

Nebraska's Congressional Districts and Electoral Votes

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October 22, 2024

Principles

- I am not advocating for one side or another.
- My background is in mathematics and data analysis.
- Main Question: Are substantial effects in Nebraska politics possible from recent population changes?

The Reasoning

- Nebraska's population balance is shifting from rural to urban.
- Nationally, urban districts tend to vote Democratic.
- The population shift could bring changes to Nebraska's politics.

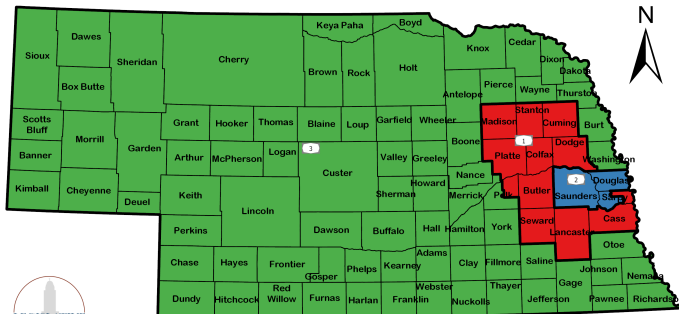
Nebraska's Electoral College Votes

- Law enacted in 1992 to encourage grassroots activity, encourage voting.
- Two of five electoral votes go to the statewide winner.
- For the other three electoral votes, one vote goes to the winner in each congressional district.
- Twice the electoral votes have been split 4-and-1: 2008, 2020.

The Current Nebraska Congressional Districts

United States House of Representatives - LB 1 (2021)

CONG21-39002



Created by Legislative Research
Source: US Census Bureau
Date Created: 1/3/2022

CONG21-39001 Introduced
Placed on General File by Committee
Committee Adoption, 5-4
Amended by CONG21-39002
Passed 35-11-3 on Final Reading

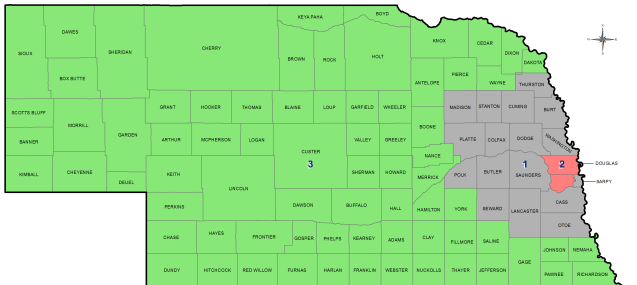
District	Deviation
1	0%
2	0%
3	0%



Comparison to 2011 Congressional Districts

U.S. House of Representatives - LB 704 (2011)

(Districts took effect May 27, 2011)



GIS
LEGISLATIVE
RESEARCH OFFICE
Geographic Information Systems
Map Created by: Trisha Schlake, GIS Specialist
Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Date Created: 6-27-2011

0 80 100 Miles

Timeline for Apportionment and Redistricting

- 2020 – U.S. Census Bureau headcount.
- April 2021 – Census figures released.
- September 2021 – Unicameral special session for redistricting.
- May 2024 – U. S. Census Bureau estimates of 2023 population.

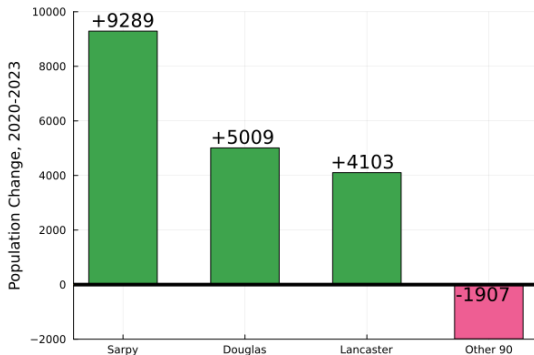
Population Changes in Congressional Districts

NE-	POPN 2020	POPN 2023	POPN CHANGE	PERCENT
1	653822	666186	12364	+1.89
2	653847	662331	8484	+1.30
3	653835	649409	-4426	-0.68

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Changes in Nebraska: 2020 to 2023

In 2023, 56.4% of Nebraska's population is in 3 urban counties.



