***Should the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico be admitted as states?***

***Background regarding the Admission of New States***

At the formation of the United States, thirteen colonies became states, confirmed as a union with enactment of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. Article 4, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution lays out how a new state can join the Union: “New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new States shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.”

The U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power to grant statehood but does not establish the process for doing so. Congress is free to determine the conditions of statehood on a case-by-case basis. Typically, Congress has required the territory applying for statehood to have a certain minimum population. In addition, Congress requires that the territory provide evidence that a majority of its residents favor statehood. The Constitution mandates that a new state cannot be created by splitting or merging existing states unless both the U.S. Congress and the legislatures of the states involved approve. However, Congress is under no constitutional obligation to grant statehood, even in those territories whose residents express a desire for statehood.

With the Treaty of Paris ending the American Revolution in 1783, the United States gained a large stretch of land from the Appalachian Mountains to the Mississippi River. This area included land claims by the states of Virginia, New York, Massachusetts, North and South Carolina, which were ceded to the federal government and became the states of Vermont, Kentucky and Tennessee (1791-1796), as well as the Northwest Territory. From the Northwest Territory the states of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois were soon created (1803-1818). The creation of states from the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 was slower but ultimately yielded 15 additional states.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 resulted in the admission of Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state. Similarly, Arkansas was admitted as a slave state in 1836 with Michigan admitted as a free state a few months later in 1837. The balancing of slave and free states was upset by the admission of Florida and Texas (slave states) in 1845, but re-established with the admission of Iowa, Wisconsin, California, Minnesota and Oregon as free states, 1846-1859. At the time of the 1860 presidential election, there were 18 free states and 16 slave states. However, the extensive area comprising the New Mexico, Kansas, Nebraska, Utah and Washington Territories were all open to the possibility of slavery. During and immediately after the Civil War, the Republican-controlled Congress admitted the states of Kansas, West Virginia (carved out of Virginia), Nevada and Nebraska (1861-1867), followed by a rash of sparsely populated Western states—Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington, Idaho and Utah (1876-1896)--to bolster their hold on the federal government. The “Indian Territory” of Oklahoma became a state in 1907, followed by Arizona and New Mexico in 1912, and finally Hawaii and Alaska in 1959. (See Handout One: States Admitted to the Union)

***Statehood for the District of Columbia***

The District of Columbia was created because Congress believed that it needed control over the national capital (See *The Federalist Papers #43*). This belief resulted in the creation of a national capital, separate from any state, by the “District Clause” in Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 of the United States Constitution: *[The Congress shall have Power] “To exercise exclusive Legislation in all cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States.”*

In 1788, the land on which the District of Columbia is formed was ceded by [Maryland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maryland). In 1790, the first Congress passed the Residence Act placing the District on the Potomac River between the Anacostia and Connogochegue Rivers, with the exact location chosen by President [George Washington](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Washington). (See Handout Two: Map of the District of Columbia and surrounding states). The debate about where to place a permanent seat of government had been a source of controversy. Two of President Washington’s Cabinet members, Secretary of State [Thomas Jefferson](https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/J/JEFFERSON%2C-Thomas-%28J000069%29/) and Secretary of the Treasury [Alexander Hamilton](https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/H/HAMILTON%2C-Alexander-%28H000101%29/), fashioned a compromise with the tacit support of one of the House’s most influential members, Representative [James Madison](https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/M/MADISON%2C-James%2C-Jr--%28M000043%29/) of Virginia. (“No one else was in the room where it happened,” Hamilton, Broadway Musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda). In exchange for locating the capital in a southern location, southern Representatives dropped their opposition to Hamilton’s program to have the federal government assume the states’ Revolutionary War debt in the Compromise of 1790.

Within a year of moving to the District from New York City, Congress passed the [District of Columbia Organic Act of 1801](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/District_of_Columbia_Organic_Act_of_1801) and incorporated the new federal District under congressional authority as permitted by the District Clause. Since the District of Columbia was no longer part of any state, residents of the District lost voting representation in Congress and the Electoral College as well as a voice in Constitutional Amendments and the right to home rule. District citizens immediately met and sent a protest to Congress complaining about being taxed without representation.

