

# How legitimate is our ELECTORAL COLLEGE?

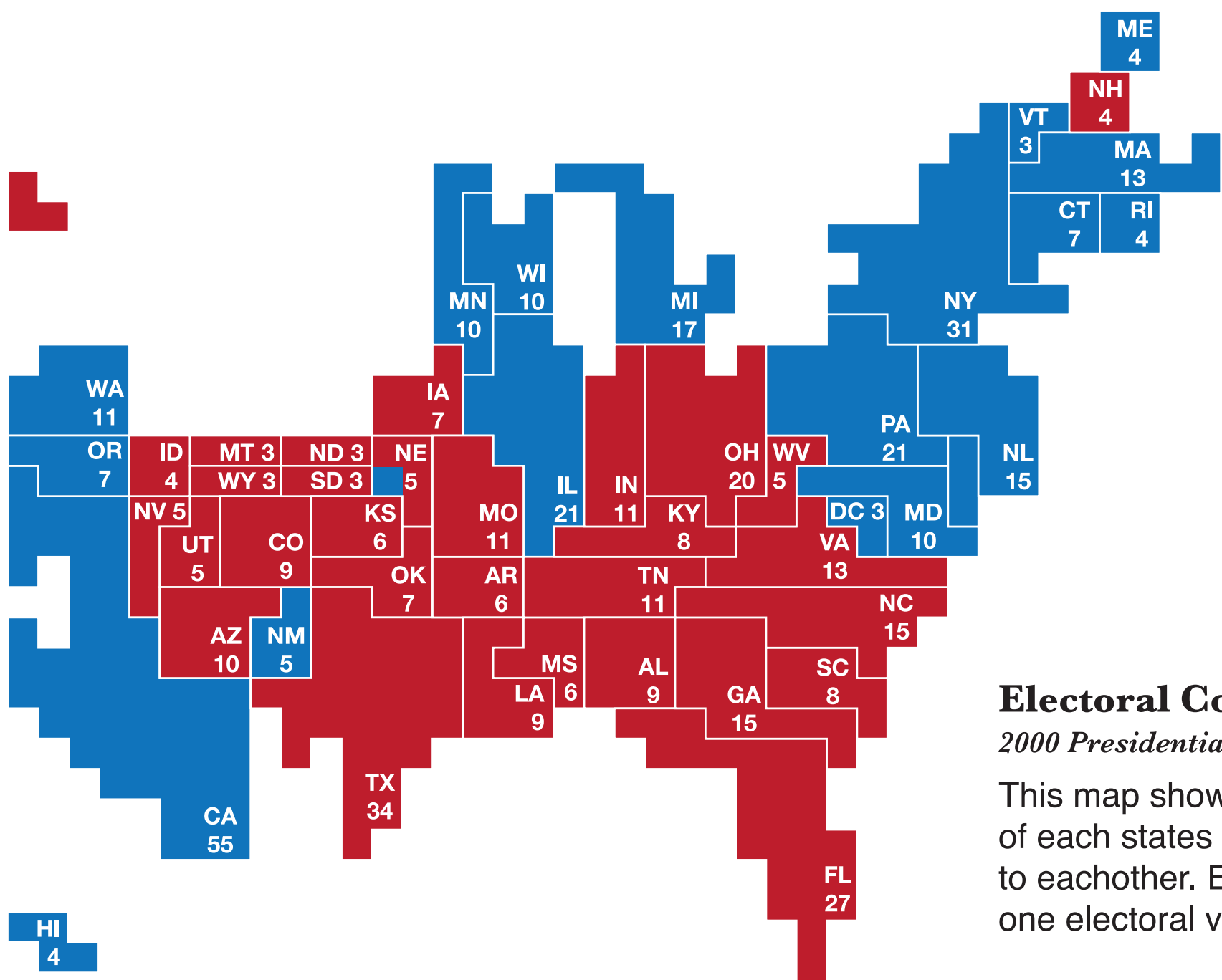
## 2000 Bush / Gore

### What is the Electoral College?

Americans elect the President and Vice-president through a method of indirect popular election. However, votes actually count towards a group of electors who pledge to vote for a specific candidate when the Electoral College meets in December. The "Electoral College" is the unofficial term coined in the 1800s for the group of citizens selected by the people to cast votes for President and Vice President.