Nebraska's population is shifting to urban areas.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

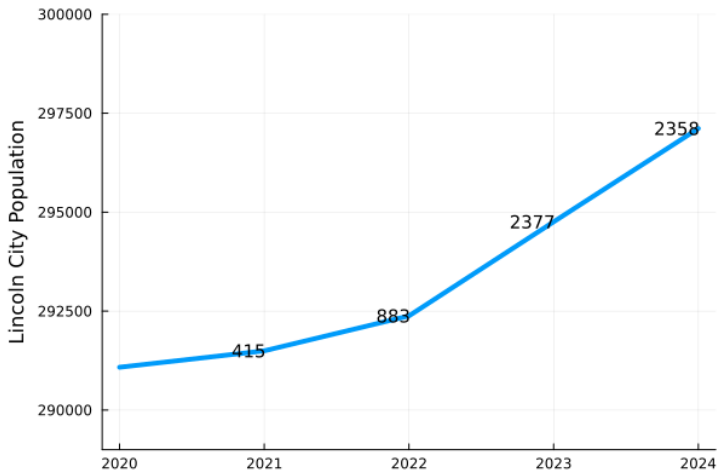
Blurring Between Rural and Urban

<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2024/08/redefining-rural.html>

... we're seeing suburban-style subdivisions in otherwise rural areas; residents of small rural towns working in urban areas; and jobs in urban and suburban areas filled by workers living in predominantly agricultural areas.

“While this is not new, the trend has been a blurring of the line between rural and urban,” said Michael Ratcliffe, senior geographer in the U.S. Census Bureau’s Geography Division.

Population Changes in Lincoln



Source: www.nebraska-demographics.com/lincoln-demographics

Population Changes in Cities versus Counties

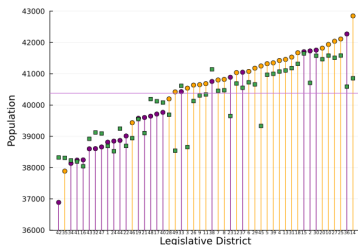
- Increase of 3675 from 2020 to 2023 is consistent with 4103 increase in Lancaster County from U.S. Census Bureau.
- Case of Omaha is similar: Increase of 3150 from 2020 to 2023 is consistent with 5009 increase from the Census Bureau.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau,

www.nebraska-demographics.com/lincoln-demographics

A Comment about Malapportionment

- *Malapportionment* means some areas being over-represented and others being under-represented in the political process.
- The Congressional Districts have become malapportioned.
- Nebraska's Legislative Districts are even more malapportioned.
(There should be 25 or 26 districts from urban areas.)



What Does It Mean?

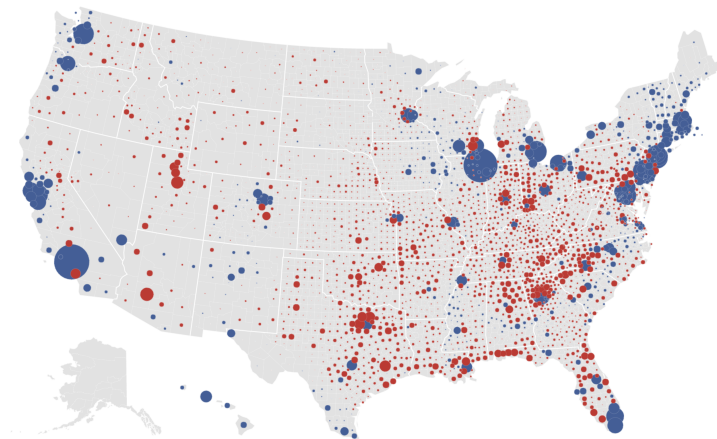
- Have shown that Nebraska's population is shifting from rural areas to the 2 urban districts.
- Are substantial effects in Nebraska politics possible from recent population changes?

The Blue Dot



Source: Lincoln Journal-Star, September 5, 2024

Urban Areas as Blue Dots



Source: New York Times, November 11, 2016.

Who is Moving?