In the 1960s, there was bipartisan support for voting rights for residents of the District of Columbia. Republicans joined Democrats in approving the 23rd Amendment in 1961, which gave residents of the District of Columbia the right to vote for President. It gave the District three electoral votes, “equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State”. In 1970, President Nixon signed a law giving the District a nonvoting delegate to the House of Representatives. In 1973 the District of Columbia Home Rule Act was enacted, which created an elected mayor and council for the District. However, Congress retained the right to review and overturn laws created by the council and to intervene in local affairs.

Since then the quest for statehood has become more difficult. A District of Columbia Statehood bill introduced in 1993 did not pass Congress. But the residents of the District have persisted in their campaign to become the 51st state. On November 8, 2016, the residents of the District of Columbia voted overwhelmingly (79%) in favor of statehood, with 86% voter turnout. In 2017, District of Columbia congressional delegate Eleanor Norton, who can introduce and debate bills but not vote on them, introduced H.R. 51, a Washington, D.C. Admission Act, which would create the state of Washington, Douglass Commonwealth, named after the African-American [abolitionist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abolitionism_in_the_United_States) [Frederick Douglass](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_Douglass), who lived in Washington, D.C. from 1877 to 1895. It would turn Washington, D.C. into the nation’s 51st state, shrinking the federal district to the White House, the National Mall and the Capitol complex. On June 26, 2020, the House of Representatives finally voted on the Washington, D.C. Admission Act. It passed by a vote of 232 to 180, with every Republican and one Democrat voting “no”. Republicans in the Senate, where the legislation must meet a bipartisan 60-vote threshold to advance, have rejected the idea and President Trump has threatened to veto it. Democratic presidential candidate, former Vice-President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., has said that he would support the move for statehood.

The District of Columbia currently (2019) has a population of approximately 711,000. This is greater than the populations of Vermont and Wyoming and slightly less than the populations of Alaska and North Dakota. If the District of Columbia were to become a state, it would be entitled to one Representative in the House and two Senators, as do these four other states (See Handout Four: List of populations of states and territories). Republicans are opposed to admitting the District of Columbia as a state because is a Democratic Party-friendly urban area (since 2000 Democratic presidential nominees have captured 89% of the vote by District residents).

The arguments against statehood are historical and partisan. Opponents argue that the founders specifically discussed and declined to establish the nation’s capital as a state. They also contend that the District of Columbia is merely “an appendage of the federal government full of lobbyists and civil servants”. It would also be the only state to have no rural residents and thus no need to consider the interests of non-urban areas. Some have expressed concern that the newly formed state might enact a [commuter tax](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commuter_tax) on non-residents that work in the District, which is currently illegal under the [District of Columbia Home Rule Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/District_of_Columbia_Home_Rule_Act).

There is also a question as to whether granting statehood to the District would need the approval of Maryland. The U.S. Constitution requires that any new states formed from an existing state receive permission from the state’s legislature. Since Maryland granted land to form the national capital and not a new state, some lawmakers have concluded that Maryland must also consent to the new state (which it probably would in any case). Republicans suggest that the District of Columbia could simply be absorbed into the state of Maryland and then the people of the District would have a vote. Ultimately, the opposition is based on partisanship: Republicans fear that the two Senators and one Representative that the District would have as a state would always vote Democratic.

Democrats and residents of the District argue that the District of Columbia not only has more population than several states, but also pays more in federal taxes than 21 states and its young people serve in the armed services. As citizens of the United States, it is fundamentally unfair for them to be denied the right to have representation in the Senate and House of Representatives and the right to full control over its local affairs. They note that although the District has had a history of fiscal problems, for the past two decades it has been and is currently fiscally viable.

George Derek Musgrove and Chris Myers Asch, historians and co-authors of “Chocolate City: A history of Race and Democracy in the Nation’s Capital,” argue in an October 1, 2020 Op-Ed in the *New York Times* that“admitting new states has *always* been partisan”. The 1820 Missouri Compromise enabled Missouri to be admitted as a slave state only because it was balanced by the admission of Maine as a free state. After years of stalled efforts, Hawaii and Alaska were admitted together in 1959 with Alaska presumed Democratic and Hawaii presumed Republican at the time. Since then, residents of Hawaii have become much more supportive of the Democratic Party and residents of Alaska have become much more Republican. Racism may also lie behind the opposition to the District as a state since only 37.5% of the residents of the District of Columbia are white non-Hispanic (See <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/DC>).

