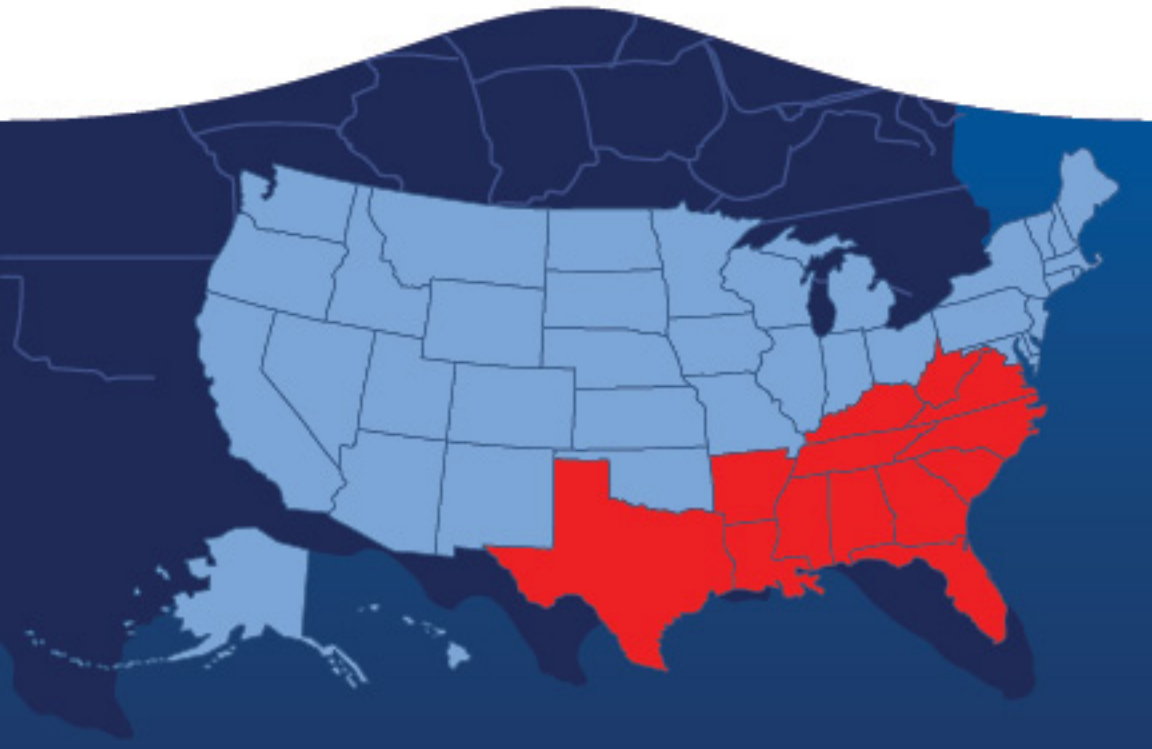
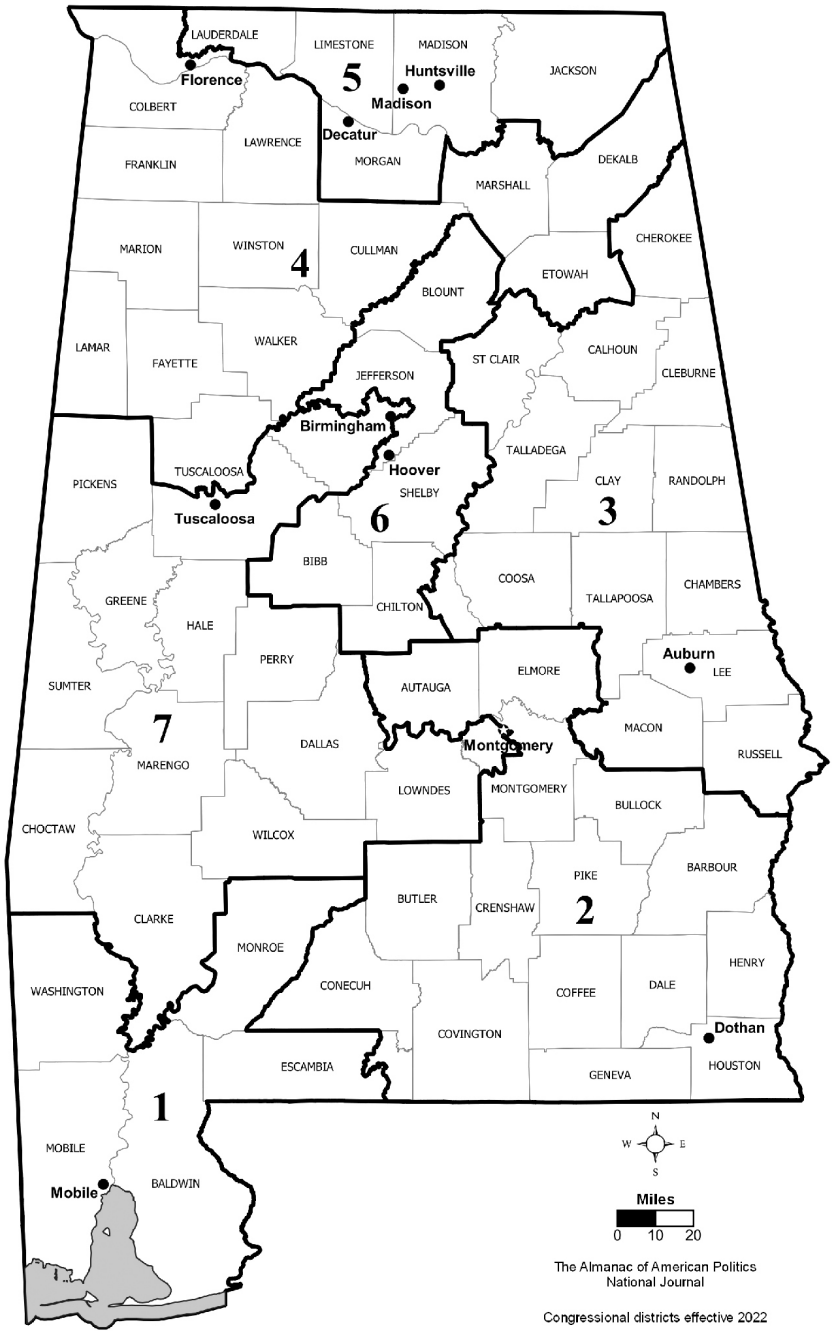
2024 Almanac of American Politics:

Southeast



ALABAMA


LAUDERDALE
LIMESTONE
MADISON
Florence
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Huntsville
JACKSON
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Madison
Decatur
LAWRENCE
FRANKLIN
MORGAN
DEKALB
MARSHALL
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WINSTON
4
CULLMAN
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LAMAR
FAYETTE
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ST CLAIR
CALHOUN
CLEBURNE
JEFFERSON
Birmingham
TALLADEGA
PICKENS
TUSCALOOSA
Hoover
SHELBY
CLAY
RANDOLPH
Tuscaloosa
6
3
BIBB
COOSA
CHAMBERS
GREENE
CHILTON
TALLAPOOSA
HALE
Auburn
PERRY
ELMORE
LEE
SUMTER
AUTAUGA
MACON
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DALLAS
Montgomery
RUSSELL
MARENGO
LOWNDES
MONTGOMERY
BULLOCK
CHOCTAW
WILCOX
PIKE
BARBOUR
BUTLER
CRENSHAW
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CLARKE
MONROE
HENRY
WASHINGTON
CONECUH
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COVINGTON
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The Almanac of American Politics
National Journal
Congressional districts effective 2022

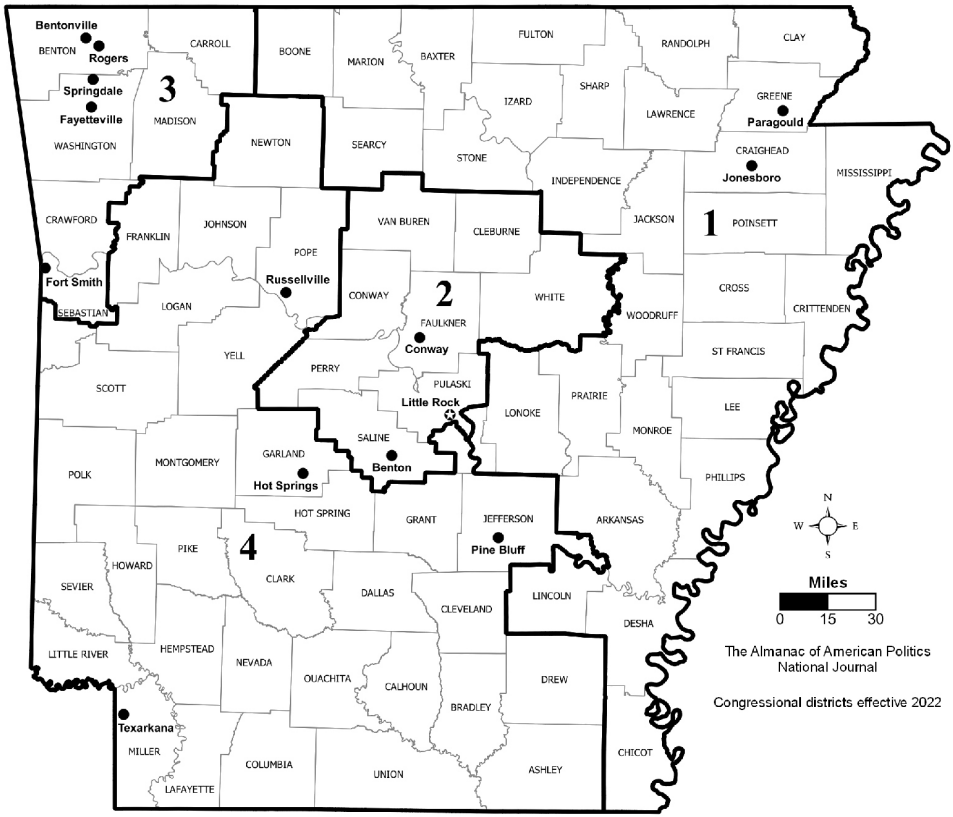
Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	286,649 (63%)	Sanders (D)	75,035 (17%)	Bloomberg (D)	52,874 (12%)
	Warren (D)	25,923 (6%)				
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,441,170 (62%)	Biden (D)	849,624 (37%)		
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,318,255 (62%)	Clinton (D)	729,547 (34%)	Johnson (L)	44,467 (2%)

Alabama has been a reliably Republican state in presidential races since 1980. Jimmy Carter, a son of the South, in 1976 was the last Democratic nominee to carry Alabama, winning 60 of its 67 counties. But in 2015, a huge August rally at Ladd-Peebles Stadium outside of Mobile for Donald Trump's nascent bid for the 2016 GOP presidential nomination attracted some 30,000 boisterous supporters and signaled the candidate's unique appeal to many Republican voters who had become alienated from the party establishment and wanted more culture warrior and less economic conservatism. Populist GOP Sen. Jeff Sessions praised Trump's anti-immigration stance and was the first senator to endorse the New York real estate developer, who handily won the state's Super Tuesday primary with 43 percent. Trump's strong performance across the South made him all but impossible to catch in the GOP primaries. (Sessions would go on to be Trump's first attorney general, got fired after Trump turned on him and failed in his 2020 Senate comeback bid, showing how powerful Trump's pull was with the GOP base). In 2020, Joe Biden won the state's March 3 primary in dominant fashion with 63 percent of the vote to 17 percent for Bernie Sanders and 12 percent for Michael Bloomberg. The Super Tuesday victory came as part of Biden's sweep of the South that helped cement his nomination.