The presidential/vice-presidential pair who wins the popular vote in any given state receives all\* of the state's number of Electoral College votes. In the end, the winner of the race is the candidate who receives a majority (270) of the 538 Electoral College votes.

\* The exceptions are Maine and Nebraska, where a proportional method for allocating votes is used.



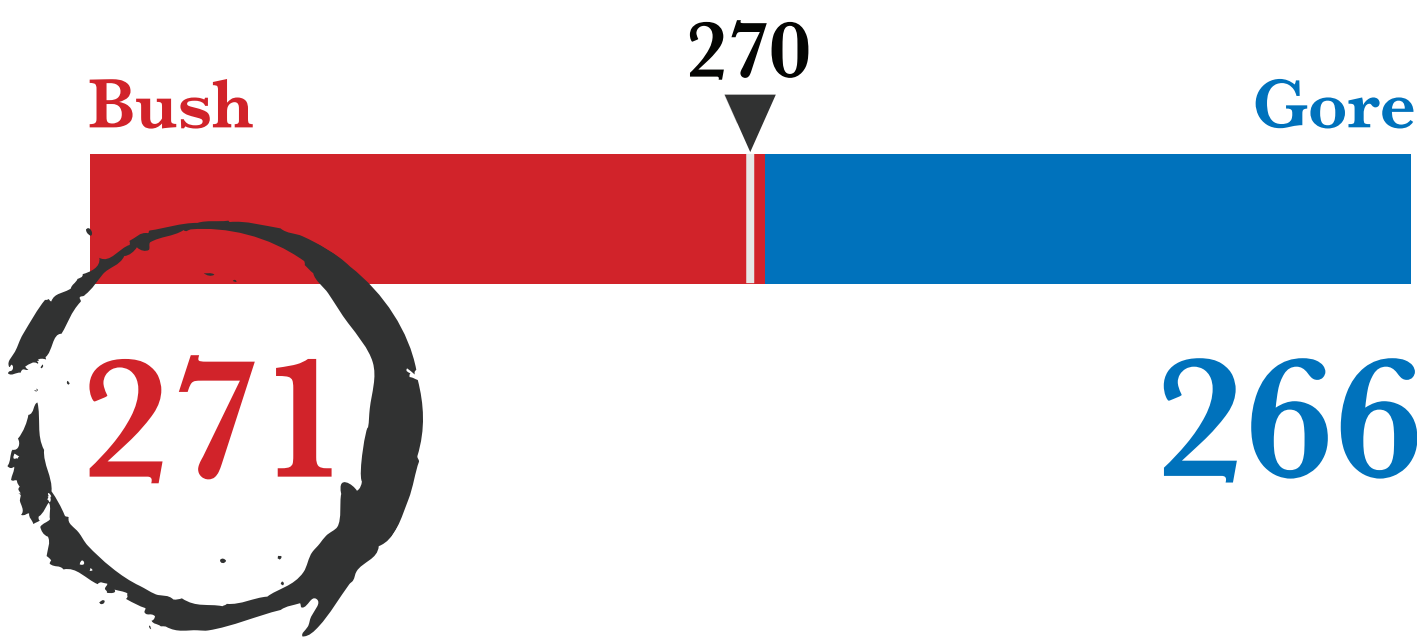
**Electoral College Cartogram**  
*2000 Presidential Election*  
This map shows the proportional weight of each states electoral votes in relation to eachother. Each square represents one electoral vote for each state.