***Statehood for Puerto Rico***

Puerto Rico is an archipelago of islands located between the Caribbean Seaand the North Atlantic Ocean, east of the Dominican Republic and west of the Virgin Islands. The northwest corner of Puerto Rico is less than 1000 miles from Miami, Florida (By comparison, Hawaii is approximately 2500 miles from mainland United States)(See Handout Three: Map of Puerto Rico). A Spanish colony since 1493, Puerto Rico became a U.S. “unincorporated territory” in 1898 after the Spanish-American War.

The status of “unincorporated territory” enabled the U.S. government to selectively govern Puerto Rico as a foreign possession in a domestic or constitutional manner. In other words, depending on the issue, the U.S. government could selectively treat Puerto Rico as a state of the United States, as an autonomous territory or as a foreign country. Between 1898 and 1952, [Congress has progressively enacted laws](https://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/states/us-pr.php) granting Puerto Ricans more administrative control over local affairs.  Since the Jones Act of 1917, babies born in Puerto Rico are automatically granted U.S. citizenship. Yet, despite their citizenship, which enables them to serve in the American Army, Puerto Ricans pay no income taxes and receive limited federal funding (The Supreme Court held in *Harris v. Santiago Rosario* in 1980 that because Puerto Rico is an unincorporated territory, Congress can grant less federal assistance to U.S. citizens living there). In 2016, Congress also created a [Financial Oversight and Management Board](https://juntasupervision.pr.gov/index.php/en/home/) for Puerto Rico comprising seven unelected officials with the power to manage the island’s economic affairs and the debt crisis. The board’s powers are so wide-ranging that it can essentially veto any law related to the budget enacted by the local legislature.

Unlike the District of Columbia, Puerto Rican support for statehood is not clear. In 1950, the U.S. Congress authorized Puerto Rico to draft a local constitution. In 1951, a constitutional convention was held in Puerto Rico to draft the constitution. In 1952, Puerto Rico ratified its territorial constitution establishing a republican form of government. Since then Puerto Rico has conducted five nonbinding votes about statehood. In the 1967 referendum, 60% voted to keep their territorial autonomy, rejecting statehood and independence. In a second vote held in 1993, Puerto Ricans more closely affirmed the status quo (49 percent) over statehood (46 percent) and independence (4 percent). In a third referendum held in 1998, the Popular Democratic Party organized a boycott. Only 47 percent of Puerto Ricans voted for statehood and 2.5 percent for independence. Fifty percent of voters chose “none of the above” in protest.

On November 6, 2012, the territorial government of Puerto Rico held a confusing two-question public referendum vote on whether it should petition for U.S. statehood. The first question asked voters whether Puerto Rico should continue to be a U.S. territory. The second question asked voters to choose from among the three possible alternatives to territorial status—statehood, independence, and nationhood in free association with the United States. In the vote count, 61% of the voters chose statehood, while only 54% voted to retain territorial status. In August 2013, a U.S. Senate committee heard testimony on Puerto Rico’s 2012 statehood referendum vote and acknowledged that the majority of the Puerto Rican people had “expressed their opposition to continuing the current territorial status.”

On February 4, 2015, Puerto Rico’s Resident Commissioner in the U.S. House of Representatives, Pedro Pierluisi (resident commissioners are allowed to introduce legislation and take part in debates and committee hearings but NOT to actually vote on legislation), introduced H.R. 727, the [Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Process Act](https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/727/text). The bill authorizes Puerto Rico’s State Elections Commission to hold a vote on Puerto Rico's [admission into the Union](https://www.thoughtco.com/states-admission-to-the-union-104903) as a state within one year after the Act's enactment. If a majority of the votes cast are for Puerto Rico's admission as a state, the bill requires the president of the United States to issue a proclamation to begin the transition process that will result in Puerto Rico's admission as a state effective January 1, 2021.

On June 11, 2017, the people of Puerto Rico voted for U.S. statehood in a nonbinding referendum. Preliminary results showed that almost 500,000 ballots were cast for statehood, more than 7,600 for free association-independence, and almost 6,700 for retaining the current territorial status. However, only about 23% of the island’s approximately 2.26 million registered voters cast ballots, leading statehood opponents to doubt the validity of the result. Although the vote did not appear to be divided along party lines, they argued that the lack of turnout was as much a statement about not becoming a state as was the 97% of voters who voted for statehood.