The general election was a foregone conclusion: Trump bested Biden 62%-37%, winning 54 of the state's 67 counties. Biden won 12 counties in the state's Black Belt, named for the rich dark soil that was once worked by cotton plantation slaves and sharecroppers. The region has a high share of African-American voters. He won Jefferson County (Birmingham), marking the fourth consecutive time that a Democratic presidential nominee carried the state's largest vote-producing county, and improved on Hillary Clinton's showing thee, as well as slightly shrinking Trump's big margins in growing, exurban Shelby and St. Clair counties. He also did better in Madison County, home to highly educated Huntsville, and Montgomery County, home to the state's capital, evidence that Trump's suburban problem carried even into the Deep South. But while Biden made some inroads with white suburbanites, the state's racially polarized nature and large share of deeply conservative, rural white voters meant he never had a shot—and in an election with presidential-level turnout, neither did Sen. Doug Jones, who had won a 2017 special election against a fatally flawed opponent.

ARKANSAS


Bentonville
BENTON
Rogers
Springdale
Fayetteville
WASHINGTON
CARROLL
3
MADISON
BOONE
NEWTON
MARION
BAXTER
SEARCY
FULTON
STONE
IZARD
SHARP
RANDOLPH
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LAWRENCE
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CRAIGHEAD
Jonesboro
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JACKSON
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CRAWFORD
FRANKLIN
JOHNSON
POPE
Fort Smith
Russellville
SEBASTIAN
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Conway
WHITE
WOODRUFF
CROSS
CRITTENDEN
ST FRANCIS
YELL
PERRY
SCOTT
PULASKI
Little Rock
LONOKE
PRAIRIE
LEE
MONROE
SALINE
Benton
GARLAND
Hot Springs
POLK
MONTGOMERY
PHILLIPS
HOT SPRING
GRANT
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Pine Bluff
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CLARK
DALLAS
CLEVELAND
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HEMPSTEAD
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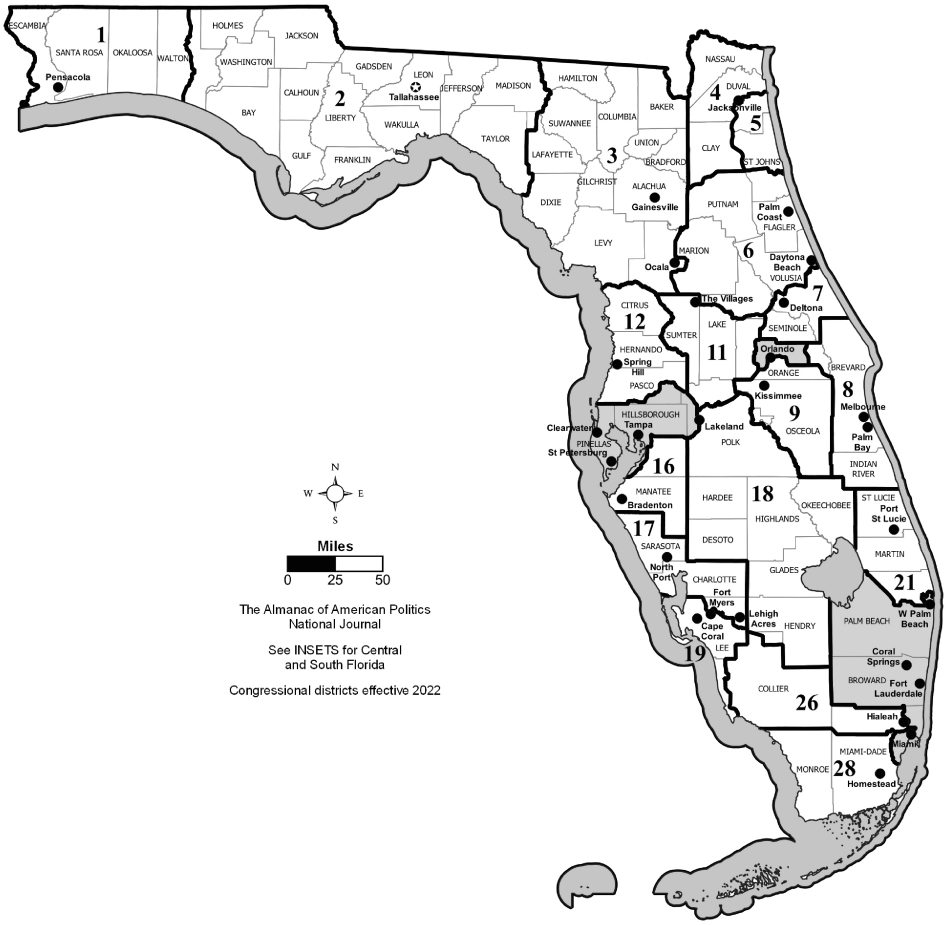
Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	93,011 (41%)	Sanders (D)	51,413 (22%)	Bloomberg (D)	38,312 (17%)
	Warren (D)	22,970 (10%)				
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	760,647 (62%)	Biden (D)	423,932 (35%)		
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	684,872 (61%)	Clinton (D)	380,494 (34%)	Johnson (L)	29,829 (3%)

Like most southern states, Arkansas voted more Democratic than the nation as a whole in presidential elections from Reconstruction to 1960. Since then, it has done so only when Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton were atop the Democratic ticket. In the past decade it has become one of the most reliably Republican states in the nation. In the past six elections, it has voted 51 and 54 percent for George W. Bush, 59 percent for John McCain, 61 percent for Mitt Romney, and 61 and 62 percent for Donald Trump. Between the presidential elections of 2000 and 2020, only in West Virginia has the Democratic percentage declined more precipitously than in Arkansas. In 1996, Bill Clinton carried all but nine of the state's 75 counties. In 2016, his wife, Hillary Clinton, won just eight. The Democratic base in presidential contests is Pulaski County (Little Rock), where more than a third of the residents are African-American. Jefferson County (Pine Bluff) also leans Democratic, as do the rural, heavily African-American counties along the Mississippi River on the state's eastern border. Northwest Arkansas, the Ozark Mountain region, is historically Republican and home to the corporate headquarters of Walmart in Bentonville.

In the 2016 GOP presidential primary, Trump edged out Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, 33%-31%, with 25% to Florida Sen. Marco Rubio. Joe Biden won the 2020 Democratic primary on March 3 by 41%-22% over Bernie Sanders, with Michael Bloomberg drawing 17% after investing heavily in the state. That contest came on Super Tuesday, when Biden's dominance across the South helped him cement his primary win. In the general election, Trump ran ahead of his 2016 numbers in much of the state, though Biden improved on Clinton's performance in the more urban and better-educated areas around Little Rock, Bentonville and Fayetteville.

FLORIDA



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National Journal

See INSETS for Central
and South Florida

Congressional districts effective 2022

Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	1,077,375 (62%)	Sanders (D)	397,311 (23%)	Bloomberg (D)	146,544	(8%)
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	5,668,731 (51%)	Biden (D)	5,297,045 (48%)			
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	4,617,886 (49%)	Clinton (D)	4,504,975 (47%)	Johnson (L)	207,043	(2%)

For the past three decades, Florida was both the largest and one of the most competitive battleground states in the country. With 29 electoral votes, the same number as New York, only California and Texas have more. Florida Democratic strategist Steven Schale, one of the state's savviest political observers, notes that from 1992 to 2016, more than 50 million votes have been cast in seven presidential elections and the two parties were separated by a miniscule 0.02 percent: Republican candidates having received a net 12,000 votes more than Democrats. But while both campaigns hotly contested Florida in 2020, Donald Trump won it by a shockingly comfortable margin, defeating Joe Biden 51.2%-47.9% with a margin of almost 372,000 votes. That's a landslide by Florida standards, the largest win for either party in a presidential election since 2004—and 7.6 points more Republican than the national popular vote, the farthest Florida's results have been from the national results since 1988. Joe Biden is the first person since John F. Kennedy to win the White House without carrying Florida.

Florida's presidential elections have been close for decades, but in reality the state has long leaned a bit more Republican than the nation as a whole. In every election since 1976, Florida's results have been more Republican than the national popular vote. And while the state will likely stay a battleground, it may not play the crucial role in future presidential contests that it has in past decades.

Trump's adopted home state was a top priority for both campaigns, a must-win for Trump and a virtual guarantee of victory for Biden. "You hold the key. If Florida goes blue, it's over," Biden said at a late October rally in Broward County.

It was both candidates' second-most-visited state, behind Pennsylvania; Trump made 16 campaign trips to Florida during the general election, while Biden was there eight times. The campaigns and their allies also spent more on Florida's expensive airwaves than on any other state, including a $100-million late investment from Michael Bloomberg to boost Biden in the state.

But while Biden and his allies outspent Trump in the state, Trump's campaign spent months targeting Florida's Hispanic voters—especially Cuban and Venezuelan Americans in South Florida. They hammered on the message that Biden was a socialist, tying him to his party's left wing and Latin American leftist dictators. The attacks did serious damage. Miami-Dade County shifted right by a whopping 22 points from 2016 to 2020, the largest swing in any populous county in the nation. Biden carried Miami-Dade by just 7 points and 85,000 votes, down from Clinton's 290,000-vote margin in the county. That shift alone accounted for more than three quarters of Trump's statewide improvement. Cubans weren't the only Hispanic population that shifted against Democrats, however—Biden won Osceola County, which is majority-Hispanic and heavily Puerto Rican, by just 14 percentage points after Clinton carried it by 25.