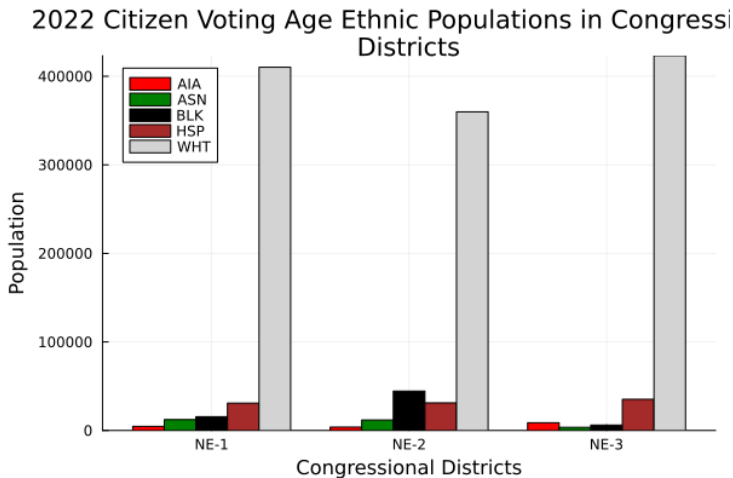
- Data is not refined enough to know exactly how the population is changing.

Change			Intn'l	Domestic
2020-2023	Births	Deaths	Migration	Migration
16414	78,825	62,001	11156	-12016

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

- We also can't tell what politics they bring with them.