Puerto Rico currently (2019) has a population of 3,193,614 (a decrease from 2010). More than 98% of the population is Hispanic (See https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/PR). This population is greater than that of 15 states (Wyoming, Vermont, Alaska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Montana, Maine, New Hampshire, Hawaii, West Virginia, Idaho, Nebraska and New Mexico)(See Handout Four: State and territory Populations). It would be entitled to four members in the House of Representatives and two Senators.

As of 2019, Puerto Rico’s [unemployment rate rested at 8.5%.](https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.pr.htm)  Before Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico in September 2017, it was estimated that roughly [46% of Puerto Ricans](http://www.cnn.com/2017/06/12/americas/puerto-rico-statehood-referendum/index.html) were living below the poverty line; in addition, about [10%](http://money.cnn.com/2017/05/08/news/economy/puerto-rico-bankruptcy-takeaways/index.html) of the island’s population had emigrated to mainland U.S. in the past decade in search of [better employment opportunities](http://www.pewhispanic.org/2014/08/11/puerto-rican-population-declines-on-island-grows-on-u-s-mainland/). The Commonwealth [filed for bankruptcy](http://money.cnn.com/2017/05/03/news/economy/puerto-rico-wants-to-file-for-bankruptcy/) in May 2017. However, since Puerto Rico is not currently a U.S. state, it is unable to access [Chapter 9 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code](http://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/municipalbondfund.asp), when it falls on financial hardship.

If Puerto Rico were to be granted statehood, there would be 102 senators instead of 100 (104 if the District of Columbia also gained statehood) along with a reordering of the 435 seats in the House of Representatives to accommodate four seats for Puerto Rico. Under the current maximum of 435 seats, this would also mean that other states would lose seats. The Democratic Party is favored to win the seats in Puerto Rico.

Currently, Puerto Rican island residents do not pay a federal income tax to the U.S. government. Nor do they pay taxes on dividends or capital gain taxes. Workers are responsible for payroll taxes to help fund Medicare and Social Security. However, there is only limited funding for food stamps, Medicaid, and other benefits that most Americans take for granted. Low-wage Puerto Ricans would benefit from statehood; high income Puerto Ricans would pay more taxes if the island became a state. Some islanders are concerned that becoming a state might result in their losing their heritage.

The arguments for and against statehood for Puerto Rico are not as straight-forward as those for statehood for the District of Columbia. First of all, unlike residents of the District of Columbia, a not insignificant number of Puerto Ricans are opposed to statehood. Residents repeatedly voted to remain a commonwealth in 1967, 1993, and 1998, and, although a majority did support statehood in the 2017 referendum, the voter turnout was extremely low. There is also concern about the high level of poverty and crime in Puerto Rico and that it would add a welfare burden to the U.S., forcing more resources to be shifted to Puerto Rico from other states. In addition, Puerto Rico has a large debt and questionable credit status. If granted statehood, the U.S. would inherit this debt.

Arguments in favor of admitting Puerto Rico as a state include the fact that even though the islands send their young to fight in U.S. wars, Puerto Rico is being treated as a colony with second-class citizenship. Those in favor of statehood argue that the residents of the islands are entitled to constitutionally-guaranteed citizenship with full political rights (voting) and responsibilities (paying taxes).

Although it is assumed that Puerto Rico would vote Democratic, it is not clear that the addition of Puerto Rico as a state might not actually help Republicans.

***Critical Thinking Activity:***

Divide your class into two groups.

Group One: Do you think that the District of Columbia should be admitted as a state? Conduct additional research. Support your conclusion with reasoning, historical examples and constitutional analysis.

Group Two: Do you think that Puerto Rico should be admitted as a state? Conduct additional research. Support your conclusion with reasoning, historical examples and constitutional analysis.

Class discussion: Compare the reasoning for statehood for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. How are the arguments similar? How are they different? What are the strongest and weakest arguments?