### Popular Vote

**GORE 50,999,897**  
**BUSH 50,456,002**

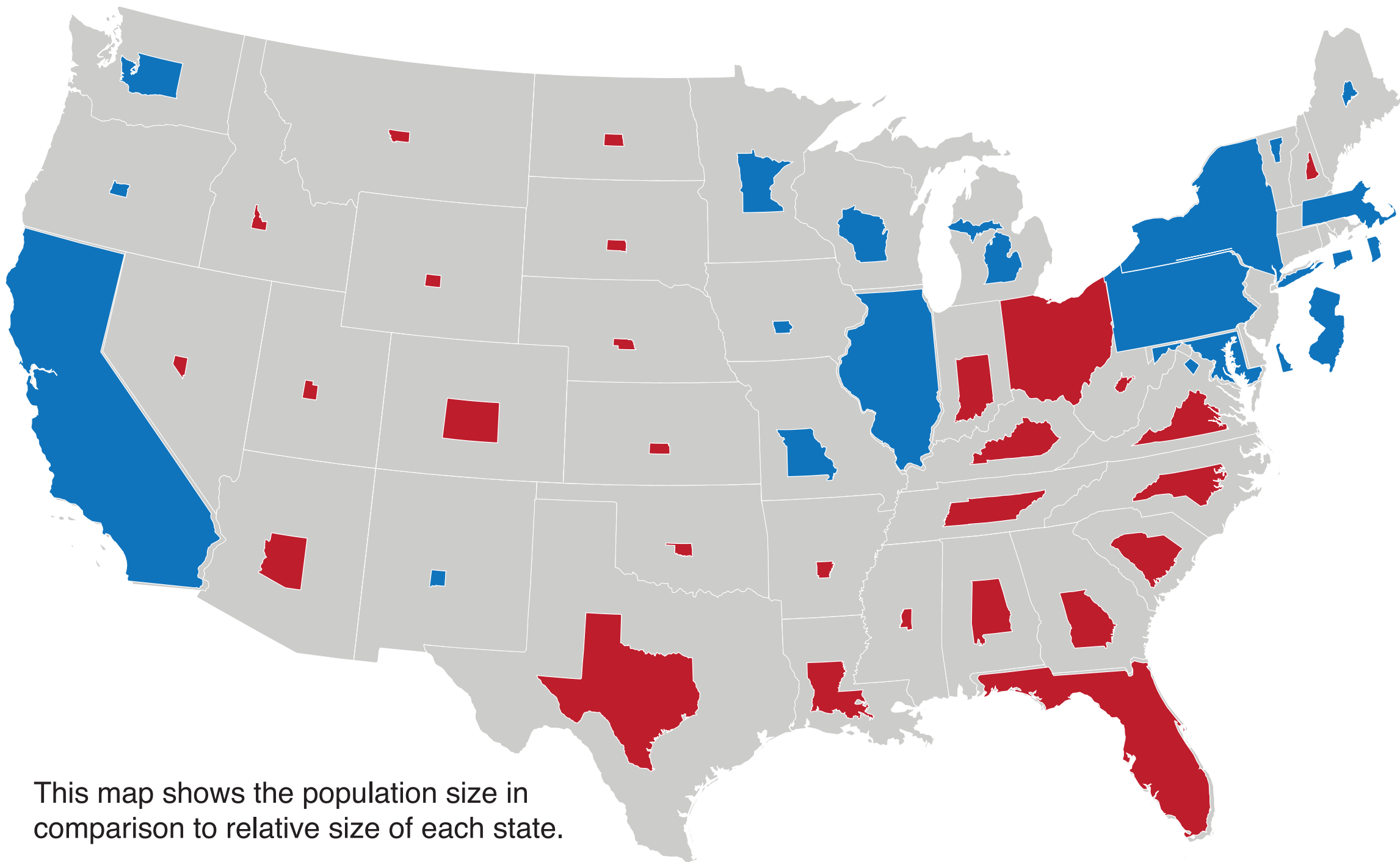
This shows the total number of votes by all Americans in the 2000 Presidential Election. If it wasn't for the Electoral College Al Gore would have won the presidency.

### Electoral Vote



Presidential Candidates need at least 270 of the 538 Electoral Votes to become elected President.

