



Voter Turnout Is Substantially Higher in Battleground States than Spectator States

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Voter turnout was 11% higher in 2016, and 16% higher in 2012, in the dozen closely divided presidential battleground states compared to the rest of the country. In 2008, voter turnout was 9% higher in the 14 closely divided presidential battleground states compared to the rest of the country.

The reason for lower voter turnout in the spectator states is that many voters realize that their vote really does not matter in the presidential race.

2016 Election

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (a body established by the Help America Vote Act of 2002) compiles data on voter turnout in each presidential election.

The table below shows the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's state-by-state turnout data for the November 2016 election.¹ In 2016, 138,467,690 people turned out to vote out of a civilian voting-age population (CVAP) of 222,469,187—that is, voter turnout was 62.2% nationally.

Column 4 shows the civilian voting-age population (CVAP), and column 5 shows the number of people who voted.

The table is sorted according to each state's turnout percentage shown in column 1—that is, percentage of the civilian voting-age population who voted.

Column 2 shows the number of general-election campaign events for each state. Virtually all (94%) of the general-election campaign events (375 of the 399 events) occurred in 12 closely divided battleground states. Each of these 12 battleground states (shown in bold in the table) received between 10 and 71 events. There was a dramatic difference between the number of events in these 12 battleground states compared to the number of events in the remaining states. The states that received the remaining 24 events (a mere 6% of the total of 375 events) received only one, two, or three events each. Moreover, all the other states received no events at all.

¹ U.S. Election Assistance Commission. 2016. *The Election Administration and Voting Survey: 2016 Comprehensive Report*. Pages 20–21. https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/eac_assets/1/6/2016_EAVS_Comprehensive_Report.pdf

Voter turnout in 2016

Turnout percent	2016 events	State	CVAP	Voter Turnout
77%	19	Colorado	3,750,953	2,884,199
75%	2	Minnesota	3,950,807	2,973,744
74%	21	New Hampshire	1,020,130	757,669
74%	3	Maine	1,048,274	771,892
72%		Oregon	2,867,670	2,051,452
70%	14	Wisconsin	4,294,321	2,993,000
70%		Massachusetts	4,850,598	3,378,801
69%	21	Iowa	2,285,126	1,581,371
69%	71	Florida	13,933,052	9,613,669
68%	1	Washington	4,937,212	3,363,452
67%		Maryland	4,182,241	2,807,326
67%	23	Virginia	5,953,612	3,996,302
66%		Montana	781,250	516,901
66%	22	Michigan	7,380,136	4,874,619
66%	55	North Carolina	7,107,998	4,690,195
66%		Delaware	681,606	448,217
66%	2	Missouri	4,525,035	2,973,855
66%		Vermont	493,124	323,623
65%		New Jersey	6,053,893	3,957,303
65%	2	Nebraska	1,333,860	869,815
65%	1	Connecticut	2,574,178	1,675,955
64%	48	Ohio	8,709,050	5,607,641
64%		DC	485,116	311,841
64%	54	Pennsylvania	9,710,416	6,223,150
64%		North Dakota	546,486	349,945
63%		Idaho	1,130,550	710,495
62%	1	Illinois	8,979,999	5,562,009
62%		Alaska	523,747	323,288
61%	17	Nevada	1,863,799	1,128,492
60%		Rhode Island	776,565	469,547
60%	1	California	24,280,349	14,610,494
60%	10	Arizona	4,526,594	2,722,660
60%		Louisiana	3,410,634	2,049,802
60%		South Dakota	621,461	372,988
60%	1	Utah	1,868,008	1,114,567
60%		Wyoming	430,026	256,553
60%		South Carolina	3,566,508	2,124,952
60%		Kansas	2,053,919	1,223,491
59%	3	Georgia	6,978,660	4,147,161
59%		Kentucky	3,297,108	1,949,254
59%		Alabama	3,620,994	2,137,452
59%	2	Indiana	4,801,113	2,831,540
58%		New York	13,531,404	7,793,078
55%	3	New Mexico	1,457,632	804,073
55%	1	Mississippi	2,210,424	1,209,357
53%		Oklahoma	2,768,561	1,465,505
53%		Tennessee	4,828,366	2,545,271
52%	1	Texas	16,864,962	8,701,152
50%		West Virginia	1,455,848	732,362
48%		Arkansas	2,164,083	1,048,513
44%		Hawaii	1,001,729	437,697
62.2%	399	Total	222,469,187	138,467,690

