatives. If the House decides the election, each state delegation gets one vote for president.



**Using the current House delegations, Trump would easily win re-election with 26 majority-Republican delegations and only 22 majority-Democratic delegations.**

# The Rules: How We Allocated “Safe” States To Each Party

We examined how each state has voted in the past five presidential elections (2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016).

We then allocated the EVs for each state based on these rules:

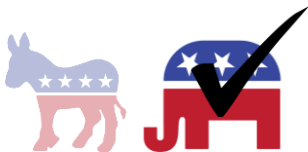
1

If a state voted for the **same party's** candidate in **five out of five** elections



2

If in four out of those five elections, that same party's candidate **won the state by 10 points or more**



Then we gave that state to that party's candidate.

- For example, we gave West Virginia to Republicans because they have won that state in five of the past five elections, and they won it four times by more than 10 points. (In 2000, George Bush beat Al Gore by only 5 points.) We used 10 points as a yardstick because that is generally considered by pollsters to be a landslide.

The rest of the states were considered **“battlegrounds”** – states up for grabs by any candidate. These are the places where an Independent candidate could be competitive.

This battleground is generous. For example, Oregon is considered a battleground because although Democrats have not lost the state since 1984, the winning margins were less than 10 points in both 2000 and 2004.

- There was one exception to these rules: the state of Texas. Though Republicans have won it in all five elections, the 9-point margin in 2016 and the even slimmer margin in the 2018 Senate election suggests that there is some appetite in Texas for a non-Republican candidate. We made Texas a battleground.

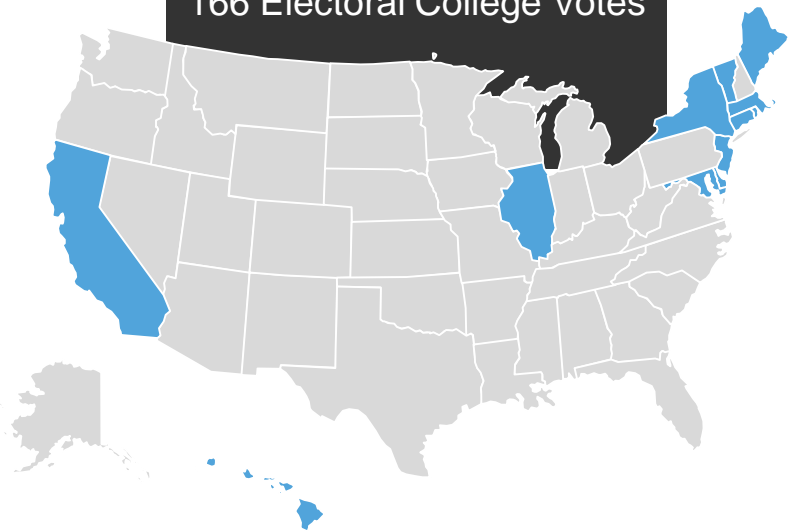


According to this math, Democrats have 166 “safe” electoral votes, Republicans have 105 “safe” electoral votes and there are 267 votes up for grabs.

The following slides show the results in the past two presidential elections for each state, along with the results in 1992, the last time there was a serious independent challenge. It is worth noting that in that year, **Ross Perot received almost 19% of the vote and did not win a single electoral vote. There were only two states – Maine and Utah – where he came second and received more votes than a major party candidate.** Most of the “safe” states were won handily by the “safe” party in 1992, aside from a handful of deep red southern states that Bill Clinton, a Southern governor, carried in 1992 and have not voted Democratic in the post-WJC era.

# Democratic “Safe” States

166 Electoral College Votes



State	EVs	2016		2012		1992	
		Result (HC-DT-GJ-JS)	Dem Margin	Result (BO-MR-GJ)	Dem Margin	Result (BC-GB-RP)	Dem Margin
California	55	62-32-3-2	30	60-37-1	23	46-33-21	13
Connecticut	7	55-41-3-1	14	58-41-1	17	42-36-22	6
Delaware	3	53-42-3-1	11	59-40-1	19	44-35-20	9
Hawaii	4	61-29-4-3	32	70-28-1	42	47-36-14	11
Illinois	20	56-39-4-1	17	58-41-1	17	49-34-17	15
Maine + CD-1*	3	54-39-5-2	15	60-38-1	22	40-32-28	8
Maryland	10	60-34-3-1	26	62-36-1	26	50-36-14	14
Massachusetts	11	60-33-4-1	27	61-38-1	23	48-29-23	19
New Jersey	14	55-41-2-1	14	58-41-1	17	43-41-16	2
New York	29	58-36-2-1	22	63-35-1	28	50-34-16	16
Rhode Island	4	54-39-3-1	15	63-35-1	28	47-29-23	18
Vermont	3	57-30-3-2	27	67-31-1	36	46-30-23	16
Washington DC	3	90-4-3-2	86	91-7-1	84	85-9-4	76
<b>Total EVs</b>	<b>166</b>						