***Background Resources on Statehood:***

How the U.S. Statehood Process works: [https://www.thoughtco.com/us-statehood-process-3322311#](https://www.thoughtco.com/us-statehood-process-3322311)

National Constitution Center: <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/interpretation/article-iv/clauses/46>

“Equal Citizenship, Self-Determination, and the U.S. Statehood Process: A Constitutional and Historical Analysis,” Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law, vol. 13, issue 2 (1981) <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1860&context=jil>

***Statehood for the District of Columbia:***

United States House of Representatives: History, Art and Archives: <https://history.house.gov/Historical-Highlights/1700s/The-Permanent-Seat-of-Government-Act/>

New York Times Op Ed (October 1, 2020): <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/01/opinion/washington-dc-state.html>

New York Times (June 26, 2020): <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/26/us/politics/dc-statehood-house-vote.html>

Washington Post (June 25, 2020): <https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/dc-statehood-vote/2020/06/25/c2ac1670-b6ee-11ea-a8da-693df3d7674a_story.html>

Brookings Institute (June 25, 2020): <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2020/06/25/the-politics-and-history-of-the-d-c-statehood-vote/>

NPR (Nov. 9, 2016): <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/11/09/501412360/d-c-votes-overwhelmingly-to-become-51st-state>

Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statehood_movement_in_the_District_of_Columbia>

***Statehood for Puerto Rico:***

The Perspective:<https://www.theperspective.com/debates/politics/puerto-rico-become-51st-state/>

Legal Planet: <https://legal-planet.org/2020/06/29/dc-and-puerto-rico-are-not-the-same/>

The Conversation: <https://theconversation.com/statehood-for-puerto-rico-lessons-from-the-last-time-the-us-added-a-star-to-its-flag-79150> and https://theconversation.com/puerto-rico-votes-on-statehood-fifth-times-the-charm-75975

Washington Monthly: <https://washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/july-august-2018/isle-of-opportunity/>

Debatepedia: [http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:\_Puerto\_Rico\_statehood\_in\_America](http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate%3A_Puerto_Rico_statehood_in_America)

Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017_Puerto_Rican_status_referendum>

**Handout One: States Admitted to the Union**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **State** | **Entered Union** | **Year Settled** |
| Delaware | Dec. 7, 1787 | 1638 |
| Pennsylvania | Dec. 12, 1787 | 1682 |
| New Jersey | Dec. 18, 1787 | 1660 |
| Georgia | Jan. 2, 1788 | 1733 |
| Connecticut | Jan. 9, 1788 | 1634 |
| Massachusetts | Feb. 6, 1788 | 1620 |
| Maryland | Apr. 28, 1788 | 1634 |
| South Carolina | May 23, 1788 | 1670 |
| New Hampshire | June 21, 1788 | 1623 |
| Virginia | June 25, 1788 | 1607 |
| New York | July 26, 1788 | 1614 |
| North Carolina | Nov. 21, 1789 | 1660 |
| Rhode Island | May 29, 1790 | 1636 |
| Vermont | Mar. 4, 1791 | 1724 |
| Kentucky | June 1, 1792 | 1774 |
| Tennessee | June 1, 1796 | 1769 |
| Ohio | Mar. 1, 1803 | 1788 |
| Louisiana | Apr. 30, 1812 | 1699 |
| Indiana | Dec. 11, 1816 | 1733 |
| Mississippi | Dec. 10, 1817 | 1699 |
| Illinois | Dec. 3, 1818 | 1720 |
| Alabama | Dec. 14, 1819 | 1702 |
| Maine | Mar. 15, 1820 | 1624 |
| Missouri | Aug. 10, 1821 | 1735 |
| Arkansas | June 15, 1836 | 1686 |
| Michigan | Jan. 26, 1837 | 1668 |
| Florida | Mar. 3, 1845 | 1565 |
| Texas | Dec. 29, 1845 | 1682 |
| Iowa | Dec. 28, 1846 | 1788 |
| Wisconsin | May 29, 1848 | 1766 |
| California | Sept. 9, 1850 | 1769 |
| Minnesota | May 11, 1858 | 1805 |
| Oregon | Feb. 14, 1859 | 1811 |
| Kansas | Jan. 29, 1861 | 1727 |
| West Virginia | June 20, 1863 | 1727 |
| Nevada | Oct. 31, 1864 | 1849 |
| Nebraska | Mar. 1, 1867 | 1823 |
| Colorado | Aug. 1, 1876 | 1858 |
| North Dakota | Nov. 2, 1889 | 1812 |
| South Dakota | Nov. 2, 1889 | 1859 |
| Montana | Nov. 8, 1889 | 1809 |
| Washington | Nov. 11, 1889 | 1811 |
| Idaho | July 3, 1890 | 1842 |
| Wyoming | July 10, 1890 | 1834 |
| Utah | Jan. 4, 1896 | 1847 |
| Oklahoma | Nov. 16, 1907 | 1889 |
| New Mexico | Jan. 6, 1912 | 1610 |
| Arizona | Feb. 14, 1912 | 1776 |
| Alaska | Jan. 3, 1959 | 1784 |
| Hawaii | Aug. 21, 1959 | 1820 |