Without doing any calculations, a glance at the table shows that the 12 battleground states (in bold) are concentrated at the top of the table. All but two of the 12 battleground states in 2016 had above-average turnout—that is, a turnout above 62.2%.

The next two tables allow us to make this visual observation more precise.

The table below shows that the voter turnout in the 12 battleground states in 2016 was 47,072,967 people out of a total civilian voting-age population (CVAP) of 70,535,187—that is, 66.7%. The table is sorted according to the number of general-election campaign events in column 2 (and, secondarily, if there is a tie, according to turnout percentage shown in column 1).

Voter turnout in 12 battleground states in 2016

Turnout percent	2016 events	State	CVAP	Voter Turnout
69%	71	Florida	13,933,052	9,613,669
66%	55	North Carolina	7,107,998	4,690,195
64%	54	Pennsylvania	9,710,416	6,223,150
64%	48	Ohio	8,709,050	5,607,641
67%	23	Virginia	5,953,612	3,996,302
66%	22	Michigan	7,380,136	4,874,619
74%	21	New Hampshire	1,020,130	757,669
69%	21	Iowa	2,285,126	1,581,371
77%	19	Colorado	3,750,953	2,884,199
61%	17	Nevada	1,863,799	1,128,492
70%	14	Wisconsin	4,294,321	2,993,000
60%	10	Arizona	4,526,594	2,722,660
66.7%	375	Total	70,535,187	47,072,967

The table below shows that the voter turnout in the 39 spectator jurisdictions (i.e., 38 states and the District of Columbia) in 2016 was 91,394,723 people out of a total civilian voting-age population of 151,934,000—that is, 60.2%.

The table is sorted based on the number of general-election campaign events in column 2 (and, secondarily, if there is a tie, the turnout percentage in column 1). The 14 states at the top of this table received a small number of events (one, two, or three), whereas the remaining 25 jurisdictions received no events at all.

Voter turnout in 39 spectator jurisdictions in 2016

Turnout percent	2016 events	State	CVAP	Voter Turnout
74%	3	Maine	1,048,274	771,892
59%	3	Georgia	6,978,660	4,147,161
55%	3	New Mexico	1,457,632	804,073
75%	2	Minnesota	3,950,807	2,973,744
66%	2	Missouri	4,525,035	2,973,855
65%	2	Nebraska	1,333,860	869,815
59%	2	Indiana	4,801,113	2,831,540
68%	1	Washington	4,937,212	3,363,452
65%	1	Connecticut	2,574,178	1,675,955
62%	1	Illinois	8,979,999	5,562,009
60%	1	California	24,280,349	14,610,494
60%	1	Utah	1,868,008	1,114,567
55%	1	Mississippi	2,210,424	1,209,357
52%	1	Texas	16,864,962	8,701,152
72%		Oregon	2,867,670	2,051,452
70%		Massachusetts	4,850,598	3,378,801
67%		Maryland	4,182,241	2,807,326
66%		Montana	781,250	516,901
66%		Delaware	681,606	448,217
66%		Vermont	493,124	323,623
65%		New Jersey	6,053,893	3,957,303
64%		DC	485,116	311,841
64%		North Dakota	546,486	349,945
63%		Idaho	1,130,550	710,495
62%		Alaska	523,747	323,288
60%		Rhode Island	776,565	469,547
60%		Louisiana	3,410,634	2,049,802
60%		South Dakota	621,461	372,988
60%		Wyoming	430,026	256,553
60%		South Carolina	3,566,508	2,124,952
60%		Kansas	2,053,919	1,223,491
59%		Kentucky	3,297,108	1,949,254
59%		Alabama	3,620,994	2,137,452
58%		New York	13,531,404	7,793,078
53%		Oklahoma	2,768,561	1,465,505
53%		Tennessee	4,828,366	2,545,271
50%		West Virginia	1,455,848	732,362
48%		Arkansas	2,164,083	1,048,513
44%		Hawaii	1,001,729	437,697
60.2%	24	Total	151,934,000	91,394,723