Biden actually did slightly better than Clinton in the areas around Tampa Bay, Jacksonville, and parts of the ruby-red panhandle, including Tallahassee, but it was far from enough.

Trump's win there was the first clear result on election night, sent some Democrats into panic mode and kept Biden from a quick knockout blow. But it also quickly became clear that Trump's win was powered by a huge swing in South Florida, a part of the U.S. unlike any other.

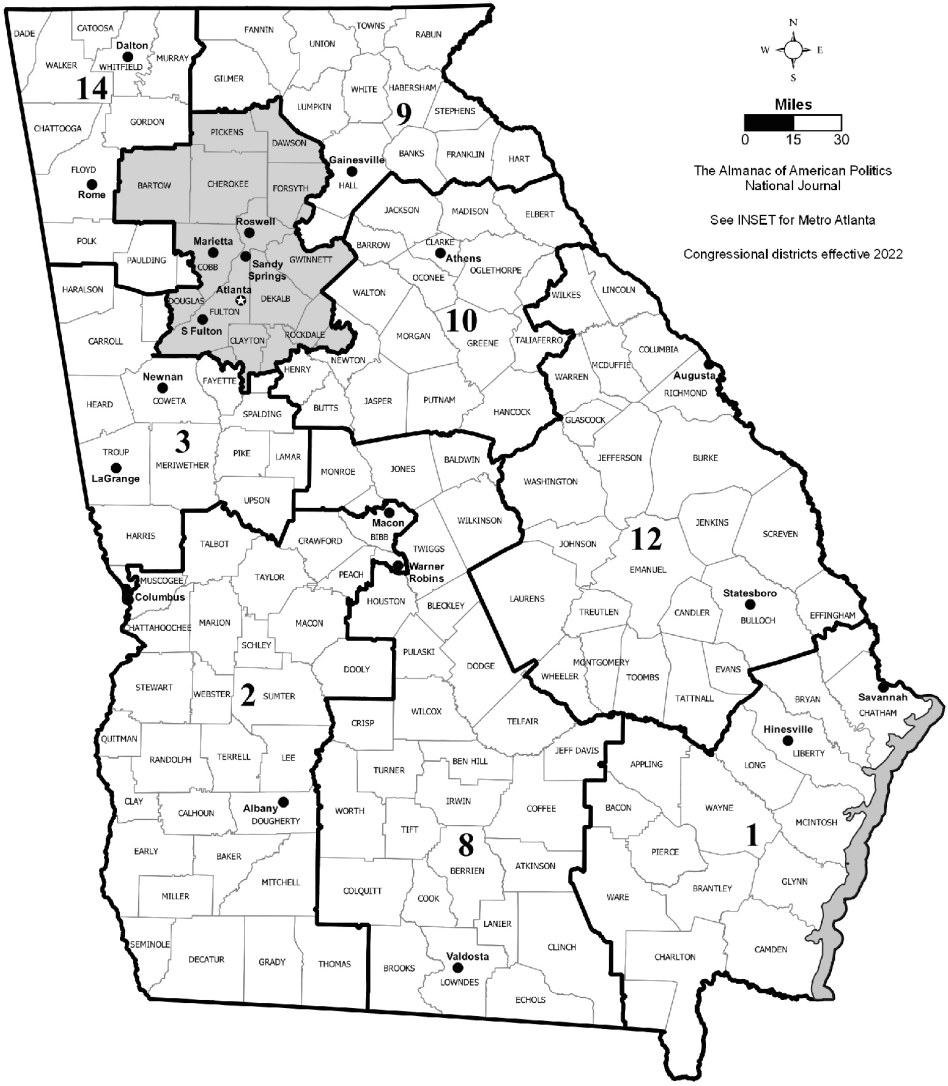
Biden's lack of a field operation in Florida due to the coronavirus pandemic, especially compared to Hillary Clinton's Miami machine, likely made a big difference as well.

Florida's presidential primary had not been crucial in determining a nomination between 1976, when Democrat Jimmy Carter defeated George Wallace and ended Wallace's career in national politics, and 2008, when Arizona Sen. John McCain defeated Mitt Romney, a victory

that propelled him to success one week later on Super Tuesday. In 2016, Trump's comfortable win in the state forced home-state Sen. Marco Rubio from the race. In 2020, Florida's primary was held on March 17, two weeks after Biden's big Super Tuesday wins and just as it became clear exactly how big a threat the coronavirus would be. Biden dominated with a 62%-23% win over Bernie Sanders, carrying every county; along with Biden wins the same day in Illinois and Arizona, the result all but ended Sanders' already-flagging hopes for a comeback (he suspended his campaign two weeks later). The election was relatively uninterrupted because of Florida's heavy use of mail voting.

Florida might remain a swing state in the years to come, but it's unlikely to be the bellwether it has been unless presidential politics shifts once again in the coming years.

GEORGIA


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National Journal
See INSET for Metro Atlanta
Congressional districts effective 2022
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Dalton
Gainesville
Rome
Roswell
Marietta
Sandy Springs
Atlanta
S Fulton
Athens
Newnan
LaGrange
Macon
Warner Robins
Columbus
Augusta
Statesboro
Savannah
Hinesville
Albany
Valdosta
DADE
CATOOSA
WALKER
WHITFIELD
MURRAY
FANNIN
UNION
TOWNS
RABUN
GILMER
WHITE
HABERSHAM
STEPHENS
LUMPKIN
CHATTOOGA
GORDON
PICKENS
DAWSON
BANKS
FRANKLIN
HART
FLOYD
BARTOW
CHEROKEE
FORSYTH
HALL
JACKSON
MADISON
ELBERT
POLK
PAULDING
COBB
GWINNETT
BARROW
CLARKE
OCONEE
OGLETHORPE
HARALSON
DOUGLAS
FULTON
DEKALB
WALTON
WILKES
LINCOLN
CARROLL
CLAYTON
ROCKDALE
MORGAN
GREENE
TALIAFERRO
COLUMBIA
NEWTON
MCDUFFIE
WARREN
HEARD
COWETA
FAYETTE
HENRY
SPALDING
BUTTS
JASPER
PUTNAM
HANCOCK
GLASCOCK
RICHMOND
TROUP
MERIWETHER
PIKE
LAMAR
MONROE
JONES
BALDWIN
JEFFERSON
BURKE
UPSON
WASHINGTON
HARRIS
TALBOT
CRAWFORD
BIBB
TWIGGS
WILKINSON
JOHNSON
EMANUEL
JENKINS
SCREVEN
MUSCOGEE
TAYLOR
PEACH
HOUSTON
BLECKLEY
LAURENS
TREUTLEN
CANDLER
BULLOCH
EFFINGHAM
HATTAHOOCHEE
MARION
MACON
SCHLEY
PULASKI
DODGE
MONTGOMERY
WHEELER
TOOMBS
EVANS
STEWART
WEBSTER
SUMTER
DOOLY
WILCOX
TELFAIR
TATTNALL
BRYAN
CHATHAM
QUITMAN
RANDOLPH
TERRELL
LEE
CRISP
TURNER
BEN HILL
JEFF DAVIS
APPLING
LIBERTY
LONG
CLAY
CALHOUN
DOUGHERTY
WORTH
IRWIN
COFFEE
BACON
WAYNE
MCINTOSH
TIFT
EARLY
BAKER
BERRIEN
ATKINSON
PIERCE
BRANTLEY
GLYNN
MITCHELL
MILLER
COLQUITT
COOK
WARE
LANIER
SEMINOLE
DECATUR
GRADY
THOMAS
BROOKS
LOWNDES
CLINCH
CHARLTON
CAMDEN
ECHOLS

Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	922,177 (85%)	Sanders (D)	101,668 (9%)			
2020 Pres. Vote	Biden (D)	2,473,633 (49%)	Trump (R)	2,461,854 (49%)			
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	2,089,104 (51%)	Clinton (D)	1,877,963 (46%)	Johnson (L)	125,306	(3%)

Georgia's rapid demographic shifts have transformed it into a battleground. In 2020, Joe Biden became the first Democrat since Bill Clinton in 1992 to carry the state, before it became the epicenter of President Donald Trump's false claims that the election had been rigged against him. The state once was part of the Solid South for Democrats and in 1976 native son Jimmy Carter carried all 159 of its counties; in 1980 it was one of just six states he carried.

Georgia's fast-growing non-white population and white suburbanites' hard shift against the GOP put the state in play in 2020. The state's population grew by almost 10 percent in the past decade, and a huge part of that population growth was driven by Blacks, Hispanics and Asian Americans. Georgia is on the cusp of becoming a majority-minority state: Its population was 48 percent non-white as of 2019, up from 44 percent in 2010.

The Peach State finally became ripe for Democrats in 2020, though even they were initially skeptical it would happen. Biden and his allies didn't start spending heavily on ads in the state until late in the campaign, and his only Georgia visit came in late October. But the state saw a massive surge in turnout from minority voters in November, especially among Hispanics and Asian Americans, and Atlanta's diverse and well-educated suburbs swung dramatically against Trump.

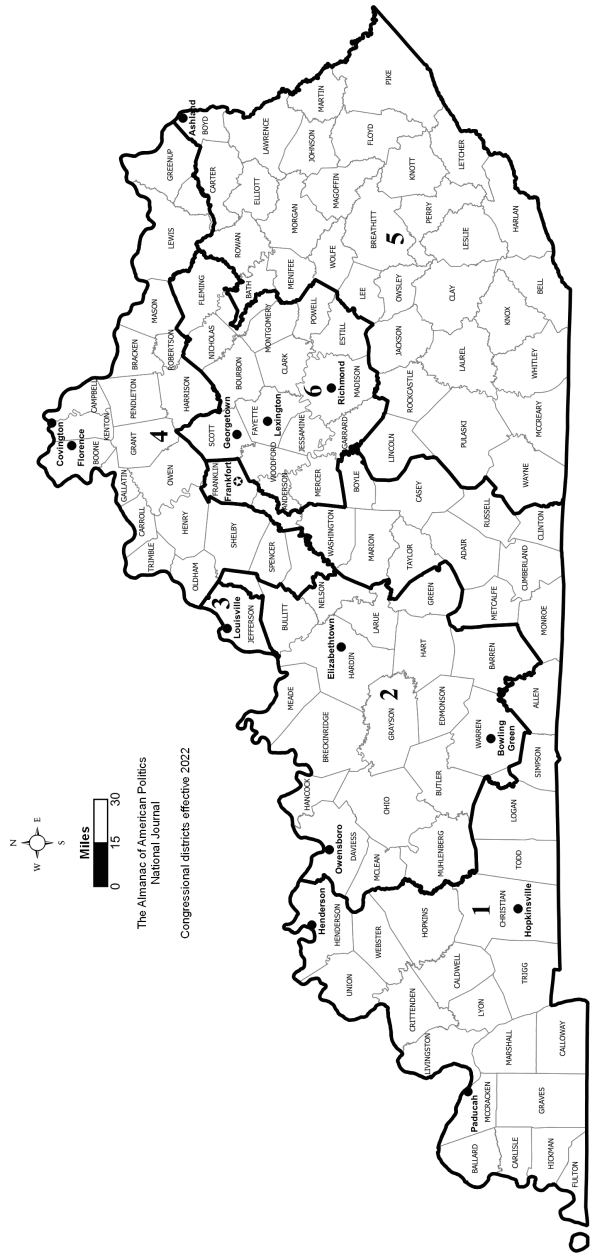
Trump led by more than 100,000 votes on election night and prematurely claimed victory. But a trove of votes remained from Atlanta and its inner suburbs. Biden pulled ahead by Friday morning, and in the final count led by more than 11,000 votes.

