APCO'S GUIDE TO ELECTION NIGHT 2020

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The 2020 U.S. presidential election will be decided by the electoral college, in which each state has the same number of votes as it has in Congress (senators and representatives combined):

• 48 of the 50 states allocate all their electoral votes to the statewide winner

• The same is true for the District of Columbia and its three electoral votes

• Maine and Nebraska allocate two electoral votes to the statewide winner, and then give one vote to the winner in each of their congressional districts (Maine has two, Nebraska three).

Our table lists the 56 declarations, classified by likely outcome and by the **projected** time of declaration. This is derived from the time that each result came through in 2012 and 2016. Much higher levels of absentee and mail-in voting are reported this year. This will probably mean that results are announced later rather than earlier. **We do not know how much later.**

Our political projections are derived by looking at recent opinion poll results nationwide and in each state, taken from fivethirtyeight.com, and applying a correction to calculate what the winning margin in each state or district would be **if the two leading candidates were equally strong in the Electoral College.**

Ranking the states from most pro-Biden to most pro-Trump, we can see that the "median" state is Pennsylvania, appropriately enough for the Keystone State. If either candidate wins only the states more favorable to him than Pennsylvania, it will not be enough to win in the electoral college. But if either wins Pennsylvania as well as the states more favorable to him they will have more than the magic 270 votes.

Each column brackets the states according to their relative leaning toward one or the other candidate. Vice President Biden's strongest prospects have 122 total electoral votes. Another 61 are in states where his advantage is 5% or more, so the outcome is not seriously in doubt. That means a total of 183 votes, of the necessary 270, which are pretty certain to go his way unless

there is an unexpected meltdown. For President Trump the numbers are less favorable – 62 electoral votes in the strongest states, 63 in the next column, for a total of 125 which can be considered solid. But that leaves a lot of votes to be decided by relatively slim margins. The election will be decided in the middle three columns of our table, with 230 electoral votes, 119 of those in the closest states.

The very first declarations are likely to be from Vermont and Kentucky, but these will be among the least useful indicators of how the race is going. Having said that, if Indiana, another early declarer, is at all close, it is very bad news for the president. The results from Texas, Georgia and New Mexico, all of which should be known by 10pm, will be a good indicator of how the night is likely to end.

If neither candidate reaches 270 votes, the election will be decided by the votes of state delegations in the House of Representatives, each voting as a single bloc. At present, the Republicans have a majority of Representatives in 26 states, the Democrats in 23, and in three states neither party has more than half. This balance is likely to shift on election night. The last time that the House of Representatives chose the president in this way was in 1825, when the popular vote was split four ways; let's hope for a result that is not as messy.

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Biden

APCO'S ELECTION NIGHT TIMELINE

Trump

APCO once again has your guide to election night – showing the normal time we expect to know the results of the 2020 votes in each state. Warning – the closest and most decisive returns will be called last.

Time (EST)	Strong Biden		Lean Biden		Must-Win for Biden		Even		Must-Win for Trump		Lean Trump		Strong Trump	
7:00 PM	Vermont	3									Indiana	11	Kentucky	8
7:30 PM											South Carolina	9	West Virginia	5
8:00 PM	District of Columbia	3	Illinois	20							Mississippi	6	Tennessee	11
	Rhode Island	4	Connecticut	7									Alabama	9
	Maryland	10											Oklahoma	7
	Delaware	3												
	Massachusetts	11												
8:30 PM			New Jersey	14									Arkansas	6
9:00 PM	New York	29					Nebraska 2nd	1	Texas	38	Kansas	6	Nebraska state	2
											Nebraska 1st	1	South Dakota	3
											Louisiana	8	North Dakota	3
													Wyoming	3
													Nebraska 3rd	1
9:30 PM					New Mexico	5			Georgia	16				
10:00 PM											Montana	3		
10:30 PM									Ohio	18	Utah	6		
11:00 PM	California	55	Oregon	7	Colorado	9	Maine 2nd	1			Missouri	10	Idaho	4
	Hawaii	4	Maine 1st	1	Maine state	2								
			Washington	12										
11:30 PM					Virginia	13	North Carolina	15	Iowa	6				
12:00 AM							Pennsylvania	20						
							Michigan	16						
12:30 AM					New Hampshire	4	Wisconsin	10						
							Florida	29						
							Nevada	6						
1:00 AM							Minnesota	10			Alaska	3		
							Arizona	11						
Total Electoral College Votes	**122**		**61**		**33**		**119**		**78**		**63**		**62**	