The ratio of 66.7% to 60.2% is 1.11—that is, in 2016, turnout in the 12 battleground states (66.7%) was 11% higher than the turnout in the 39 spectator jurisdictions (60.2%).

In summary, the turnout in the battleground states in 2016 was 11% higher than the turnout in the rest of the country.

2012 Election

The table below shows the Commission's state-by-state turnout data for the November 2012 election.² In 2012, 129,664,614 people turned out to vote out of an estimated civilian voting-age population of 219,493,648—that is, voter turnout was 59.1% nationally.

Column 4 shows the estimated civilian voting-age population (ECVAP), and column 5 shows the number of people who voted.

The table is sorted according to each state's percentage of the estimated civilian voting-age population who voted (column 1).

Column 2 shows the number of general-election campaign events for each state. In 2012, 100% of the 253 general-election campaign events occurred in 12 closely divided battleground states (shown in bold in the table).

² U.S. Election Assistance Commission. *The 2012 Election Administration and Voting Survey*. September 2013. Page 29–30.
https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/eac_assets/1/6/2012ElectionAdministrationandVoterSurvey.pdf

Voter turnout in 2012

Turnout percent	2012 events	State	ECVAP	Voter Turnout
75%	1	Minnesota	3,920,519	2,950,780
72%	18	Wisconsin	4,271,926	3,078,135
71%	23	Colorado	3,654,799	2,594,628
71%	13	New Hampshire	1,014,537	718,700
70%	27	Iowa	2,280,022	1,589,951
69%		Maine	1,046,057	724,759
67%		Massachusetts	4,784,241	3,184,196
66%	36	Virginia	5,883,341	3,896,846
66%		Maryland	4,153,057	2,734,189
66%		Washington	4,879,174	3,206,490
65%	1	Michigan	7,347,850	4,780,701
65%	73	Ohio	8,678,945	5,632,423
65%	3	North Carolina	7,013,407	4,539,729
64%		Oregon	2,822,652	1,820,507
63%		Montana	774,966	491,966
63%	40	Florida	13,534,127	8,557,692
63%		Missouri	4,505,205	2,840,776
62%		D.C.	473,487	294,254
62%		Delaware	672,175	417,631
62%		Vermont	491,789	304,509
61%		Nebraska	1,329,041	815,568
61%		New Jersey	6,012,270	3,677,463
61%		North Dakota	536,097	326,239
61%		Connecticut	2,565,067	1,560,640
60%		Illinois	8,916,661	5,339,488
60%		Idaho	1,114,631	666,290
60%	5	Pennsylvania	9,700,796	5,783,621
60%		South Dakota	619,251	368,816
59%		Louisiana	3,396,443	2,014,511
59%		Rhode Island	768,684	451,593
58%		Alaska	519,629	302,465
58%		Wyoming	430,996	250,701
58%		Alabama	3,595,400	2,083,309
57%		Georgia	6,867,525	3,910,557
57%		South Carolina	3,506,606	1,981,516
56%	13	Nevada	1,804,094	1,017,772
56%		Utah	1,829,834	1,023,036
56%		Indiana	4,780,336	2,663,373
56%		California	23,546,880	13,096,097
55%		Kentucky	3,283,865	1,815,896
54%		Kansas	2,053,815	1,115,281
53%		New York	13,408,596	7,128,852
53%		Arizona	4,376,217	2,323,579
52%		Tennessee	4,790,345	2,480,182
50%		Arkansas	2,159,446	1,080,809
49%		Oklahoma	2,757,440	1,343,380
48%		Texas	16,518,813	7,993,851
47%		West Virginia	1,460,372	685,099
47%		New Mexico	1,448,740	679,080
44%		Hawaii	993,045	436,774
40%		Mississippi	2,200,437	889,914
59.1%	253	Total	219,493,648	129,664,614

Without doing any calculations, a glance at the table shows that the 12 battleground states (in bold) are concentrated at the top of the table. All but one of the 12 battleground states in 2012 had above-average turnout—that is, a turnout above 59.1%.

