**Electoral Impact of Third Parties in Presidential Elections 1992-2016**

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| **Year** | **Total number of third party votes** | **Breakdown of third party voters by party** | **Analysis: How much impact did third parties have in this election?** |
| 2016 | 6,674,811 = 0.05%  (Total votes: 135,500,034) | 4,488,931 – Gary Johnson (Libertarian) = 0.03%  1,457,050 – Jill Stein (Green) = 0.01%  728,830 – Evan McMullin (Independent) = 0.005% | The national total for third party candidates and write-ins was well over 5%. In Utah, Evan McMullin received over 20% of the vote, while in Vermont Bernie Sanders received over 5% of the vote despite not appearing on the ballot. Green candidate Jill Stein and Libertarian Gary Johnson received over a million votes each nationwide.  In a mini-revolt against the top two candidates, a record number of ten faithless electors cast their votes for other candidates, three of which were disallowed. Most of these went to other Republicans and Democrats, but one vote went to Libertarian Ron Paul and Yankton Sioux Nation independent Faith Spotted Eagle. |
| 2012 | 2,236,111 = 1.74%  (Total votes = 129,085,410) | 1,275,971 – Gary Johnson (Libertarian) = 0.99%  469,627 – Jill Stein (Green) = 0.36%  122,389 – Virgil Goode (Constitution) = 0.09%  67,326 – Roseanne Barr (Peace and Freedom) = 0.05%  43,108 – Rocky Anderson (Justice) = 0.03%  40,628 – Tom Hoefling (America’s) = 0.03%  956 – Andre Barnett (Reform) = 0.0%  216,196 – Others = 0.19% | Gary Johnson's popular vote total set a Libertarian Party record, and his popular vote percentage was the second-best showing for a Libertarian in a presidential election, trailing only Ed Clark's in 1980. Johnson would go on to beat this record in the 2016 presidential election, winning the most votes for the Libertarian ticket in history. At the time, Green Party candidate Jill Stein's popular vote total made her the most successful female presidential candidate in a general election in United States history. This was later surpassed by Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election. |
| 2008 | 1,914,922 = 1.05%  (Total votes = 131,313,820) | 739,034 – Ralph Nader (Independent) = 0.56%  523,715 – Bob Barr (Libertarian) = 0.40%  199,750 – Chuck Baldwin (Constitution) = 0.15%  161,797 – Cynthia McKinney (Green) = 0.12%  47,941 – Alan Keyes (America’s Independent Party) = 0.04%  242,685 – Others = 0.18% | [Alan Keyes](https://rationalwiki.org/wiki/Alan_Keyes) was going to run in November as an independent, after getting no attention at all in the Republican contest and then losing the Constitution Party nomination in a landslide. He was on the ballot in one state: Colorado[.](https://rationalwiki.org/wiki/2008_U.S._presidential_election#cite_note-politics1.com-10)  Unity '08  was an attempt at launching a new centrist third party or fusion presidential ticket, possibly involving somebody like Michael Bloomberg or Joe Lieberman. Defunct - disbanded without ever agreeing on a candidate  Constitution Party -- Apparently the Constitution Party does not have primaries, but instead has a shadowy National Convention pick its candidates. However, a few lost causes ran including Don Grundmann, tax denialist and homophobe and Alan Keyes. On April 26, 2008 the party convention chose Chuck Baldwin, a [Baptist](https://rationalwiki.org/wiki/Baptist) preacher from Florida, who thought that [9/11](https://rationalwiki.org/wiki/9/11) was an inside job.  Speculation that the Reform Party would not be running a Presidential candidate, but would again endorse a minor-party candidate (as it did with Ralph Nader in 2004) turned out to be incorrect when they nominated somebody named Ted Weill as their 2008 nominee. Weill was only on the ballot in Alabama and Mississippi. The Reform Party has split into about 9 hostile factions since 2000 which only goes to show the only thing they ever were was a disparate group held together by H. Ross Perot fandom that took to ripping each other to shreds as soon as Perot left the room.  The United Fascist Party ran Jackson K. Grimes, again, as the sole member of said party. |
| 2004 | 1,228,179 = 1.002%  (Total votes=122,294,846) | 465,151 – Ralph Nader (Independent) = 0.38%  397,265 – Michael Badnarik (Libertarian) = 0.32%  143,630 – Micahel Peroutka (Constitution) = 0.12%  119,859 – David Cobb (Green) = 0.10%  27,607 – Leonard Peltier (Peace and Freedom) = 0.02%  10,837 – Walt Brown (Socialist) = 0.01%  10,791 – Roger Calero (Socialist Workers) = 0.01%  2,387 – Thomas Harens (Christian Freedom) = 0.002%  50,652 – Others = 0.04% | Minor party candidates received many fewer votes, dropping from a total of 3.5% in 2000 to approximately one percent. As in 2000, Ralph Nader finished in third place, but his total declined from 2.9 million to 400,000 votes, leaving him with fewer votes than Reform Party candidate Pat Buchanan had received in finishing fourth in 2000. |
| 2000 | 3,959,114 = 3.75%  (Total votes = 105,421,423) | 2,882,955 – Ralph Nader (Green) = 2.74%  448,895 – Pat Buchanan (Reform) = 0.43%  384,431 – Harry Browne (Libertarian) = 0.36%  98,020 – Howard Phillips (Constitution) = 0.09%  83,714 – John Hagelin (Natural Law) = 0.08%  51,186 – Others = 0.05% | Ralph Nader received almost 3% of the vote nationwide, and his individual state totals were in some cases much higher, exceeding the margin between the two main candidates, including Florida and New Hampshire, the latter of which some could argue flipped the election from Gore to Bush.  Many Gore supporters claimed that third-party candidate Nader acted as a spoiler in the election since Nader votes could have been cast for Gore, and for instance, Nader allegedly threw the election outcome to Bush. Nader received 2.74 percent of the popular vote nationwide, getting 97,000 votes in Florida (by comparison, there were 111,251 [overvotes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overvotes" \o "Overvotes)) and 22,000 votes in New Hampshire, where Bush beat Gore by 7,000 votes. Winning either state would have won the general election for Gore. Defenders of Nader, including Dan Perkins, argued that the margin in Florida was small enough that Democrats could blame any number of third-party candidates for the defeat, including Workers World Party candidate [Monica Moorehead](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monica_Moorehead), who received 1,500 votes. But the controversy with Nader also drained energy from the Democratic party as divisive debate went on in the months leading up to the election. |
| 1996 | 9,678,980 = 10.04%  (Total votes = 96,277,634) | 8,085,294 – Ross Perot (Reform) = 8.4%  685,297 – Ralph Nader (Green) = 0.71%  485,759 – Harry Browne (Libertarian) = 0.50%  184,656 – Howard Phillips (Taxpayers) = 0.19%  113,670 – John Hagelin (Natural Law) = 0.12%  113,667 – Others = 0.12% | Ross Perot ran for president again, this time as the candidate of the newly founded Reform Party. He won 8% of the popular vote.  His vote total was less than half of his performance in 1992. The 1996 national exit poll showed that just as in 1992, Perot drew supporters from Clinton and Dole equally. In polls directed at Perot voters as to who would be a second choice, Clinton consistently held substantial leads. Perot's best showing was in states that tended to strongly favor either Clinton (such as Maine) or Dole (particularly Montana, though the margin of victory there was much closer). Perot once again received his lowest amount of support in the South. |
| 1992 | 20,409,567 = 19.53%  (Total votes = 104, 423, 923) | 19,743,821 – Ross Perot (Independent) = 18.9%  290,087 – Andre Verne Marrou (Libertarian) = 0.28%  106,152 – Bo gritz (Populist) = 0.10%  73,622 - Lenora Fulani (New Alliance Party) = 0.07%  43,369 - Howard Phillips (US Taxpayers Party) =0.04%  152,516 – Others = 0.13% | Ross Perot, an independent, won 18.9% of the popular vote (but no electoral votes). His was the best popular vote showing ever for an independent candidate who stood alone on no third party ticket. Not until four years later would Perot seek to run for the first time on a third party ticket. As an independent, however, Perot finished second in two states: in Utah ahead of election winner Bill Clinton, and in Maine ahead of incumbent President George H. W. Bush.  The effect of Ross Perot's candidacy has been a contentious point of debate for many years. In the ensuing months after the election, various Republicans asserted that Perot had acted as a spoiler, enough to the detriment of Bush to lose him the election. While many disaffected conservatives may have voted for Ross Perot to protest Bush's tax increase, further examination of the Perot vote in the Election Night exit polls not only showed that Perot siphoned votes nearly equally among Bush and Clinton, but roughly two-thirds of those voters who cited Bush's broken "No New Taxes" pledge as "very important" (25%) voted for Bill Clinton. The voting numbers reveal that to win the electoral vote Bush would have had to win 10 of the 11 states Clinton won by less than five percentage points. For Bush to earn a majority of the popular vote, he would have needed 12.2% of Perot's 18.9% of the vote, 65% of Perot's support base. State exit polls suggested that Perot did not alter the electoral college count, except potentially in one state (Ohio), which nonetheless showed a result in the margin of error. Furthermore, Perot was most popular in states that strongly favoured either Clinton or Bush, limiting his real electoral impact for either candidate. He gained relatively little support in the Southern states and happened to have the best showing in states with few electoral votes. Perot appealed to disaffected voters all across the political spectrum who had grown weary of the two-party system. NAFTA played a role in Perot's support, and Perot voters were relatively moderate on hot-button social issues. |