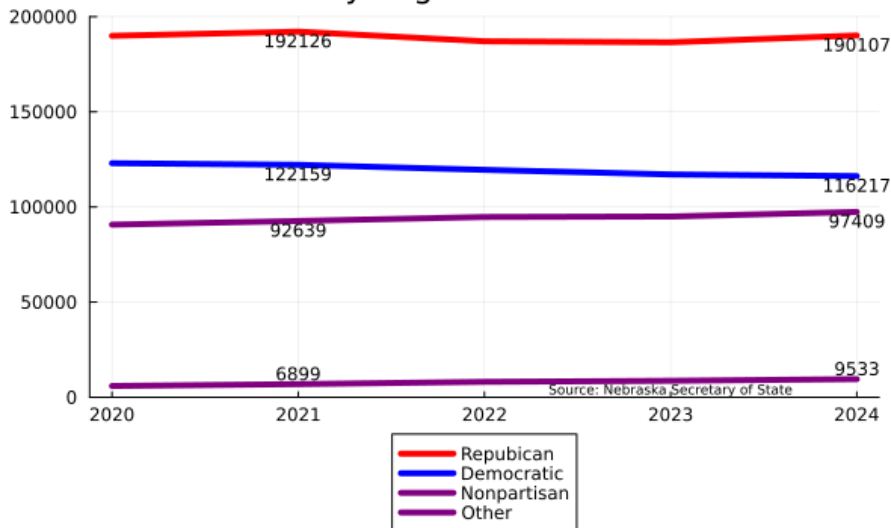
CVAP Ethnic Demographics



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

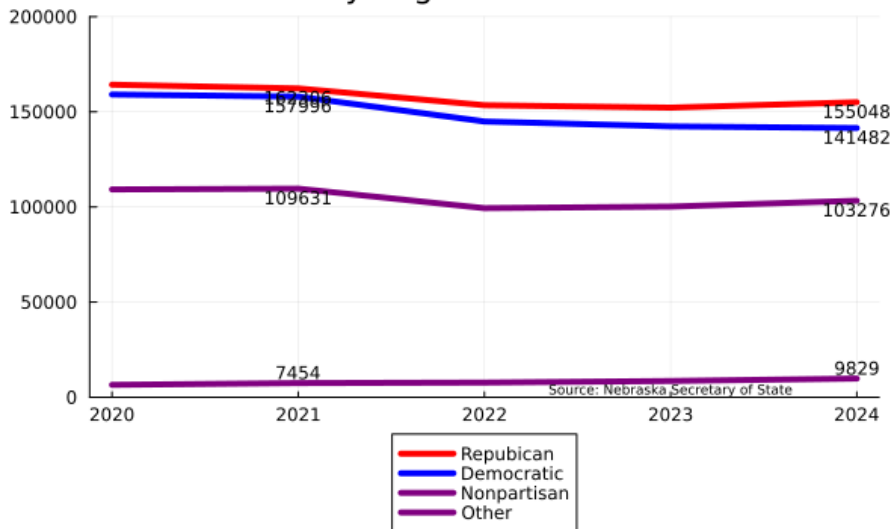
Partisan Demographics: NE-1

Party Registration in NE-1



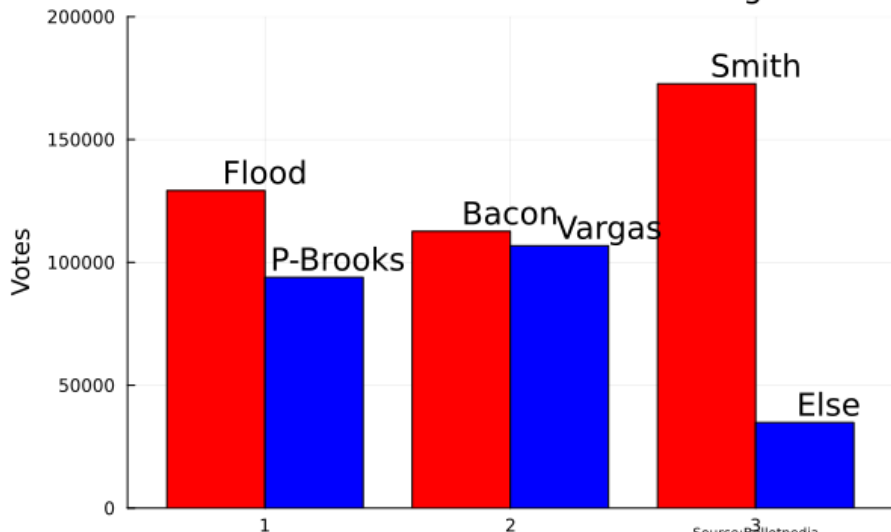
Partisan Demographics: NE-2

Party Registration in NE-2



Recent Election Results

Nov. 2022 General Election for Congress



Campaign Donations in NE-1 in Sep 2024

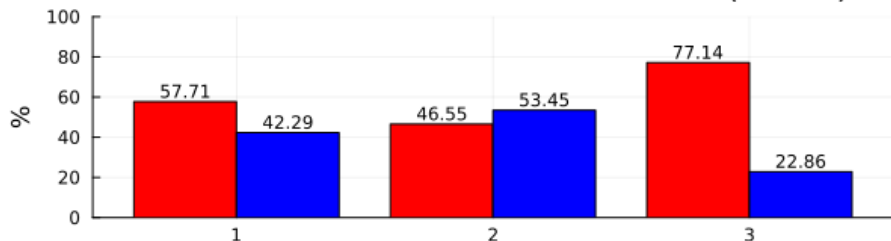
Added Oct. 29

Candidate	Donors	Dollars
Harris	490	\$54,885
Trump	859	\$41,944

Source: U.S. Federal Election Commission

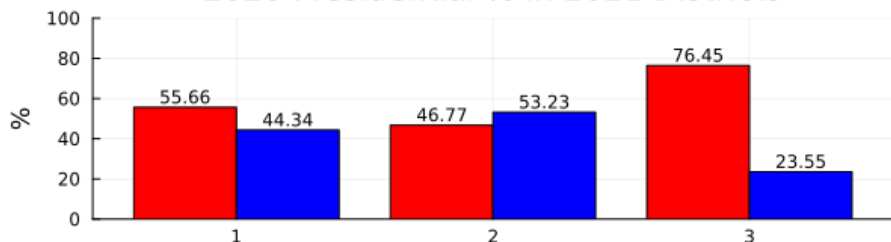
2020 Results in Current Districts

2020 Presidential % in 2020 Districts (Actual)



Source: www.politico.com/2020-election/results/nebraska

2020 Presidential % in 2021 Districts



What do Current Polls Say?

- There are no reliable recent polls for Nebraska.
- The available polls are candidate sponsored.
- The poll sizes are on the low side.
- Conclusions from the polls are unreliable.
- There are many election models using past data.

Most Recent Polls

- Added Oct. 29: NYT/Sienna Poll, 1,194 voters,
- Fisher/Osborn in statistical tie.
- Trump leads Harris by 15% in the state, according to the poll.
- Trump won the state by closer to 20% in 2020.

Conclusions:

- NE-2 (Omaha) will probably be a blue dot.
- NE-1 (Lincoln and East-Central) will probably be red in 2024 (based on partisan demographics, past results.)
- Note: Cross-over votes have become less common over time.
- Will Initiatives and Referenda make a difference?
- Will "Registered Independents" make a difference?
- NE-1 may be trending toward a blue dot (by 2030?)

All Conclusions Can Be Influenced By Your Vote

- Main Message: The 2024 Presidential Election results in our District could be close, very close, so everyone needs to vote in this election.
- There are also 6 ballot issues, Congressional races, 2 Senate races and local government races.
- So get out and vote!