The next two tables allow us to make this visual observation more precise.

The table below shows that the voter turnout in the 12 battleground states in 2012 was 45,140,978 out of an estimated civilian voting-age population (ECVAP) of 69,104,363—that is, a turnout level of 65.3%. The table is sorted according to the number of general-election campaign events in column 2 (and, secondarily, if there is a tie, according to turnout percentage shown in column 1).

Voter turnout in 12 battleground states in 2012

Turnout percent	2012 events	State	ECVAP	Voter Turnout
65%	73	Ohio	8,678,945	5,632,423
63%	40	Florida	13,534,127	8,557,692
66%	36	Virginia	5,883,341	3,896,846
70%	27	Iowa	2,280,022	1,589,951
71%	23	Colorado	3,654,799	2,594,628
72%	18	Wisconsin	4,271,926	3,078,135
71%	13	New Hampshire	1,014,537	718,700
56%	13	Nevada	1,804,094	1,017,772
60%	5	Pennsylvania	9,700,796	5,783,621
65%	3	North Carolina	7,013,407	4,539,729
75%	1	Minnesota	3,920,519	2,950,780
65%	1	Michigan	7,347,850	4,780,701
65.3%	253	12 states	69,104,363	45,140,978

The table below shows that the voter turnout in the 39 spectator jurisdictions in 2012 was 84,523,636 out of a total civilian voting-age population of 150,389,285—that is, a turnout level of 56.2%. This table is sorted according to the turnout percentage (column 1). None of these places received any campaign events (column 2).

Voter turnout in 39 spectator jurisdictions in 2012

Turnout percent	2012 events	State	ECVAP	Voter Turnout
69%		Maine	1,046,057	724,759
67%		Massachusetts	4,784,241	3,184,196
66%		Maryland	4,153,057	2,734,189
66%		Washington	4,879,174	3,206,490
64%		Oregon	2,822,652	1,820,507
63%		Montana	774,966	491,966
63%		Missouri	4,505,205	2,840,776
62%		D.C.	473,487	294,254
62%		Delaware	672,175	417,631
62%		Vermont	491,789	304,509
61%		Nebraska	1,329,041	815,568
61%		New Jersey	6,012,270	3,677,463
61%		North Dakota	536,097	326,239
61%		Connecticut	2,565,067	1,560,640
60%		Illinois	8,916,661	5,339,488
60%		Idaho	1,114,631	666,290
60%		South Dakota	619,251	368,816
59%		Louisiana	3,396,443	2,014,511
59%		Rhode Island	768,684	451,593
58%		Alaska	519,629	302,465
58%		Wyoming	430,996	250,701
58%		Alabama	3,595,400	2,083,309
57%		Georgia	6,867,525	3,910,557
57%		South Carolina	3,506,606	1,981,516
56%		Utah	1,829,834	1,023,036
56%		Indiana	4,780,336	2,663,373
56%		California	23,546,880	13,096,097
55%		Kentucky	3,283,865	1,815,896
54%		Kansas	2,053,815	1,115,281
53%		New York	13,408,596	7,128,852
53%		Arizona	4,376,217	2,323,579
52%		Tennessee	4,790,345	2,480,182
50%		Arkansas	2,159,446	1,080,809
49%		Oklahoma	2,757,440	1,343,380
48%		Texas	16,518,813	7,993,851
47%		West Virginia	1,460,372	685,099
47%		New Mexico	1,448,740	679,080
44%		Hawaii	993,045	436,774
40%		Mississippi	2,200,437	889,914
56.2%	253	Total	150,389,285	84,523,636

The ratio of 65.3% to 56.2% is 1.16—that is, in 2012, turnout in the 12 battleground states (65.3%) was 16% higher than turnout in the 38 spectator states and the District of Columbia (56.2%).