Biden's win was built in metro Atlanta. He netted almost 130,000 more votes than Hillary Clinton from Clayton, Fulton and DeKalb counties, each of which includes parts of Atlanta. But the biggest swing came in Atlanta's suburban counties: Biden netted 160,000 more votes than Clinton from the six core suburban counties surrounding Atlanta; he ran 10 points ahead of Clinton's numbers in eight counties in suburban and exurban Atlanta.

Trump wasn't willing to accept the results, however, claiming widespread voter fraud even after two separate recounts affirmed Biden's victory, pressuring the state's Republican secretary of state and governor to overturn the results and attacking them when they refused. The furious division he sowed within the GOP may have helped Democrats pull off victories two months later in a pair of hotly contested Senate runoffs that gave them a tie in the Senate.

Georgians like their primary to play an important role in presidential politics. In 1992, Democratic Gov. Zell Miller scheduled it one week before Super Tuesday to help Democratic nominee Bill Clinton; his win gave Clinton momentum going into the large batch of Southern primaries one week later. In 2016, then-Georgia Secretary of State Brian Kemp (currently the governor) helped organize the "SEC primary," named after the South's college football powerhouse Southeastern Conference. Six other southern states—Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia—held presidential primaries March 1. Trump lost only Oklahoma and Texas. In Georgia, he defeated Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, 39%-24%. African-American voters dominated Georgia's Democratic primaries, and helped Clinton defeat Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, 71%-28%, in 2016. In 2020, Georgia's primary was postponed because of the coronavirus until June 9, long after Biden had won the Democratic nomination. He defeated Sanders, who had suspended his campaign, 85%-9%. With confidence that he would win support from Georgia if he faced a primary challenge in 2024, Biden got the Democratic National Committee to make the state fourth in its presidential calendar. But Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger subsequently set a later date for the state's primary.

KENTUCKY


Ashland
Covington
Florence
Georgetown
Frankfort
Lexington
Richmond
Louisville
Elizabethtown
Bowling Green
Owensboro
Henderson
Hopkinsville
Paducah
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BOYD
GREENUP
CARTER
LAWRENCE
JOHNSON
MARTIN
PIKE
FLOYD
KNOTT
LETCHER
LEWIS
ELLIOTT
MORGAN
MAGOFFIN
PERRY
HARLAN
BRECKINRIDGE
GRAYSON
EDMONSON
WARREN
BARREN
ALLEN
SIMPSON
LOGAN
TODD
CHRISTIAN
HOPKINS
MUHLENBERG
BUTLER
OHIO
DAVIESS
HANCOCK
MCLEAN
WEBSTER
HENDERSON
UNION
CALDWELL
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LYON
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MARSHALL
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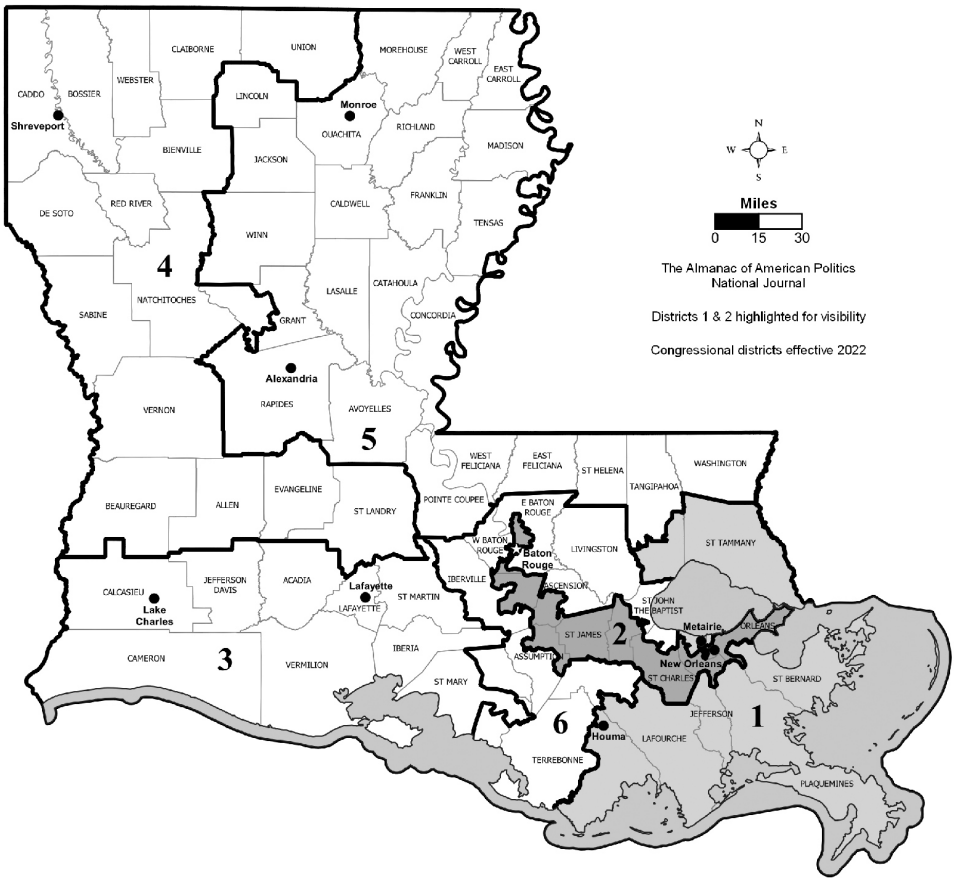
Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	365,284 (68%)	Sanders (D)	65,055 (12%)		
2016 Caucus (R)	Trump (R)	82,493 (36%)	Cruz (R)	72,503 (32%)	Rubio (R)	37,579 (16%)
	Kasich (R)	33,134 (14%)				
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,326,646 (62%)	Biden (D)	772,474 (36%)		
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,202,971 (63%)	Clinton (D)	628,854 (33%)	Johnson (L)	53,752 (3%)

It has been 24 years since Democrats won Kentucky in a presidential election. In the intervening quarter-century, it's become one of the most reliably Republican states in the country. With two Southerners on their ticket, they carried the state in 1992 and 1996. In 2000, Al Gore from neighboring Tennessee was hobbled by stands hostile to tobacco, coal and guns, all staples of Kentucky culture. George W. Bush carried the state, 57%-41%, that year, and Republicans have won by growing margins ever since. In 2012, Barack Obama carried only four of Kentucky's 120 counties, including those containing the state's two largest cities, Louisville and Lexington, and the state capital of Frankfort. He carried only one historically Democratic county in the eastern mountains. Even when losing by landslide margins, George McGovern carried seven mountain counties in 1972 and Walter Mondale carried 12 mountain counties in 1984.

The GOP trend has continued. Donald Trump won every coal country county in both 2016 and 2020 as he defeated Hillary Clinton by 63%-33 and beat Joe Biden by 62%-36%. In both elections, the Democratic nominee carried just two counties, Jefferson (Louisville) and Fayette (Lexington and the University of Kentucky). Democrats' policies toward combating global warming, the ongoing decline of the coal industry, Trump's promises to bring back coal, the region's conservative social values, and populist blue-collar voters' hard shift against Democrats, and antagonism toward the coasts have all remade Appalachia into one of the most solidly Republican areas of the country. And while the areas around Louisville and Lexington shifted left in 2020, much of the state's more rural territory continued its rightward drift. One illustration: Elliott County, a small coal county, went to Al Gore by nearly a 2-to-1 margin in 2000; in 2020, Trump won more than three quarters of its vote, seven points greater than his 2016 performance.

LOUISIANA


CLAIBORNE
UNION
MOREHOUSE
WEST CARROLL
EAST CARROLL
CADDO
BOSSIER
WEBSTER
LINCOLN
Monroe
Shreveport
OUACHITA
RICHLAND
MADISON
BIENVILLE
JACKSON
FRANKLIN
RED RIVER
CALDWELL
DE SOTO
WINN
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LASALLE
CATAHOULA
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SABINE
GRANT
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WASHINGTON
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BEAUREGARD
ALLEN
EVANGELINE
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Baton Rouge
LIVINGSTON
ST TAMMANY
CALCASIEU
JEFFERSON DAVIS
ACADIA
Lafayette
ST MARTIN
IBERVILLE
ASCENSION
Lake Charles
LAFAYETTE
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST
Metairie
ORLEANS
ST JAMES
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IBERIA
CAMERON
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VERMILION
ASSUMPTION
New Orleans
ST CHARLES
ST BERNARD
ST MARY
JEFFERSON
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Houma
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National Journal
Districts 1 & 2 highlighted for visibility
Congressional districts effective 2022