<https://www.infoplease.com/us/states/states-by-order-of-entry-into-the-union>

**Handout Two: Map of Washington, D.C., carved out of Maryland**



**Handout Three: The Island of Puerto Rico**



**Puerto Rico** an archipelago of islands located between the **Caribbean Sea and** the North **Atlantic Ocean**, east of the Dominican Republic and west of the Virgin Islands. Its capital, San Juan, is 2193 miles from mainland United States, closer than Hawaii is to mainland United States.

**Handout Four: State and Territory Populations**

| **Rank in states & territories, 2019** | **Rank in states & territories, 2010** | **State** | **Population estimate, July 1, 2019**[[2]](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_population#cite_note-AnnualEstUS-2) | **Census population, April 1, 2010**[[3]](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_population#cite_note-3) | **Percent change, 2010–2019**[[note 1]](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_population#cite_note-4) | **Percent of the total U.S. population, 2018**[[note 3]](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_population#cite_note-6) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 1 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/01/Flag_of_California.svg/23px-Flag_of_California.svg.png[California](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/California) | 39,512,223 | 37,254,523 | 6.1% | 11.96% |
| 2 | 2 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f7/Flag_of_Texas.svg/23px-Flag_of_Texas.svg.png[Texas](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas) | 28,995,881 | 25,145,561 | 15.3% | 8.68% |
| 3 | 4 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f7/Flag_of_Florida.svg/23px-Flag_of_Florida.svg.png[Florida](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida) | 21,477,737 | 18,801,310 | 14.2% | 6.44% |
| 4 | 3 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1a/Flag_of_New_York.svg/23px-Flag_of_New_York.svg.png[New York](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_%28state%29) | 19,453,561 | 19,378,102 | 0.4% | 5.91% |
| 5 | 6 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f7/Flag_of_Pennsylvania.svg/23px-Flag_of_Pennsylvania.svg.png[Pennsylvania](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pennsylvania) | 12,801,989 | 12,702,379 | 0.8% | 3.87% |
| 6 | 5 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/01/Flag_of_Illinois.svg/23px-Flag_of_Illinois.svg.png[Illinois](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois) | 12,671,821 | 12,830,632 | -1.2% | 3.85% |
| 7 | 7 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4c/Flag_of_Ohio.svg/23px-Flag_of_Ohio.svg.png[Ohio](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio) | 11,689,100 | 11,536,504 | 1.3% | 3.53% |
| 8 | 9 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/54/Flag_of_Georgia_%28U.S._state%29.svg/23px-Flag_of_Georgia_%28U.S._state%29.svg.png[Georgia](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_%28U.S._state%29) | 10,617,423 | 9,687,653 | 9.6% | 3.18% |
| 9 | 10 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/bb/Flag_of_North_Carolina.svg/23px-Flag_of_North_Carolina.svg.png[North Carolina](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Carolina) | 10,488,084 | 9,535,483 | 10.0% | 3.14% |
| 10 | 8 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b5/Flag_of_Michigan.svg/23px-Flag_of_Michigan.svg.png[Michigan](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michigan) | 9,986,857 | 9,883,640 | 1.0% | 3.02% |
| 11 | 11 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/92/Flag_of_New_Jersey.svg/23px-Flag_of_New_Jersey.svg.png[New Jersey](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Jersey) | 8,882,190 | 8,791,894 | 1.0% | 2.69% |
| 12 | 12 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/47/Flag_of_Virginia.svg/22px-Flag_of_Virginia.svg.png[Virginia](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia) | 8,535,519 | 8,001,024 | 6.7% | 2.58% |
| 13 | 13 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/54/Flag_of_Washington.svg/23px-Flag_of_Washington.svg.png[Washington](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington) | 7,614,893 | 6,724,540 | 13.2% | 2.28% |
| 14 | 16 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9d/Flag_of_Arizona.svg/23px-Flag_of_Arizona.svg.png[Arizona](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arizona) | 7,278,717 | 6,392,017 | 13.9% | 2.17% |
