

as they were then called—to be involved with the electors system. Legislators in state legislatures who were members of political parties later turned the electors system over to the parties, which now choose their elector candidates at state party conventions.

• The founders also wanted the electors to be free agents, so that if the voters chose an unfit candidate, they would feel free to choose a different president. Partisan legislators, including Nevada's, later passed state laws requiring that electors be pledged and bound to their political parties.

• Nor did the founders want winner-take-all distribution of electors. "The [proportional] district mode was mostly, if not exclusively in view when the Constitution was framed and adopted; & was exchanged for the general ticket [winner-take-all]," wrote James Madison when state legislatures started adding winner-take-all to the founders' system. All states except Nebraska and Maine now overlay this process atop the electors system.

Though Sisolak argues that Nevada, under the proposed compact, would have "a greatly diminished voice in the outcome of national electoral contests," he does not explain how.

Because a state's number of electoral votes is based on the number of its member of Congress, a built-in bias resulting from the two Senate seats given to each state favors small

states. But the effect of that bias can be tracked, and scholars have said that bias did not elect Donald Trump in 2016.

Presidential candidates, at least in the current political climate, devote their heaviest effort not to large or small states but to whichever states are gettable. Since the era of extreme partisan polarization began in the Gingrich period, states have become locked up for one party or the other early in presidential campaigns. There are

then usually about a dozen "swing states" that are still up for grabs. Those are the ones that get the most attention from the presidential campaigns.

National Popular Vote, which supports the compact, reports that "94 percent of the 2016 [presidential campaign] events (375 of the 399) were in 12 states."

As one of those battleground states, Nevada—which was still competitive—did rather well in that competition for attention, receiving 17 campaign visits, more than any other Western state except Colorado (19). If Nevada had not still been gettable, it would not have drawn so many candidate visits, no matter its electoral votes. The most populous state of all, California, received only one such visit because it was locked up early, even though it was the richest electoral vote prize. □

"This arrangement is not in the state's best interests."

Gov. Steve Sisolak

Biker folks visit



The Street Vibrations special event was back in town last week, and from all indications it still seems to rattle the casinos, though grateful for the business. There were lots of warning posters about not wearing gang colors, guns and such. Of course, those posters were often alongside posters advertising booze.

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