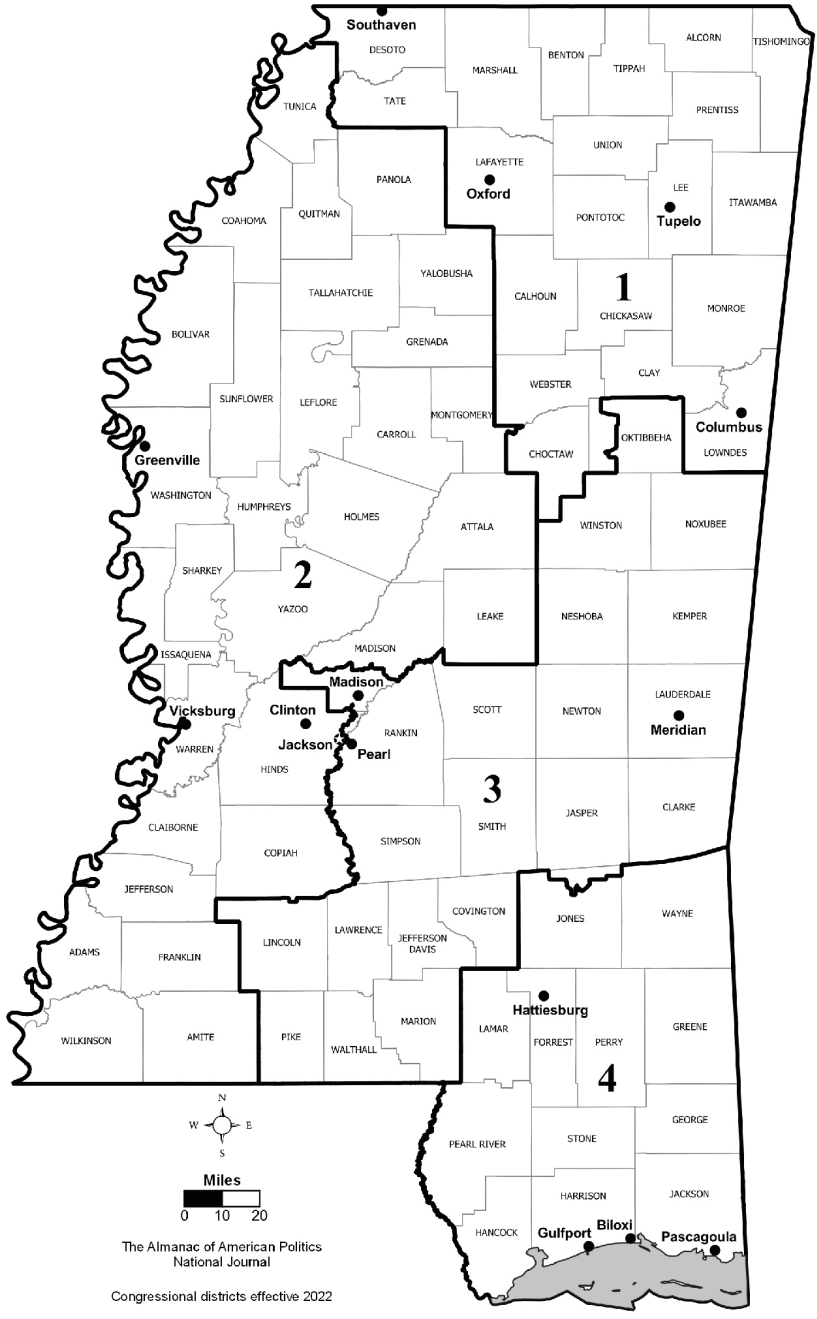
Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	212,555 (80%)	Sanders (D)	19,859 (7%)
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,255,776 (58%)	Biden (D)	856,034 (40%)
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,178,638 (58%)	Clinton (D)	780,154 (38%)

Not many general election presidential campaign ads are going to be taped in Cajun any time soon. In the past five races, Louisiana voted for the Republican nominees by 57 percent, 59 percent, 58 percent, 58 percent and—surprise!—58 percent. The vote in President Donald Trump's victory over Joe Biden, who received 40 percent, was remarkably similar to the regional results in the state four and eight years earlier: Biden, Hillary Clinton and President Barack Obama all won Orleans Parish (New Orleans) with more than 80 percent; won metro Baton Rouge by single digits and carried the Parish that includes Shreveport; and the GOP nominee dominated in most of the rest of the state.

Louisiana has rarely played a significant role in presidential primaries and caucuses. In 2016, Trump narrowly defeated Ted Cruz 41%-38% on March 5, but Cruz managed to wrangle 10 additional delegates in the post-primary selection process. Trump threatened a lawsuit but never followed through. In the Democratic primary, Clinton trounced Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, 71%-23%. Louisiana's 2020 primary was supposed to be held April 4, but state officials moved it all the way back to July 11 because of the coronavirus, making the state the second to last to vote. Biden, who'd already won the nomination, won with 80% of the vote.

MISSISSIPPI



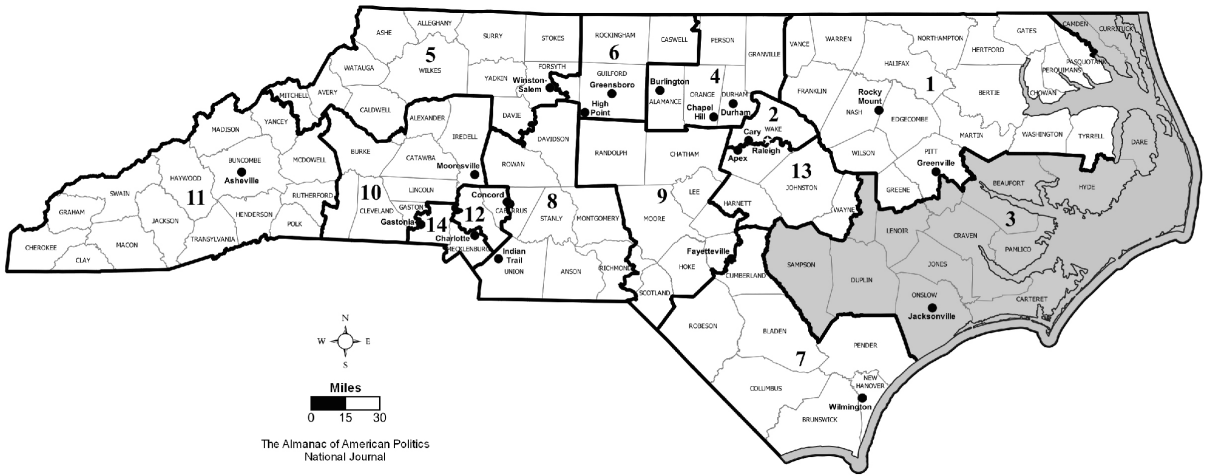
Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	222,160 (81%)	Sanders (D)	40,657 (15%)
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	756,764 (58%)	Biden (D)	539,398 (41%)
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	700,714 (58%)	Clinton (D)	485,131 (40%)

Mississippi voted for Jimmy Carter in 1976 and came within 12,000 votes of doing so again in 1980. But starting in 1984, Democratic presidential nominees have won between only 37 and 44 percent here. The state's Delta region with its heavy African-American population hugs the Mississippi River and votes Democratic. The rest of the state, stretching from Tupelo in the north, to the suburban Jackson counties of Madison and Rankin, to Biloxi on the Gulf Coast, votes Republican. Mississippi followed its historical norm in 2020: President Donald Trump defeated Joe Biden, 58%-41%. The state has some of the most racially polarized voting patterns in the country: Exit polls found Trump winning 81 percent of white voters and just 5 percent of Black voters.

Mississippi has held a presidential primary in the second week of March since 1988. The 2016 GOP contest saw a record turnout of 416,270 votes, with Trump defeating Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, 47%-36%. On the Democratic side, African Americans accounted for more than 70 percent of the primary electorate, and their overwhelming support gave Hillary Clinton an 83%-17% victory over Bernie Sanders. They flocked to Biden in 2020, giving him a dominant 81%-15% win over Sanders on March 10, a week after Biden's big Super Tuesday, and handed him 34 of the state's 36 delegates.

NORTH CAROLINA



The Almanac of American Politics
National Journal

District 3 highlighted for visibility

Congressional districts effective 2022

Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	572,271 (43%)	Sanders (D)	322,645 (24%)	Bloomberg (D)	172,558	(13%)
	Warren (D)	139,912 (11%)					
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	2,758,775 (50%)	Biden (D)	2,684,292 (49%)			
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	2,362,631 (50%)	Clinton (D)	2,189,316 (46%)	Johnson (L)	130,126	(3%)

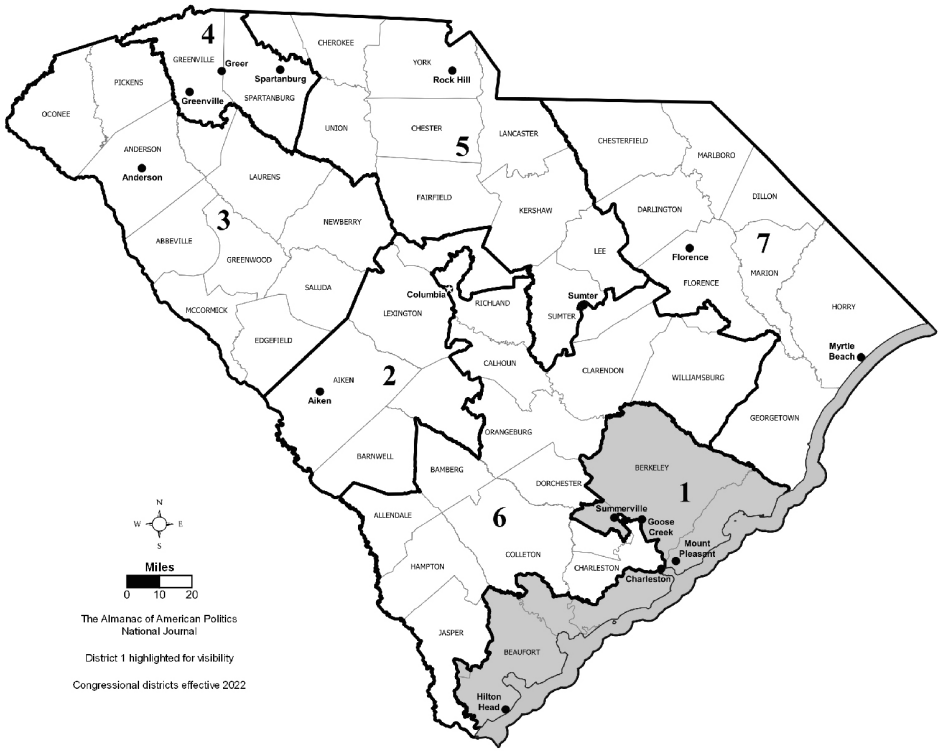
Republicans have carried North Carolina in 11 of the last 13 presidential elections, though it's been a battleground state in the past few cycles. The only Democratic victories came in 1976, when southerner Jimmy Carter won the state and 2008, when Barack Obama's campaign built an organization that was able to take advantage of a 2007 state law permitting same-day voter registration and the growing appeal of early voting to mobilize large numbers of college students and African Americans.