Polling data via fivethirtyeight.com and current as of Nov 2, 2020.
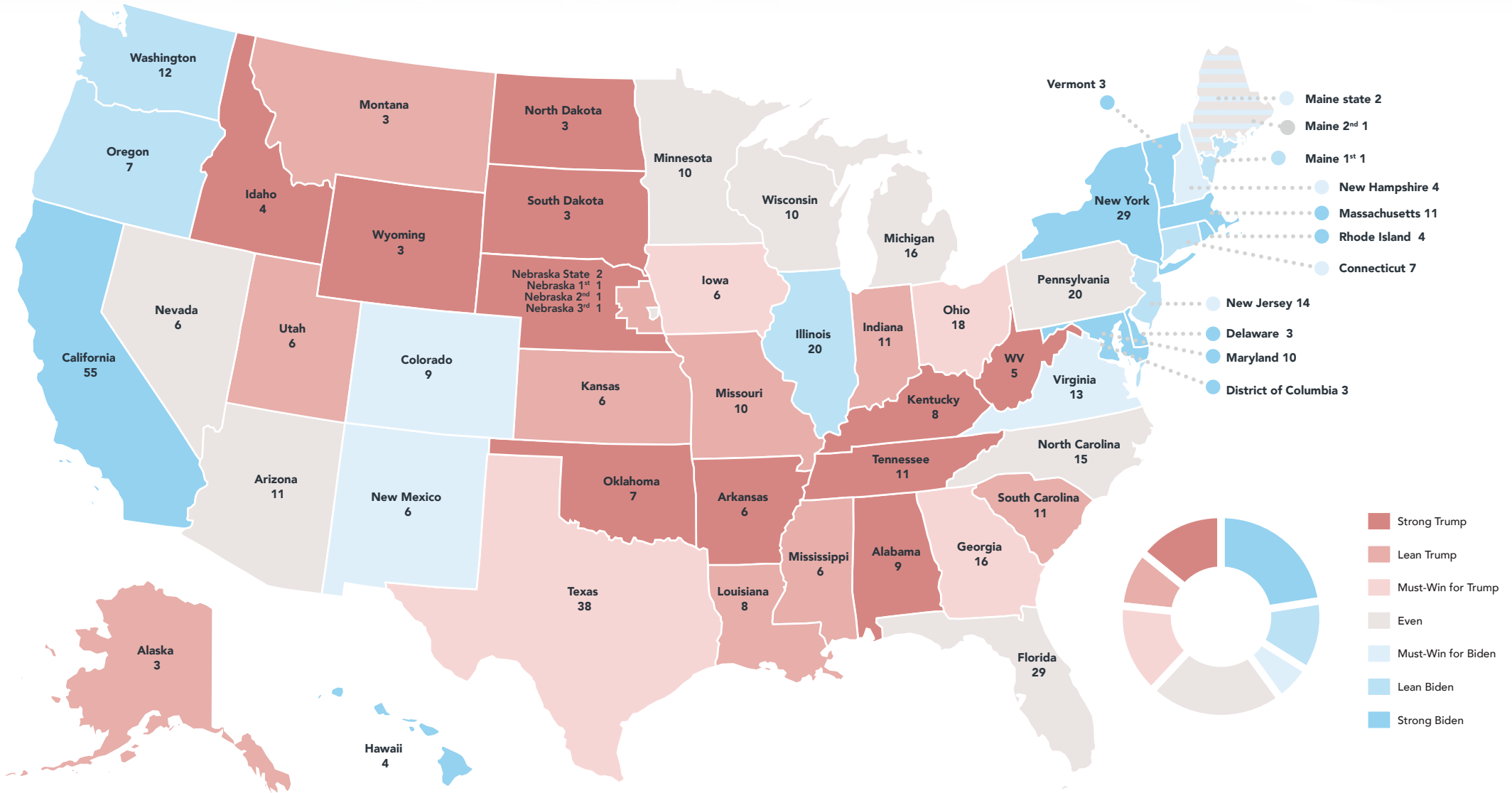
APCO'S ELECTION NIGHT 2020 MAP

APCO once again has your guide to election night – showing the normal time we expect to know the results of the 2020 votes in each state. Warning – the closest and most decisive returns will be called last.

Washington 12
Oregon 7
California 55
Nevada 6
Montana 3
Idaho 4
Wyoming 3
Utah 6
Arizona 11
New Mexico 6
Colorado 9
North Dakota 3
South Dakota 3
Nebraska State 2
Nebraska 1st 1
Nebraska 2nd 1
Nebraska 3rd 1
Kansas 6
Oklahoma 7
Texas 38
Minnesota 10
Iowa 6
Missouri 10
Arkansas 6
Louisiana 8
Wisconsin 10
Illinois 20
Michigan 16
Indiana 11
Kentucky 8
Tennessee 11
Mississippi 6
Alabama 9
Ohio 18
WV 5
Virginia 13
North Carolina 15
South Carolina 11
Georgia 16
Florida 29
Pennsylvania 20
Alaska 3
Hawaii 4

Vermont 3
New York 29
Maine state 2
Maine 2nd 1
Maine 1st 1
New Hampshire 4
Massachusetts 11
Rhode Island 4
Connecticut 7
New Jersey 14
Delaware 3
Maryland 10
District of Columbia 3

Legend:
- Strong Trump
- Lean Trump
- Must-Win for Trump
- Even
- Must-Win for Biden
- Lean Biden
- Strong Biden

Biden | **Trump**

Strong Biden	Lean Biden	Must-Win for Biden	Even	Must-Win for Trump	Lean Trump	Strong Trump
122	61	33	119	78	63	62

Polling data via fivethirtyeight.com and current as of Nov 2, 2020.

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