| 15 | 14 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f2/Flag_of_Massachusetts.svg/23px-Flag_of_Massachusetts.svg.png[Massachusetts](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massachusetts) | 6,949,503 | 6,547,629 | 5.3% | 2.09% |
| 16 | 17 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9e/Flag_of_Tennessee.svg/23px-Flag_of_Tennessee.svg.png[Tennessee](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tennessee) | 6,833,174 | 6,346,105 | 7.6% | 2.05% |
| 17 | 15 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/ac/Flag_of_Indiana.svg/23px-Flag_of_Indiana.svg.png[Indiana](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indiana) | 6,732,219 | 6,483,802 | 3.8% | 2.02% |
| 18 | 18 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5a/Flag_of_Missouri.svg/23px-Flag_of_Missouri.svg.png[Missouri](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missouri) | 6,137,428 | 5,988,927 | 2.5% | 1.85% |
| 19 | 19 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a0/Flag_of_Maryland.svg/23px-Flag_of_Maryland.svg.png[Maryland](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maryland) | 6,045,680 | 5,773,552 | 4.7% | 1.83% |
| 20 | 20 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/22/Flag_of_Wisconsin.svg/23px-Flag_of_Wisconsin.svg.png[Wisconsin](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wisconsin) | 5,822,434 | 5,686,986 | 2.4% | 1.76% |
| 21 | 22 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/46/Flag_of_Colorado.svg/23px-Flag_of_Colorado.svg.png[Colorado](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado) | 5,758,736 | 5,029,196 | 14.5% | 1.72% |
| 22 | 21 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b9/Flag_of_Minnesota.svg/23px-Flag_of_Minnesota.svg.png[Minnesota](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minnesota) | 5,639,632 | 5,303,925 | 6.3% | 1.70% |
| 23 | 24 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/69/Flag_of_South_Carolina.svg/23px-Flag_of_South_Carolina.svg.png[South Carolina](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Carolina) | 5,148,714 | 4,625,364 | 11.3% | 1.54% |
| 24 | 23 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5c/Flag_of_Alabama.svg/23px-Flag_of_Alabama.svg.png[Alabama](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alabama) | 4,903,185 | 4,779,736 | 2.6% | 1.48% |
| 25 | 25 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/e0/Flag_of_Louisiana.svg/23px-Flag_of_Louisiana.svg.png[Louisiana](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louisiana) | 4,648,794 | 4,533,372 | 2.5% | 1.41% |
| 26 | 26 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8d/Flag_of_Kentucky.svg/23px-Flag_of_Kentucky.svg.png[Kentucky](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kentucky) | 4,467,673 | 4,339,367 | 3.0% | 1.35% |
| 27 | 27 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b9/Flag_of_Oregon.svg/23px-Flag_of_Oregon.svg.png[Oregon](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregon) | 4,217,737 | 3,831,074 | 10.1% | 1.27% |
| 28 | 28 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/6e/Flag_of_Oklahoma.svg/23px-Flag_of_Oklahoma.svg.png[Oklahoma](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oklahoma) | 3,956,971 | 3,751,351 | 5.5% | 1.19% |
| 29 | 30 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/96/Flag_of_Connecticut.svg/20px-Flag_of_Connecticut.svg.png[Connecticut](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Connecticut) | 3,565,287 | 3,574,097 | -0.2% | 1.08% |
| 30 | 35 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f6/Flag_of_Utah.svg/23px-Flag_of_Utah.svg.png[Utah](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utah) | 3,205,958 | 2,763,885 | 16.0% | 0.96% |
| 31 | 29 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/28/Flag_of_Puerto_Rico.svg/23px-Flag_of_Puerto_Rico.svg.png[Puerto Rico](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Rico) | 3,193,694 | 3,725,789 | -14.3% | 0.97% |
| 32 | 31 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/aa/Flag_of_Iowa.svg/23px-Flag_of_Iowa.svg.png[Iowa](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iowa) | 3,155,070 | 3,046,355 | 3.6% | 0.95% |
| 33 | 36 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f1/Flag_of_Nevada.svg/23px-Flag_of_Nevada.svg.png[Nevada](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nevada) | 3,080,156 | 2,700,551 | 14.1% | 0.92% |
| 34 | 33 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9d/Flag_of_Arkansas.svg/23px-Flag_of_Arkansas.svg.png[Arkansas](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arkansas) | 3,017,825 | 2,915,918 | 3.5% | 0.91% |