The recent arrivals of many Hispanics and affluent professionals in the state's Research Triangle provided opportunities for Democrats to compete in the GOP-leaning state, and it has attracted heavy campaign spending from both sides, though Democrats have failed to repeat Obama's 2008 success. Mitt Romney beat Obama by 50%-48% in 2012, and Donald Trump defeated Hillary Clinton, 50%-46% in 2016. North Carolina was once again vigorously contested in 2020, as one of the six core battleground states that saw heavy ad spending from both campaigns. Polls consistently showed a tight race, though Joe Biden led in more of them. Trump beat Biden 50%-49%, the closest of any of his wins. His 74,000-vote margin was almost 100,000 votes fewer than his 2016 edge, as turnout surged from 4.7 million to 5.4 million votes cast.

Biden made the biggest inroads around Charlotte and in the fast-growing, heavily Democratic Research Triangle; his margins of victory in Mecklenburg County (Charlotte) and Wake County (Raleigh) were both almost six points higher than Clinton's had been, and he ran 10 points ahead of Clinton in Cabarrus County (exurban Charlotte). But Trump made marginal gains in much of North Carolina's more rural areas, including in the Black Belt in the northeast, as well as in Robeson County, a rural county south of Fayetteville with a large number of Lumbee Indians, which swung 14 points his direction. Black turnout was up for Biden compared to Clinton, but not enough to overcome a rural White turnout surge for Trump. The election was close enough that it took 10 days for the Associated Press to officially call the race, as late-arriving mail ballots trickled in.

North Carolina's primary has occasionally played a role in presidential politics. In 1976, after five straight losses, Ronald Reagan won his first major victory over Gerald Ford in the Republican primary, reenergizing his campaign that went all the way to the convention. After Obama trounced Clinton in the 2008 primary, he was the defacto Democratic nominee. In 2016, the state moved its primary up to March 15. In the GOP contest, Trump narrowly defeated Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, 40%-37%. Clinton beat Sanders 55%-41%, and carried 83 of 100 counties. In 2020, North Carolina was one of the Super Tuesday states Michael Bloomberg made a big play for, dropping more than $12 million on TV ads. But Biden's big primary win in neighboring South Carolina just a few days earlier helped him gain momentum, and he won North Carolina's primary, 43%-24%, over Bernie Sanders, with Bloomberg a distant third at 12 percent. It was one of several big wins for Biden that day that helped make him the prohibitive favorite for the nomination.

SOUTH CAROLINA



The Almanac of American Politics
National Journal

District 1 highlighted for visibility

Congressional districts effective 2022

Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	262,336 (49%)	Sanders (D)	106,605 (20%)	Steyer (D)	61,140 (11%)
	Buttigieg (D)	44,217 (8%)	Warren (D)	38,120 (7%)		
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,385,103 (55%)	Biden (D)	1,091,541 (43%)		
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,155,389 (55%)	Clinton (D)	855,373 (41%)	Johnson (L)	49,204 (2%)

South Carolina has been reliably Republican in presidential elections since 1980. But that's also the year it became a major player in the presidential primary process, helping boost Ronald Reagan to the GOP nomination. Since then, it's played a key, if sometimes ugly, role in both parties' nomination processes.

The primary's significance for Republicans started when Ronald Reagan defeated John Connolly in 1980. Connolly had the backing of the state's legendary segregationist Sen. Strom Thurmond. Reagan's 55%-30% victory confirmed his widespread popularity among Southern Republicans and helped propel him to the GOP nomination. In 1988, Republicans moved the primary to right before Super Tuesday; Texas' George H.W. Bush won a 49%-21%-19% victory over GOP Senate leader Bob Dole and evangelical champion Pat Robertson that foreshadowed a sweep of the Southern primaries that clinched the nomination for him three days later. In 1992, Bush beat Pat Buchanan 67%-26%, squashing Buchanan's claims to conservative Southern support. Four years later, Dole, after his disappointing showings elsewhere, won an impressive 45%-29% victory over Buchanan. In 2000, George W. Bush beat John McCain 53%-42% in a particularly bruising and bitter contest that included a whisper campaign that McCain's adopted daughter was actually illegitimate; the contest left relations between McCain and Bush strained throughout the latter's presidency. In 2008, McCain defeated former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee 33%-30%. The Arizonan's victory established him as the frontrunner for the nomination and gave him momentum that he carried into the Florida primary 10 days later and then the subsequent Super Tuesday contests. The 2012 Republican primary was held just 10 days after New Hampshire, and got nasty as well; Mitt Romney faced attacks on his Mormon religion, while Newt Gingrich turned a bombshell report about his marital infidelities to his advantage by attacking a debate moderator and the media, and defeated Romney, 40%-28%.

The 2016 edition of the South Carolina GOP primary was another Republican slugfest. Donald Trump questioned Texas Sen. Ted Cruz's citizenship and accused former President George W. Bush of lying about the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War. After that debate the former president made his only appearance at a campaign rally for his brother, Jeb, who also got an endorsement from South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham. Florida Sen. Marco Rubio won endorsements from Gov. Nikki Haley and Sen. Tim Scott. But it was Trump's fiery rhetoric and disdain for the GOP establishment and the media that excited South Carolina Republicans and enabled him to defeat Rubio, 33%-23%. Cruz finished third with 22 percent and Bush's 8 percent prompted him to withdraw from the race.

In 2008, the Democratic National Committee chose South Carolina as the only state other than New Hampshire to hold an early primary. Since then, the Democrat who won South Carolina also won the nomination. It's not just a momentum-builder: South Carolina is the first primary state with a large Black population, and African Americans make up a significant share of the overall Democratic primary electorate. The most coveted endorsement for Democrats is from House Majority Whip James Clyburn, an African American and a force in a presidential primary in which the electorate is more than 50 percent Black. Candidates and surrogates flock to his annual spring fish fry in Columbia, where the crowd consumes more than 1,000 pounds of whiting. Clyburn didn't endorse in 2008; Barack Obama won a crushing victory, defeating Hillary Clinton 55%-26%. Years later in his memoir, Clyburn, who said he voted for Obama, wrote that he received a 2 a.m. phone call the day after the primary from Bill Clinton blaming

him for his wife's defeat and vowing, "If you bastards want a fight, you damn well will get one." The 2016 Democratic primary was much less contentious and saw a reversal of fortune for Clinton, who consolidated African-American support and was endorsed by Clyburn one week before the primary. Clinton won more than 80 percent of Black voters.

Republicans canceled their 2020 primary to protect Trump (both parties have done this before for incumbent presidents—Democrats in 1996 and 2012, Republicans in 1984 and 2004).

South Carolina (and Clyburn) played an even bigger role in the 2020 nomination process. Joe Biden limped into the state; he'd lost the first three nominating contests of Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada, hadn't finished with more than 18 percent of the vote in any of them, and was almost out of money. But Obama's former vice president was also the only candidate left who had a deep connection to the African American community—and arguably the only candidate left with the potential coalition to stop Bernie Sanders from the nomination. Clyburn endorsed Biden three days ahead of the primary, arguing that he was the only candidate left who could beat Trump and warning of "down-ballot carnage" if Sanders won the nomination.

Sanders had invested heavily in a field operation to try to make inroads with the state's Black voters, while billionaire philanthropist Tom Steyer poured millions into the state. But Biden's longstanding connection with African-American voters and Clyburn's last-minute boost made a big difference. He won, 49%-20% over Sanders, with Steyer at 11 percent. According to exit polls, Biden won more than three-fifths of the Black vote, which accounted for almost 60 percent of the total electorate; more than half of primary voters said Clyburn's endorsement was an important factor in who they voted for. Biden knew it: "My buddy Jim Clyburn, you brought me back!" he declared in his primary victory speech that Saturday night.

The results drove Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar and South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg from the race; both endorsed Biden almost immediately afterward, along with former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke. The win showed Black voters stood with Biden, while the subsequent endorsements helped him unify white voters That combination propelled him to a huge Super Tuesday victory three days later that turned Biden from a foundering candidate into the eventual nominee—and president.

The state's general elections have been much less suspenseful. Its racially polarized vote means Democrats have a relatively high floor and low ceiling for their overall state vote, and have won between 40 and 45 percent in every presidential election since 1996. In 2020, Trump defeated Biden 55%-43%. Trump won 33 of the state's 46 counties. Biden carried Charleston and Richland counties (Columbia) and did well in the counties with larger African-American populations. Four years earlier, Trump won, 55%-43%.

TENNESSEE

Kingsport
Johnson City
Knoxville
Chattanooga
Clarksville
Nashville
Murfreesboro
Franklin
Spring Hill
Smyrna
Hendersonville
Jackson
Bartlett
Memphis
Collierville
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SULLIVAN
JOHNSON
CARTER
WASHINGTON
UNICOI
GREENE
HAWKINS
HANCOCK
HAMBLEN
COCKE
GRAINGER
JEFFERSON
SEVIER
CLAIBORNE
UNION
KNOX
BLOUNT
CAMPBELL
ANDERSON
MONROE
LOUDON
SCOTT
ROANE
MORGAN
MCMINN
POLK
FENTRESS
RHEA
MEIGS
BRADLEY
PICKETT
CUMBERLAND
HAMILTON
OVERTON
VAN BUREN
BLEDSOE
SEQUATCHIE
CLAY
PUTNAM
WHITE
MARION
JACKSON
DEKALB
WARREN
GRUNDY
MACON
SMITH
CANNON
COFFEE
FRANKLIN
TROUSDALE
SUMNER
WILSON
RUTHERFORD
BEDFORD
MOORE
LINCOLN
ROBERTSON
DAVIDSON
WILLIAMSON
MARSHALL
GILES
CHEATHAM
MAURY
MONTGOMERY
DICKSON
HICKMAN
LEWIS
LAWRENCE
STEWART
HOUSTON
HUMPHREYS
PERRY
WAYNE
BENTON
DECATUR
HENRY
CARROLL
HENDERSON
HARDIN
WEAKLEY
GIBSON
CHESTER
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Congressional districts effective 2022