In summary, the turnout in the battleground states in 2012 was 16% higher than the turnout in the rest of the country.

2008 Election

The table below shows the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's state-by-state turnout data for the November 2008 election.³ In 2008, 131,924,177 people turned out to vote out of an estimated civilian voting-age population (ECVAP) of 210,476,000—that is, voter turnout was 62.7% nationally.

The table is sorted according to turnout percentage (column 1).

Column 2 shows the number of general-election campaign events in each state. Virtually all (98%) of the general-election campaign events (293 of the 300 events) occurred in 14 closely divided battleground states. Each of these 14 battleground states (shown in bold in the table) received between 7 and 62 events. There was a dramatic difference between the number of events in these 14 battleground states compared to the number of events in the remaining states. The jurisdictions that received the remaining seven events (a mere 2% of the national total of 300 events) received only one or two events each. All the other states received no events at all.

³ U.S. Election Assistance Commission. 2008. *The 2008 Election Administration and Voting Survey*. November 2009. Pages 28–29. https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/eac_assets/1/28/2008%20Election%20Administration%20and%20Voting%20Survey%20EAVS%20Report.pdf

Voter turnout in 2008

Turnout percent	2008 events	State	ECVAP	Voter Turnout
77%	2	Minnesota	3,799,000	2,920,214
73%	12	New Hampshire	988,000	719,403
73%	2	Maine	1,025,000	744,456
72%	8	Wisconsin	4,190,000	2,996,869
71%	20	Colorado	3,434,000	2,426,253
69%	7	Iowa	2,226,000	1,546,483
69%		Vermont	482,000	333,839
69%	10	Michigan	7,334,000	5,039,080
68%	21	Missouri	4,391,000	2,992,023
68%		Oregon	2,711,000	1,845,251
68%		Alaska	485,000	328,957
68%	23	Virginia	5,546,000	3,750,065
67%	46	Florida	12,643,000	8,514,809
67%		Maryland	3,957,000	2,661,905
67%		Montana	740,000	497,599
67%		Massachusetts	4,621,000	3,102,995
67%		New Jersey	5,851,000	3,910,220
67%		Washington	4,609,000	3,071,587
66%		Connecticut	2,480,000	1,644,845
66%	62	Ohio	8,569,000	5,671,438
66%	15	North Carolina	6,586,000	4,338,197
66%		Delaware	632,000	415,696
65%		North Dakota	490,000	318,425
65%		South Dakota	598,000	387,355
65%	40	Pennsylvania	9,400,000	6,071,357
64%		Wyoming	397,000	256,035
64%		Arkansas	2,083,000	1,341,795
64%		Nebraska	1,278,000	811,780
63%		Illinois	8,830,000	5,577,509
63%		Kansas	2,005,000	1,263,202
63%		Rhode Island	757,000	475,428
63%		Idaho	1,063,000	667,506
62%		California	22,224,000	13,798,557
61%		Louisiana	3,237,000	1,980,814
61%		Alabama	3,462,000	2,105,622
60%	9	Indiana	4,643,000	2,805,986
60%		Georgia	6,614,000	3,975,986
58%		New York	13,206,000	7,722,019
58%		South Carolina	3,303,000	1,930,359
58%	12	Nevada	1,665,000	970,019
58%		Kentucky	3,198,000	1,861,577
57%	1	Tennessee	4,591,000	2,618,238
56%		Oklahoma	2,630,000	1,474,694
55%		Arizona	4,205,000	2,320,851
55%		Utah	1,759,000	960,299
53%		Texas	15,254,000	8,059,731
52%	1	D.C.	433,000	226,871
52%	1	West Virginia	1,418,000	736,622
50%		Hawaii	919,000	456,009
45%	8	New Mexico	1,370,000	620,289
31%		Mississippi	2,145,000	657,058
62.7%	300	Total	210,476,000	131,924,177

Without doing any calculations, a glance at the table shows that the 14 battleground states (in bold) are concentrated at the top of the table. All but three of these 14 battleground states in 2008 had above-average turnout—that is, a turnout above 62.7%.