| 35 | 32 | [Mississippi](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mississippi) | 2,976,149 | 2,967,297 | 0.3% | 0.90% |
| 36 | 34 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/da/Flag_of_Kansas.svg/23px-Flag_of_Kansas.svg.png[Kansas](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas) | 2,913,314 | 2,853,118 | 2.1% | 0.88% |
| 37 | 37 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c3/Flag_of_New_Mexico.svg/23px-Flag_of_New_Mexico.svg.png[New Mexico](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Mexico) | 2,096,829 | 2,059,179 | 1.8% | 0.63% |
| 38 | 39 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4d/Flag_of_Nebraska.svg/23px-Flag_of_Nebraska.svg.png[Nebraska](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebraska) | 1,934,408 | 1,826,341 | 5.9% | 0.58% |
| 39 | 40 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a4/Flag_of_Idaho.svg/19px-Flag_of_Idaho.svg.png[Idaho](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Idaho) | 1,787,065 | 1,567,582 | 14.0% | 0.53% |
| 40 | 38 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/22/Flag_of_West_Virginia.svg/23px-Flag_of_West_Virginia.svg.png[West Virginia](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Virginia) | 1,792,147 | 1,852,994 | -3.3% | 0.55% |
| 41 | 41 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ef/Flag_of_Hawaii.svg/23px-Flag_of_Hawaii.svg.png[Hawaii](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii) | 1,415,872 | 1,360,301 | 4.1% | 0.43% |
| 42 | 43 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/28/Flag_of_New_Hampshire.svg/23px-Flag_of_New_Hampshire.svg.png[New Hampshire](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Hampshire) | 1,359,711 | 1,316,470 | 3.3% | 0.41% |
| 43 | 42 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/35/Flag_of_Maine.svg/19px-Flag_of_Maine.svg.png[Maine](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maine) | 1,344,212 | 1,328,361 | 1.2% | 0.40% |
| 44 | 45 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/cb/Flag_of_Montana.svg/23px-Flag_of_Montana.svg.png[Montana](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montana) | 1,068,778 | 989,415 | 8.0% | 0.32% |
| 45 | 44 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f3/Flag_of_Rhode_Island.svg/17px-Flag_of_Rhode_Island.svg.png[Rhode Island](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhode_Island) | 1,059,361 | 1,052,567 | 0.6% | 0.32% |
| 46 | 46 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c6/Flag_of_Delaware.svg/23px-Flag_of_Delaware.svg.png[Delaware](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delaware) | 973,764 | 897,934 | 8.4% | 0.29% |
| 47 | 47 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1a/Flag_of_South_Dakota.svg/23px-Flag_of_South_Dakota.svg.png[South Dakota](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Dakota) | 884,659 | 814,180 | 8.7% | 0.27% |
| 48 | 49 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ee/Flag_of_North_Dakota.svg/19px-Flag_of_North_Dakota.svg.png[North Dakota](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Dakota) | 762,062 | 672,591 | 13.3% | 0.23% |
| 49 | 48 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/e6/Flag_of_Alaska.svg/21px-Flag_of_Alaska.svg.png[Alaska](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska) | 731,545 | 710,231 | 3.0% | 0.22% |
| 50 | 51 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/d4/Flag_of_the_District_of_Columbia.svg/23px-Flag_of_the_District_of_Columbia.svg.png[District of Columbia](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington%2C_D.C.) | 705,749 | 601,723 | 17.3% | 0.21% |
| 51 | 50 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/49/Flag_of_Vermont.svg/23px-Flag_of_Vermont.svg.png[Vermont](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont) | 623,989 | 625,741 | -0.3% | 0.19% |
| 52 | 52 | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/bc/Flag_of_Wyoming.svg/22px-Flag_of_Wyoming.svg.png[Wyoming](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wyoming) | 578,759 | 563,626 | 2.7% | 0.17% |

<https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_population>

Note 1: This figure for each state compares to a national increase of 5.97%.

Note 2: Each state has a number of votes in the Electoral College equal to two more than its number of representatives in the U.S. House, while DC is granted 3 electoral votes. The Electoral College is used to elect the President and Vice President of the United States.

Note 3: Because of rounding of the individual percentages, the entries in this column may not sum to 100%.