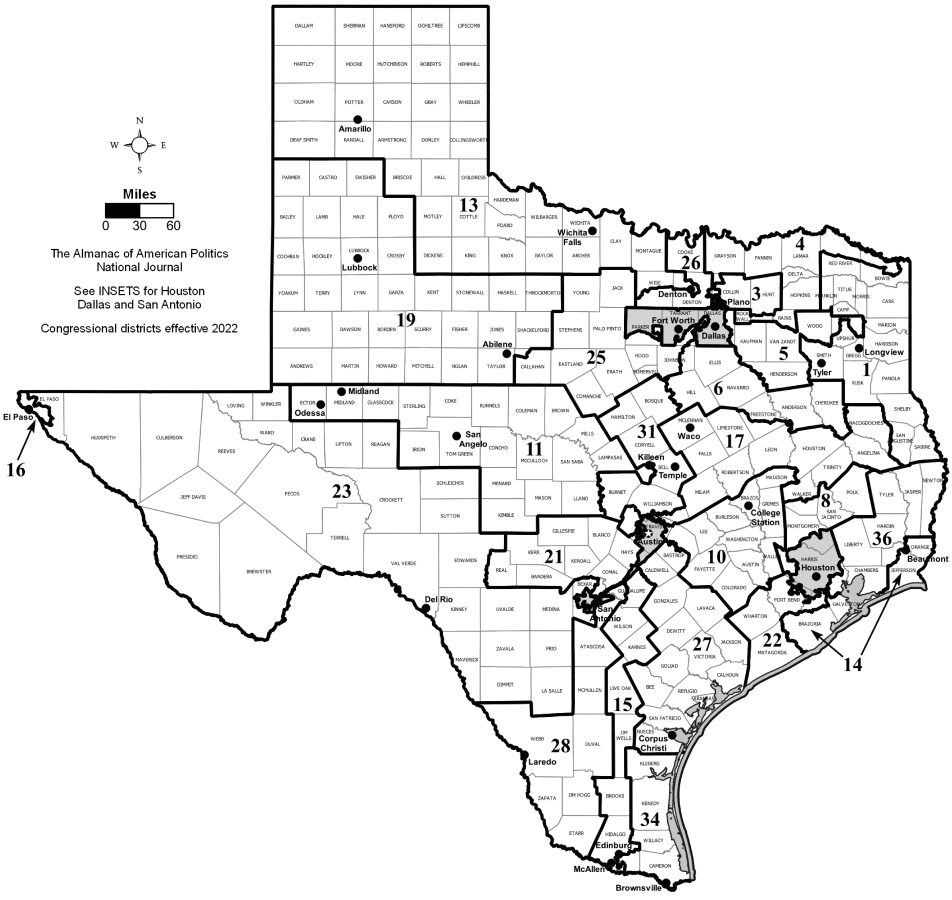
Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	215,390 (42%)	Sanders (D)	129,168 (25%)	Bloomberg (D)	79,789 (15%)
	Warren (D)	53,732 (10%)				
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,852,475 (61%)	Biden (D)	1,143,711 (37%)		
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	1,522,925 (61%)	Clinton (D)	870,695 (35%)	Johnson (L)	70,397 (3%)

Most of Tennessee is part of the Jacksonian belt of America running along the Appalachians, territory that has turned more and more Republican since 2000. That year, Al Gore carried 36 of its 95 counties and came within four points of carrying his home state. By 2008, Barack Obama carried just six: Memphis' Shelby County, which is majority African American; Nashville's Davidson County; and four other small counties. Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden both won only three: Shelby, Davidson and tiny Haywood, the only other county in the state with a majority-Black population. President Donald Trump defeated Biden, 61%-38%.

Tennessee set its primary on Super Tuesday in 2008, and Clinton defeated Obama 54%-40%. In 2016, she defeated Bernie Sanders 66%-33%. In 2020, Tennessee was one of the states where Michael Bloomberg made the most effort, but Biden won 42%-25% over Sanders, with Bloomberg at 15%. Recent GOP primaries have offered mixed results. In 2008, Mike Huckabee defeated John McCain, 34%-32%, with Mitt Romney third at 24 percent. In 2012, Rick Santorum defeated Romney, 37%-28%. In 2016, Trump defeated Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, 39%-25% and carried 94 of the state's 95 counties.

TEXAS


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National Journal
See INSETS for Houston
Dallas and San Antonio
Congressional districts effective 2022
Amarillo
Lubbock
Midland
Odessa
Abilene
Wichita Falls
Denton
Plano
Fort Worth
Dallas
Longview
Tyler
San Angelo
Waco
Killeen
Temple
College Station
Austin
Houston
Beaumont
San Antonio
Del Rio
Laredo
Corpus Christi
Edinburg
McAllen
Brownsville
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Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	725,562 (35%)	Sanders (D)	626,339 (30%)	Bloomberg (D)	300,608 (14%)
	Warren (D)	239,237 (11%)				
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	5,890,347 (52%)	Biden (D)	5,259,126 (46%)		
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	4,685,047 (52%)	Clinton (D)	3,877,868 (43%)	Johnson (L)	283,492 (3%)

Democrats haven't won Texas since Jimmy Carter in 1976, and the closest a Democratic nominee has come since then was when Bob Dole beat Bill Clinton 49%-44%. President Donald Trump beat Joe Biden in 2020, 52%-46%, the highest Democratic share of the vote since Carter in 1976. Explosive population growth, demographic shifts and suburbs' leftward shift have narrowed the gap in recent years. While 2020 showed the state isn't quite ready for battleground status, it could move that direction in future years.

In 2012, Mitt Romney carried Texas 57%-41%. By 2016, Hillary Clinton held Trump to 52%-43%, a margin comparable to his victory in the battleground state of Ohio. Clinton's improvement came because she won the Dallas-Fort Worth area by less than a percentage point, and captured metro Houston roughly 51%-45%. Almost one-fourth of the 2016 Texas electorate was Hispanic and, according to the television network exit poll, they voted for Clinton 61%-34%. That was a far cry from 2004, when President George W. Bush lost that group by only one percentage point.

Texas Democrats, including 2018 Senate nominee Beto O'Rourke, clamored for Biden to pay attention to the state in 2020. But his campaign never seriously invested in Texas, seeing the expensive state as a waste of resources. The only real spending came from a super PAC backed by Michael Bloomberg, which spent a few million dollars in the race's closing weeks.

Biden's team was right—Texas was a bit out of reach—but not for the reasons many assumed heading into the election.

Biden flipped Williamson and Hays counties in suburban Austin and Tarrant County (Fort Worth), and posted double-digit improvements over Clinton in four counties around the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex in North Texas. In Texas' five most populous counties—Bexar (San Antonio), Harris (Houston), Dallas, Tarrant and Travis (Austin), Biden won 2.8 million votes, up from Clinton's 2.1 million, and he netted a quarter-million more votes. Biden's vote total of almost 5.3 million statewide far outpaced Clinton's 3.9 million votes in 2016—and Trump's 4.7 million votes in 2016. But Trump's 2020 total was 5.9 million votes.

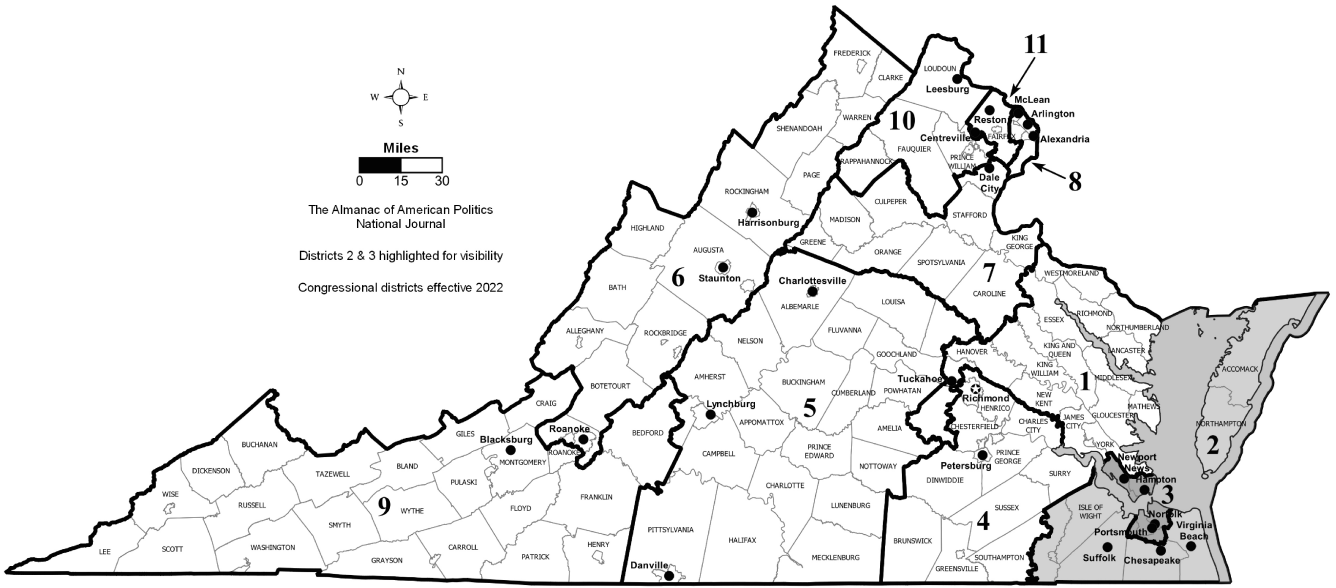
The Rio Grande Valley along the U.S.-Mexico border saved Trump from a closer call. The heavily Tejano, mostly poor, rural and culturally conservative region has long been one of the Democratic Party's best regions in the state. But it showed Trump's biggest improvement of anywhere in the country besides Miami-Dade County in Florida. He flipped six South Texas counties, and improved by 20-point margins in 18 counties, most along the Rio Grande River. That included a 55-point swing in Starr County and a 40-point swing in tiny Kenedy County in the valley, and a 46-point swing in Maverick County further west.

Biden won the Texas Hispanic vote 58%-41%, according to exit polls, weaker than Clinton four years earlier.

Texas has been sporadically important in both parties' primary contests. The 2016 Republican primary came at a critical phase. Texas Sen. Ted Cruz campaigned hard in his home state, knowing that if he lost it he was out. Cruz defeated Trump, 44%-27%, but disappointing results for him in other states put Trump in the driver's seat to the nomination. On the Democratic side, Clinton swamped Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, 65%-33%.

Sanders campaigned hard there in 2020, part of his heavy focus on winning Hispanic voters, and was banking on a win on Super Tuesday. But Joe Biden's nationwide momentum helped him to a 35%-30% win, one of the biggest blows to Sanders on a night that anointed Biden the heavy frontrunner.