**Recall the rules:** These states were allocated to Democrats because

1

The state voted for the **Democratic candidate** in five out of the past five elections

+

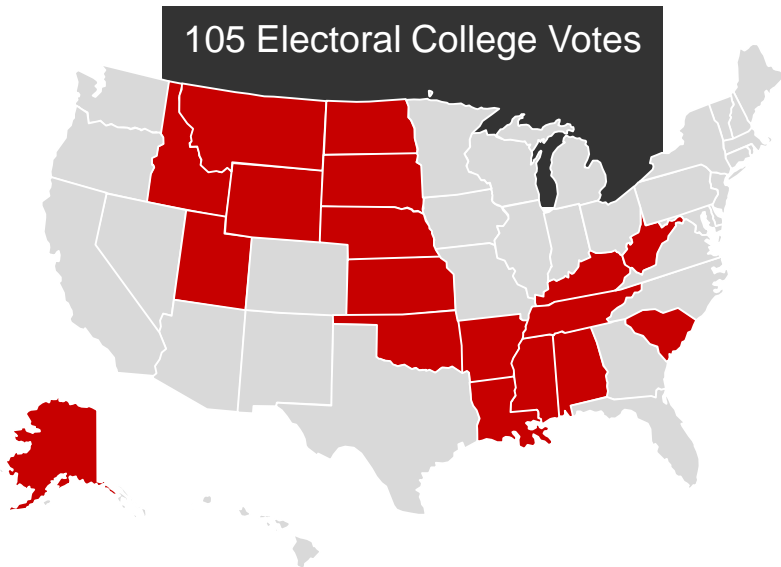
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In four out of those five elections, the **Democrat** won the state by 10 points or more

\*Results in the table are for Maine's CD-1, not the state overall

# Republican “Safe” States

105 Electoral College Votes



**Recall the rules:** These states were allocated to Republicans because

1

The state voted for the Republican candidate in five out of the past five elections

+

2

In four out of those five elections, the Republican won the state by 10 points or more

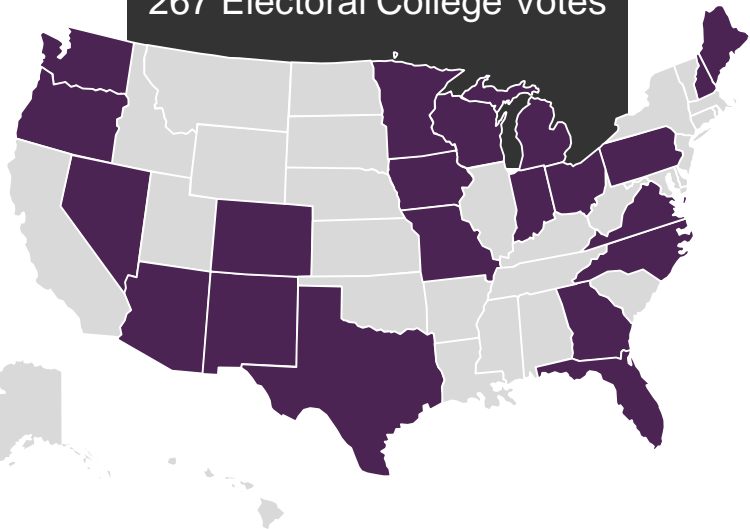
*\*Note: the actual margin in Arkansas in 2004 was 9.76, but we have rounded it to 10 pts., because Republicans have won the state by at least 20 pts. since 2004.*

*†Note: we are showing third-party candidate Evan McMullin, instead of Gary Johnson in Utah in 2016.*