The next two tables allow us to make this visual observation more precise.

The table below shows that the voter turnout in the 14 battleground states in 2008 was 48,462,271 people out of a total estimated civilian voting-age population (ECVAP) of 72,985,000—that is, 66.4%. The table is sorted according to the number of general-election campaign events in column 2 (and, secondarily, if there is a tie, according to turnout percentage shown in column 1).

Voter turnout in 14 battleground states in 2008

Turnout percent	2008 events	State	CVAP	Voter Turnout
66%	62	Ohio	8,569,000	5,671,438
67%	46	Florida	12,643,000	8,514,809
65%	40	Pennsylvania	9,400,000	6,071,357
68%	23	Virginia	5,546,000	3,750,065
68%	21	Missouri	4,391,000	2,992,023
71%	20	Colorado	3,434,000	2,426,253
66%	15	North Carolina	6,586,000	4,338,197
73%	12	New Hampshire	988,000	719,403
58%	12	Nevada	1,665,000	970,019
69%	10	Michigan	7,334,000	5,039,080
60%	9	Indiana	4,643,000	2,805,986
72%	8	Wisconsin	4,190,000	2,996,869
45%	8	New Mexico	1,370,000	620,289
69%	7	Iowa	2,226,000	1,546,483
66.4%	293	Total	72,985,000	48,462,271

The table below shows that the voter turnout in the 37 spectator jurisdictions in 2008 was 83,461,906 people out of a total estimated civilian voting-age population of 137,491,000—that is, 60.7%. The table is sorted based on the number of general-election campaign events in column 2 (and, secondarily, if there is a tie, the turnout percentage in column 1). As can be seen, the five of the 37 jurisdictions at the top of this table received a small number of events (one or two), whereas the 32 other jurisdictions received no events at all.

Voter turnout in 37 spectator jurisdictions in 2008

Turnout percent	2008 events	State	ECVAP	Voter Turnout
77%	2	Minnesota	3,799,000	2,920,214
73%	2	Maine	1,025,000	744,456
57%	1	Tennessee	4,591,000	2,618,238
52%	1	D.C.	433,000	226,871
52%	1	West Virginia	1,418,000	736,622
69%		Vermont	482,000	333,839
68%		Oregon	2,711,000	1,845,251
68%		Alaska	485,000	328,957
67%		Maryland	3,957,000	2,661,905
67%		Montana	740,000	497,599
67%		Massachusetts	4,621,000	3,102,995
67%		New Jersey	5,851,000	3,910,220
67%		Washington	4,609,000	3,071,587
66%		Connecticut	2,480,000	1,644,845
66%		Delaware	632,000	415,696
65%		North Dakota	490,000	318,425
65%		South Dakota	598,000	387,355
64%		Wyoming	397,000	256,035
64%		Arkansas	2,083,000	1,341,795
64%		Nebraska	1,278,000	811,780
63%		Illinois	8,830,000	5,577,509
63%		Kansas	2,005,000	1,263,202
63%		Rhode Island	757,000	475,428
63%		Idaho	1,063,000	667,506
62%		California	22,224,000	13,798,557
61%		Louisiana	3,237,000	1,980,814
61%		Alabama	3,462,000	2,105,622
60%		Georgia	6,614,000	3,975,986
58%		New York	13,206,000	7,722,019
58%		South Carolina	3,303,000	1,930,359
58%		Kentucky	3,198,000	1,861,577
56%		Oklahoma	2,630,000	1,474,694
55%		Arizona	4,205,000	2,320,851
55%		Utah	1,759,000	960,299
53%		Texas	15,254,000	8,059,731
50%		Hawaii	919,000	456,009
31%		Mississippi	2,145,000	657,058
60.7%	5	Total	137,491,000	83,461,906

The ratio of 66.4% to 60.7% is 1.09—that is, in 2008, turnout in the 14 battleground states (66.4%) was 9% higher than the turnout in the 37 spectator jurisdictions (60.7%).