VIRGINIA


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The Almanac of American Politics
National Journal
Districts 2 & 3 highlighted for visibility
Congressional districts effective 2022
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Leesburg
McLean
Arlington
Reston
Centreville
Alexandria
Dale City
Harrisonburg
Staunton
Charlottesville
Tuckahoe
Richmond
Lynchburg
Roanoke
Blacksburg
Petersburg
Newport News
Hampton
Norfolk
Virginia Beach
Portsmouth
Suffolk
Chesapeake
Danville
FREDERICK
CLARKE
LOUDOUN
WARREN
SHENANDOAH
FAUQUIER
PRINCE WILLIAM
FAIRFAX
RAPPAHANNOCK
PAGE
ROCKINGHAM
CULPEPER
STAFFORD
MADISON
GREENE
ORANGE
SPOTSYLVANIA
KING GEORGE
WESTMORELAND
HIGHLAND
AUGUSTA
BATH
ALBEMARLE
LOUISA
CAROLINE
ESSEX
RICHMOND
NORTHUMBERLAND
ALLEGHANY
ROCKBRIDGE
NELSON
FLUVANNA
GOOCHLAND
HANOVER
KING AND QUEEN
LANCASTER
KING WILLIAM
MIDDLESEX
ACCOMACK
AMHERST
BUCKINGHAM
CUMBERLAND
POWHATAN
NEW KENT
MATHEWS
BOTETOURT
CRAIG
BEDFORD
APPOMATTOX
AMELIA
CHESTERFIELD
HENRICO
CHARLES CITY
JAMES CITY
GLOUCESTER
NORTHAMPTON
YORK
GILES
MONTGOMERY
ROANOKE
CAMPBELL
PRINCE EDWARD
NOTTOWAY
PRINCE GEORGE
DINWIDDIE
SURRY
SUSSEX
ISLE OF WIGHT
BUCHANAN
DICKENSON
TAZEWELL
BLAND
PULASKI
WISE
RUSSELL
WYTHE
SMYTH
FLOYD
FRANKLIN
CHARLOTTE
LUNENBURG
BRUNSWICK
SOUTHAMPTON
GREENSVILLE
LEE
SCOTT
WASHINGTON
GRAYSON
CARROLL
PATRICK
HENRY
PITTSYLVANIA
HALIFAX
MECKLENBURG

Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	705,501 (53%)	Sanders (D)	306,388 (23%)	Warren (D)	142,546 (11%)
	Bloomberg (D)	128,030 (10%)				
2020 Pres. Vote	Biden (D)	2,413,568 (54%)	Trump (R)	1,962,430 (44%)		
2016 Pres. Vote	Clinton (D)	1,981,473 (50%)	Trump (R)	1,769,443 (44%)	Johnson (L)	118,274 (3%)

Once a solidly Republican state, Virginia suddenly became a national bellwether in 2008 and 2012, when its 53%-46% and 51%-47% margins for Barack Obama were the same as those in the nation as a whole. It has since continued to drift left, driven by an increasingly diverse electorate, rapid growth in well-educated and government-employee rich Northern Virginia, and suburbanites' antipathy to the GOP under Trump, and it appears its bellwether status may have just been a blip in its transformation into a Democratic-leaning state.

In the first half of the 20th century, Virginia was part of the solid Democratic South. But from 1952 to 1960 it voted Republican, following the "golden silence" of segregationist Democratic Sen. Harry Byrd Sr., who declined to endorse presidential candidates, but quietly signaled his preference for the more fiscally conservative GOP standard bearers. It voted for Democrat Lyndon Johnson for president in 1964, then backed Republicans in the next 10 elections. But over time, the GOP margins narrowed. In 2008, Obama targeted Virginia from start to finish. His organizing efforts for the February primary gave him a head start when he defeated Hillary Clinton 64%-35%. Obama ran seven percentage points ahead of John Kerry in 2004 on his way to defeating John McCain. In 2012, Obama's margin over Mitt Romney was reduced, but patterns were similar. Close-in Northern Virginia D.C. suburbs voted heavily for Obama, and he narrowly carried the Northern Virginia exurbs. The vote was almost identical to 2008 in the Tidewater and metro Richmond, while Romney increased Republican margins in rural areas.

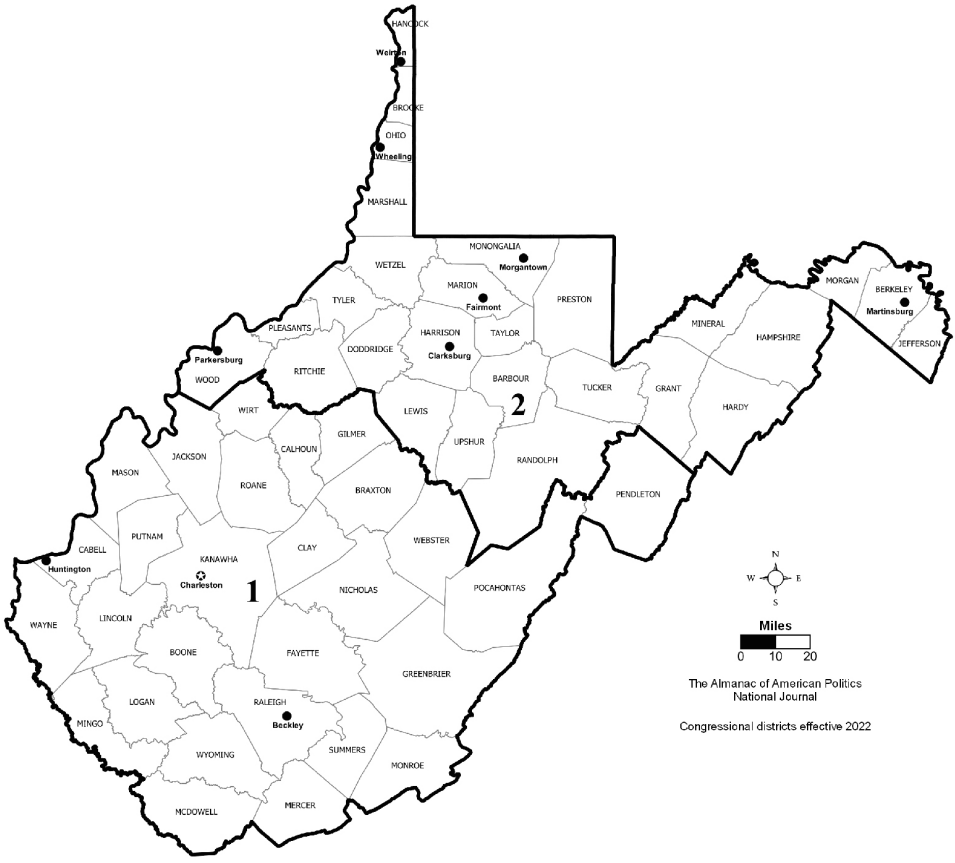
The growth and diversity of the Northern Virginia suburbs and exurbs will continue to make the region's voters a critical component of the Democratic coalition in the state. In 2016, Hillary Clinton beat Donald Trump by 50%-44%, four points wider than her national popular vote margin.

The state kept moving left in 2020, and after seeing a decrease in campaigning and ad spending from both parties in 2016 it saw almost none in 2020. Joe Biden defeated Trump 54%-44%, the first time a Democrat won Virginia by a double-digit margin since Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1944. He improved on Clinton's margins across the state, doing even better than her already-impressive performance in Northern Virginia and suburban Richmond and nearly matching Obama's numbers in the African-American heavy Tidewater region. He won Virginia Beach, which Obama never managed to do, and carried Stafford County in exurban D.C., a first for a Democrat in modern history. Trump improved in some Appalachian counties, but Biden ran ahead of both Clinton and Obama almost everywhere else. His 10-point margin was six points better than his national popular vote victory.

In the 2008 Democratic presidential primaries, held early in the calendar in mid-February, Obama captured the state the same day he won in neighboring Maryland and the District of Columbia, making him the clear frontrunner in the race. In the GOP competition, McCain defeated Mike Huckabee 50%-41. Since 2012, Virginia has held its primary on Super Tuesday. That year only two Republicans gathered enough signatures to make it onto the ballot on March 6; Romney beat Ron Paul 60%-40%. This was Paul's highest percentage in any 2012 primary. The 2016 primary was held on March 1, when both parties' nominations were up for grabs. The Republican contest saw Trump narrowly defeat Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, 33%-30%. The Democratic primary was a one-sided affair in which Clinton reversed her 2008 fate and walloped Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, 64%-35%. In 2020, Biden did the same thing to Sanders, winning 53%-23%, with Elizabeth Warren at 11 percent and Michael Bloomberg

at 10 percent. It was one of Biden's biggest Super Tuesday wins, on a night that made him the dominant frontrunner for the nomination.

WEST VIRGINIA



Presidential Politics

2020 Primary (D)	Biden (D)	122,518 (65%)	Sanders (D)	22,793 (12%)			
2020 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	545,382 (69%)	Biden (D)	235,984 (30%)			
2016 Pres. Vote	Trump (R)	489,371 (69%)	Clinton (D)	188,794 (26%)	Johnson (L)	23,004	(3%)

From 1932 to 1996, the only Republicans who carried West Virginia were incumbents headed for landslide reelection victories—Dwight Eisenhower in 1956, Richard Nixon in 1972, and Ronald Reagan in 1984. But West Virginia has voted Republican in the last six presidential elections, and in 2020 was the second most Republican state in the country, with President Donald Trump defeating Joe Biden 69%-30%. That shift can be explained by two factors: culture and coal. West Virginia is the heart of Appalachia, the region of the country that has shifted the hardest against Democrats in the last two decades, as religious, socially conservative voters who resent the presumptions of coastal elites and blame Democrats for accelerating the coal industry's demise have moved to the GOP, especially as Republicans became a more populist, working-class party in the Trump era.

The Democratic decline began when George W. Bush targeted West Virginia. Bush's support of mountaintop mining and opposition to gun control helped him beat Al Gore 52%-46% in 2000 and John Kerry 56%-43% in 2004. In 2012, Mitt Romney carried the state 62%-36%, winning all 55 counties—the first nominee of either party to do so since the Civil War. Trump became the second, defeating Hillary Clinton 69%-27%, and he swept the state again in 2020. From 2008 to 2020, two of the three counties where the GOP saw its best county-level improvement in the country were in West Virginia, according to an NBC News analysis: Obama had carried both McDowell and Webster counties in 2008, but Trump won roughly 80 percent of their votes in 2020.

West Virginia's presidential primary, held in May, has not attracted much attention since 1960, when John F. Kennedy took on Hubert Humphrey and beat him with 61 percent of the vote, proving that a Catholic could succeed in a virtually all-Protestant state. In 2008, Clinton defeated Obama 67%-26%, her biggest margin except for Arkansas. In 2016, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders defeated Clinton, 51%-36%, carrying every county. Trump's opponents had already abandoned their bids when he won 77 percent of the vote. The state's 2020 primary was postponed to June because of the coronavirus, long after Biden had won the nomination; he defeated Sanders, 65%-12%.