State	EVs	2016		2012		1992	
		Result (HC-DT-GJ-JS)	Rep Margin	Result (BO-MR-GJ)	Rep Margin	Result (BC-GB-RP)	Rep Margin
Alabama	9	34-62-2-0	28	38-61-1	23	41-48-11	7
Alaska	3	37-51-6-2	14	41-55-2	14	30-39-28	9
Arkansas*	6	34-61-3-1	27	37-61-2	24	53-35-10	-18
Idaho	4	28-59-4-1	31	33-65-1	32	28-42-27	14
Kansas	6	36-57-5-2	21	38-60-2	22	34-39-27	5
Kentucky	8	33-63-3-1	30	38-60-1	22	45-41-14	-4
Louisiana	8	38-58-2-1	20	41-58-1	17	46-41-12	-5
Mississippi	6	40-58-1-0	18	44-55-1	11	41-50-9	9
Montana	3	36-56-6-2	20	42-55-3	13	38-35-26	-3
Nebraska	5	34-59-5-1	25	38-60-1	22	29-47-24	18
North Dakota	3	27-63-6-1	36	39-58-2	19	32-44-23	12
Oklahoma	7	29-65-6-0	36	33-67-0	34	34-43-23	9
South Carolina	9	41-55-2-1	14	44-55-1	11	40-48-12	8
South Dakota	3	32-62-6-0	30	40-58-2	18	37-41-22	4
Tennessee	11	35-61-3-1	26	39-59-1	20	47-42-10	-5
Utah	6	28-46-22†-1	18	25-73-1	48	25-43-27	18
West Virginia	5	26-69-3-1	43	36-62-1	26	48-35-16	-13
Wyoming	3	22-67-5-1	45	28-68-2	40	34-40-26	6
<b>TOTAL EVS</b>		<b>105</b>					

## Battleground States: We Purposely Crafted A Generous Battleground, Maximizing the Number of States A Third Party Candidate Could Compete In

***These are the states Schultz could realistically compete in. Even if he won all of them, he'd be short of 270.***



**The battleground is made up of all the states that did not fall into the “safe” partisan states. We also generously added Texas to the battleground.**

		2016		2012		1992	
State	EVs	Result (HC-DT-GJ-JS)	Dem Margin	Result (BO-MR-GJ)	Dem Margin	Result (BC-GB-RP)	Dem Margin
Arizona	11	45-49-4-1	-4	45-54-1	-9	37-38-24	-1
Colorado	9	48-43-5-1	5	51-46-1	5	39-35-23	4
Florida	29	48-49-2-1	-1	50-49-1	1	39-41-20	-2
Georgia	16	46-51-3-0	-5	46-53-1	-7	43-43-13	0
Iowa	6	41-51-4-1	-10	52-46-1	6	43-37-19	6
Indiana	11	38-57-5-0	-19	44-54-2	-10	37-43-20	-6
Maine CD-2	1	41-51-6-2	-10	53-44-1	9	38-29-33	9
Michigan	16	47-47-4-1	0	54-45-0	9	44-36-19	8
Minnesota	10	46-45-4-1	1	53-45-1	8	43-32-24	11
Missouri	10	38-57-3-1	19	44-54-2	10	44-34-22	-10
Nevada	6	48-46-3-0	2	52-46-1	6	37-35-26	2
New Hampshire	4	46-46-4-1	0	52-46-1	6	39-38-23	1
New Mexico	5	48-40-9-1	8	53-43-4	10	46-37-16	9
North Carolina	15	46-50-3-0	-4	48-50-1	-2	43-43-14	0
Ohio	18	44-52-3-1	-8	51-48-1	3	40-38-21	2
Oregon	7	50-39-5-2	11	54-42-1	12	42-33-24	9
Pennsylvania	20	48-49-2-1	-1	52-47-1	5	45-36-18	9
Texas	38	43-52-3-1	-9	41-57-1	-16	37-41-22	-4
Virginia	13	50-44-3-1	6	51-47-1	4	41-45-14	-4
Washington	12	54-38-5-2	16	56-41-1	15	43-32-24	11
Wisconsin	10	46-47-4-1	-1	53-46-1	7	41-37-22	4
Total EVs	267						

# SCENARIO A: No Candidate Gets 270, State Delegations In The House Decide; Republicans Have Upper Hand and Would Re-Elect Trump

According to the rules we set up, once the highly partisan states are removed there are only 267 remaining electoral votes in the battleground where a third party candidate is viable. Even if Schultz were to run the table in those states, **he'd be short of 270 and no other candidate would reach 270 either.**

**The election would go to the House of Representatives where the state delegations would cast their vote.**



If the House decides the election, each state delegation gets one vote for president.

**Republican  
Majority  
Delegations:  
26**

**Democratic  
Majority  
Delegations:  
22**

**Unclear:  
2**

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arkansas
- Florida
- Georgia
- Idaho
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Hawaii
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Minnesota
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- Oregon
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington

- Michigan (*tied delegation*)
- Pennsylvania (*currently one Republican-leaning seat vacant; Democrats have 9 seats, Republicans 8*)



Using the current House delegations, **Trump would easily win re-election** with 26 states having a Republican majority and only 22 having a Democratic majority

## SCENARIO B: Howard Schultz Gets Donald Trump 270 EVs (And More)

**What is more likely than that is that Schultz peels away enough Democratic votes in those battleground states to hand the election to Trump.** It is easy to imagine how this happens. We created the following example to illustrate it.