***Other notable presidential elections for third parties:***

**1968 presidential election -** Former Democratic Governor of [Alabama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alabama) [George Wallace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Wallace) ran on the [American Independent Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Independent_Party) line. Wallace received 9,901,118 votes for 13.5% of the popular vote, receiving 45 electoral votes in [the South](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_United_States) and many votes in the North. Wallace remains the only third party candidate since 1948 to win a state.

**1972 presidential election -** Despite only garnering 3,674 votes (roughly 0.00005% of the actual electorate), [John G. Hospers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_G._Hospers) of the Libertarian Party secured one electoral vote in this election due to [Virginia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia) [faithless elector](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faithless_elector), [Roger MacBride](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_MacBride). In addition, the results of the faithless elector made the Libertarian vice-presidential nominee [Theodora "Tonie" Nathan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonie_Nathan) became the first woman in U.S. history to receive an electoral vote.

**1980 presidential election -** Congressman [John B. Anderson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_B._Anderson) received 5,719,850 votes, for 6.6% of the vote, as an independent candidate for President. [Libertarian Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libertarian_Party_(United_States)) candidate [Ed Clark](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ed_Clark) won 921,128 votes, or 1.1% of the total. No other Libertarian candidate has ever gotten more than 0.5% in a presidential election until Gary Johnson won 1% in 2012.