### Population Scale



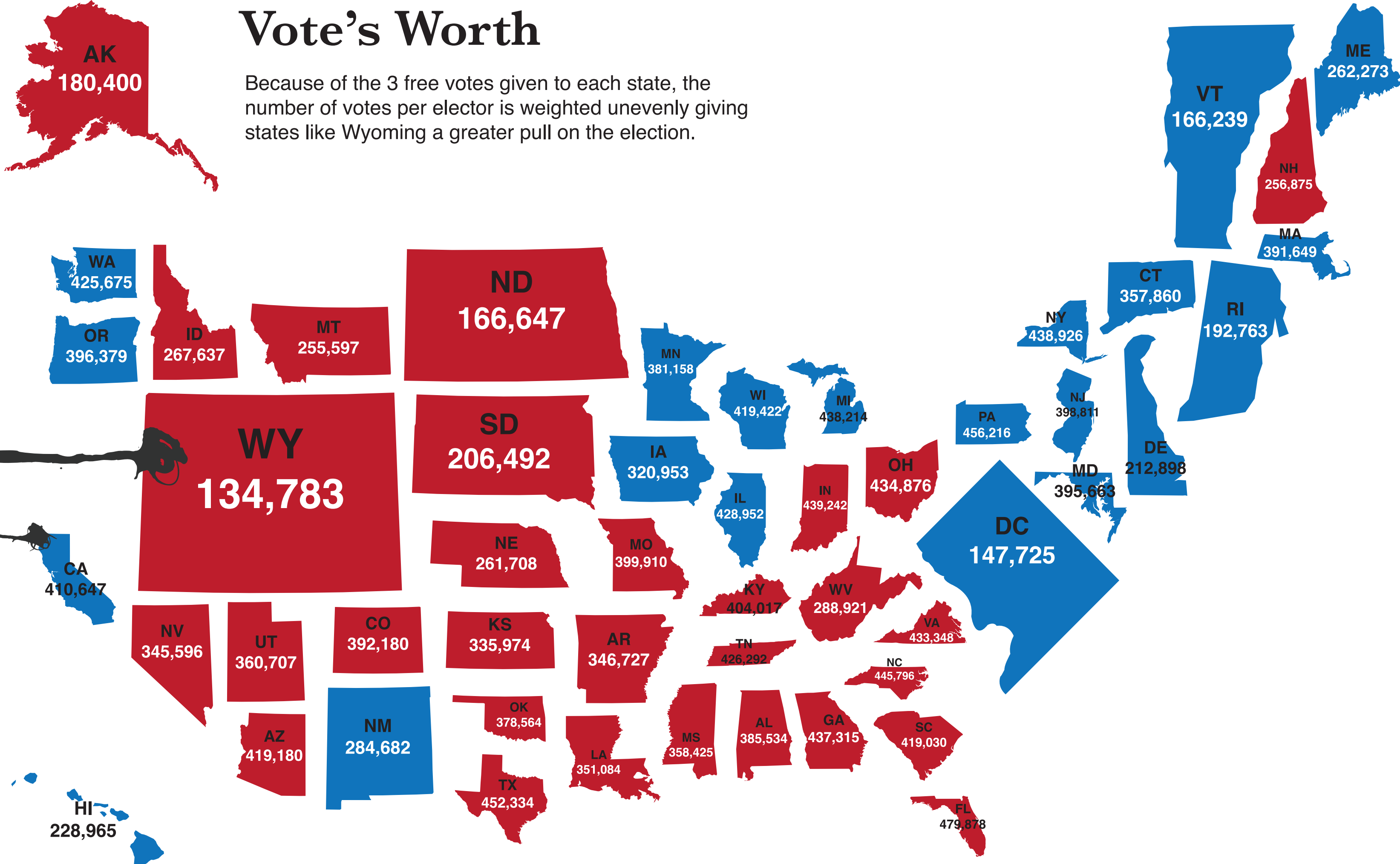
This map shows the population size in comparison to relative size of each state.

### How does that work?

Although Gore won the popular vote, Bush won the presidency. This is because of the disproportionate scale of each state's population combined with their number of electoral college members. Each state recieves one elector from the Senate and two from the House of Representatives; the additional electoral college members are elected through a means of population size.

### Vote's Worth

Because of the 3 free votes given to each state, the number of votes per elector is weighted unevenly giving states like Wyoming a greater pull on the election.



### Average Vote Per Elector

**GORE 191,728.94**  
**BUSH 186,184.51**

Wyoming's vote counts as 1.00  
California's vote counts as .45

### Electoral College Summary

The Electoral College is why we have odd circumstances as seen in the 2000 Presidential Election where George W. Bush won the presidency although he lost the popular vote to Al Gore. Bush took all the small states, having a greater weight, to swing the election in his favor.

Compare the size of the states in the Population map above with the Vote's Worth map to the right get a real feeling for how some of our small states can make a big difference in the outcome of the elections.