- We analyzed the states that comprise the Battleground to see which states should be allocated to the Republicans. In the first instance, if a state was won by the Republicans in the last five out of five elections and in 1992, even if the margin was small, we gave that state to that Party.
  - This netted the Republican candidate Texas, Missouri, and Arizona for 164 EVs
- We also gave Indiana and North Carolina to Republicans because Obama's narrow wins there in 2008 were an anomaly – the last Democrat Indiana voted for was Lyndon Johnson and the last Democrat North Carolina voted for was Jimmy Carter. That brings their total to 190 EVs.

We then made some state by state decisions – keeping in mind that Schultz has openly positioned himself as a “lifelong Democrat” and has spent the past couple of weeks criticizing Democrats and the party – and gave the following states to Republicans:

- **Florida:** A true toss up state where Trump remains relatively popular and Republicans occupy all statewide offices. As was the case in 2000 and 1992, it is easy to see a third party candidate siphoning enough votes to hand this to Trump
- **Georgia:** Clinton was the last Democrat to win Georgia (1992) and though Dems have gained in recent years, a third party could fracture the vote enough to stall Dem momentum
- **Iowa:** Trump's strong win in Iowa in 2016, the Republican domination of statewide offices and Gore's razor-thin margin in 2000 when Nader drew Democratic votes makes it easy to see how this state could end up in Trump's column again
- **Ohio:** Trump beat Clinton by 8 points in a state where a Republican won the governorship last year; Ohio has been trending more Republican since 2012 and eroding the Democratic vote would hand the state to Republicans
- **Virginia:** Though Democrats have made gains in VA in the last three elections, the margin has been 6pts or less and Republicans won the state in the previous ten elections
- **Wisconsin:** In 2000, 2004, and 2016, less than one percentage point separated the winning and losing candidates. It is likely any loss of Democratic support to a third party hands Wisconsin to Trump
- *Note: In this scenario, Trump does not need to win WI to get to 270 – he's at 272 without it. And he does not need VA if he wins WI and ME-2, which would get him 270 even.*

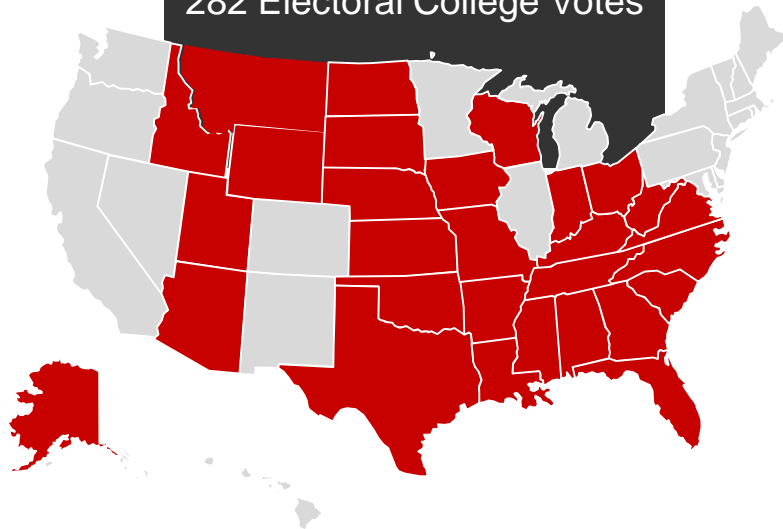
**In this scenario the Republican, presumably Trump, ends up with 282 EVs and the presidency – and that's without even touching Pennsylvania and Michigan.** This scenario also doesn't account for the fact that, despite historical trends, it would not be difficult for a Republican to pry, for example, NH or NV away from Democrats if the Dem vote is fractured.