In summary, the turnout in the battleground states in 2008 was 9% higher than the turnout in the rest of the country.

Why Voter Turnout Is Affected by Battleground Status

It is no mystery why voter turnout is higher in battleground states compared to the rest of the country.

A 2005 Brookings Institution report entitled *Thinking About Political Polarization* pointed out:

“The electoral college can depress voter participation in much of the nation. Overall, the percentage of voters who participated in last fall’s election was almost 5 percent higher than the turnout in 2000. Yet, most of the increase was limited to the battleground states. **Because the electoral college has effectively narrowed elections like the last one to a quadrennial contest for the votes of a relatively small number of states, people elsewhere are likely to feel that their votes don’t matter.**”⁴ [Emphasis added]

In 2012, *USA Today* reported the following about that year’s election:

“Swing-state voters are a bit more enthusiastic about voting this year than those living elsewhere, perhaps reflecting the attention they’re given in TV ads and candidate visits. Nearly half of those in battleground states are extremely or very enthusiastic about voting for president this year.”⁵

Numerous analysts have observed that voter turnout in spectator states is adversely affected because voters of both parties in such states realize that their votes do not matter in presidential elections.⁶

1824 Election

There is nothing new about the fact that voter turnout is higher in closely divided battleground states. Indeed, it is direct consequence of the state-by-state winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes.

Discussing voter turnout in the 1824 presidential election, historian Donald Ratcliffe wrote:

“The overall level of turnout in the election was low. ... **The reason was that in most states, the outcome in the [presidential election] was already fairly clear, and voting did seem a priority. Only half**

⁴ Nivola, Pietro S. 2005. *Thinking About Political Polarization*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution. Policy Brief 139. January 2005.

⁵ Page, Susan. 2012. Swing states poll: Amid barrage of ads, Obama has edge. *USA Today*. July 8, 2012.

⁶ Committee for the Study of the American Electorate. 2004. President Bush, mobilization drives propel turnout to post-1968 high. November 4, 2004. Also, the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate reported, “Turnout in battleground states increased by 6.3 percentage points, while turnout in the other states (and the District of Columbia) increased by only 3.8 percentage points.”

a dozen states experienced a real popular contest: in the Old Northwest (Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois), in New Jersey and Maryland, and in North Carolina. In these states, turnout in the presidential election rose to over 40 percent, compared with less than 24 percent in the ten other states⁷ that held a popular election.”⁸ [Emphasis added]

In *America Goes to the Polls: A Report on Voter Turnout in the 2008 Election*, the Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network found that in 2008:

“Voter turnout in the 15 battleground states averaged **seven points higher** than in the 35 non-battleground states.”⁹ [Emphasis added]

Concerning the 2004 election, Daniel E. Bergan reported in *Public Opinion Quarterly* that

“Battleground states had turnout rates that are **five percentage points higher** than those of non-battleground states.”¹⁰ [Emphasis added]

⁷ Note that there was no popular vote for President in 1824 in six states (New York, Delaware, South Carolina, Vermont, and Louisiana) because the legislatures of those states appointed the state’s presidential electors. By 1828, only two state legislatures appointed presidential electors (Delaware and South Carolina).

⁸ Ratcliffe, Donald. 2015. *The One-Party Presidential Contest: Adams, Jackson, and 1824’s Five-Horse Race*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas. Page 21.

⁹ *America Goes to the Polls: A Report on Voter Turnout in the 2008 Election*. Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network. 2008.

¹⁰ Bergan, Daniel E. et al. 2005. Grassroots mobilization and voter turnout in 2004. 69 *Public Opinion Quarterly*. Volume 69. Pages 760 and 772.