# SCENARIO B: Republican States

Trump gets over 270 even without MI and PA

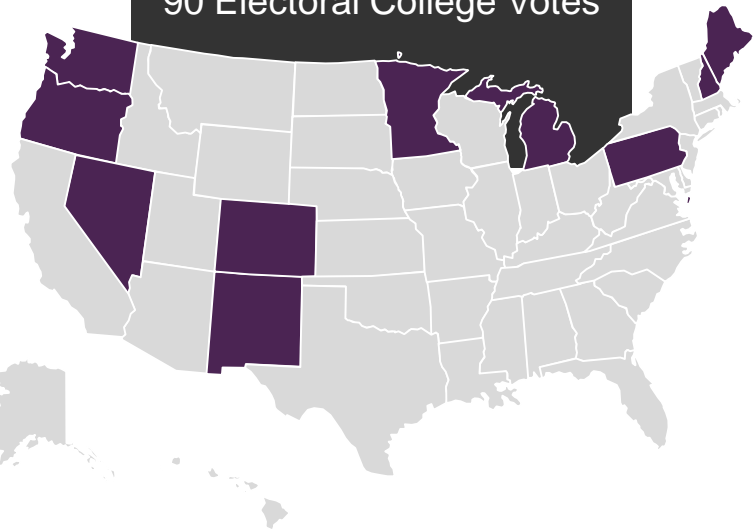
282 Electoral College Votes



State	EVs	2016		2012		1992	
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Florida	29	48-49-2-1	1	50-49-1	-1	39-41-20	2
Georgia	16	46-51-3-0	5	46-53-1	7	43-43-13	0
Idaho	4	28-59-4-1	31	33-65-1	32	28-42-27	14
Indiana	11	38-57-5-0	19	44-54-2	10	37-43-20	6
Iowa	6	41-51-4-1	10	52-46-1	-6	43-37-19	-6
Kansas	6	36-57-5-2	21	38-60-2	22	34-39-27	5
Kentucky	8	33-63-3-1	30	38-60-1	22	45-41-14	-4
Louisiana	8	38-58-2-1	20	41-58-1	17	46-41-12	-5
Mississippi	6	40-58-1-0	18	44-55-1	11	41-50-9	9
Missouri	10	38-57-3-1	19	44-54-2	10	44-34-22	-10
Montana	3	36-56-6-2	20	42-55-3	13	38-35-26	-3
Nebraska	5	34-59-5-1	25	38-60-1	22	29-47-24	18
North Carolina	15	46-50-3-0	4	48-50-1	2	43-43-14	0
North Dakota	3	27-63-6-1	36	39-58-2	19	32-44-23	12
Ohio	18	44-52-3-1	8	51-48-1	-3	40-38-21	-2
Oklahoma	7	29-65-6-0	36	33-67-0	34	34-43-23	9
South Carolina	9	41-55-2-1	14	44-55-1	11	40-48-12	8
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Texas	38	43-52-3-1	9	41-57-1	16	37-41-22	4
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West Virginia	5	26-69-3-1	43	36-62-1	26	48-35-16	-13
Wisconsin	10	46-47-4-1	1	53-46-1	-7	41-37-22	-4
Wyoming	3	22-67-5-1	45	28-68-2	40	34-40-26	6
Total EVs		282					

# SCENARIO B - Unassigned Battlegrounds; Even If The Dem Wins These Competitive EVs And The “Safe” Democratic Seats, The Candidate Would Only Have 256 and Trump Will Win With 282

90 Electoral College Votes



State	EVs	2016		2012		1992	
		Result (HC-DT-GJ-JS)	Dem Margin	Result (BO-MR-GJ)	Dem Margin	Result (BC-GB-RP)	Dem Margin
Colorado	9	48-43-5-1	5	51-46-1	5	39-35-23	4
Maine CD-2	1	41-51-6-2	-10	53-44-1	9	38-29-33	9
Michigan	16	47-47-4-1	0	54-45-0	9	44-36-19	8
Minnesota	10	46-45-4-1	1	53-45-1	8	43-32-24	11
Nevada	6	48-46-3-0	2	52-46-1	6	37-34-26	3
New Hampshire	4	46-46-4-1	0	52-46-1	6	39-38-23	1
New Mexico	5	48-40-9-1	8	53-43-4	10	46-37-16	9
Oregon	7	50-39-5-2	11	54-42-1	12	42-33-24	9
Pennsylvania	20	48-49-2-1	-1	52-47-1	5	45-36-18	9
Washington	12	54-38-5-2	16	56-41-1	15	43-32-24	11
<b>Total EVs</b>	<b>90</b>						

# Summary: Schultz Has No Realistic Path To The Presidency, His Candidacy Only Stands To Benefit Republicans And Trump

## SCENARIO A

Schultz sweeps the battleground states

Democratic Electoral Votes 166

Republican Electoral Votes 105

Independent Electoral Votes 267

No candidate gets 270 and the House decides:

Republican Votes 26

Democratic Votes 22

**! Trump is re-elected**

## SCENARIO B

Schultz peels enough votes from the Democrat to hand the election to Trump

Republican Electoral Votes 282



**! Trump is re-elected**

*\*Reminder: There are two additional votes in the House because Michigan and Pennsylvania delegations are unclear, as Michigan's delegation is currently tied and Pennsylvania currently has a vacant Republican leaning seat.*