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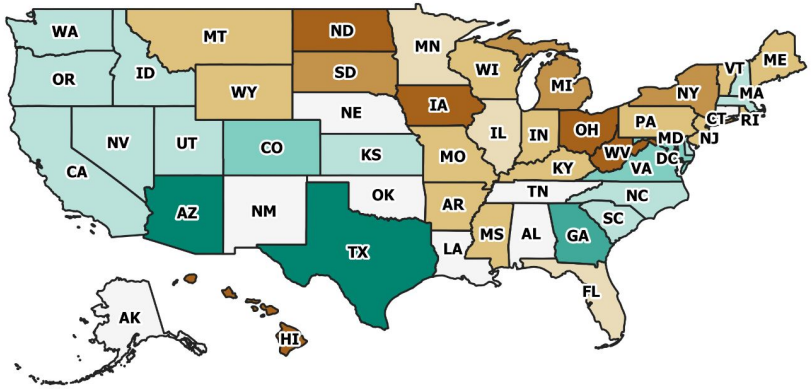
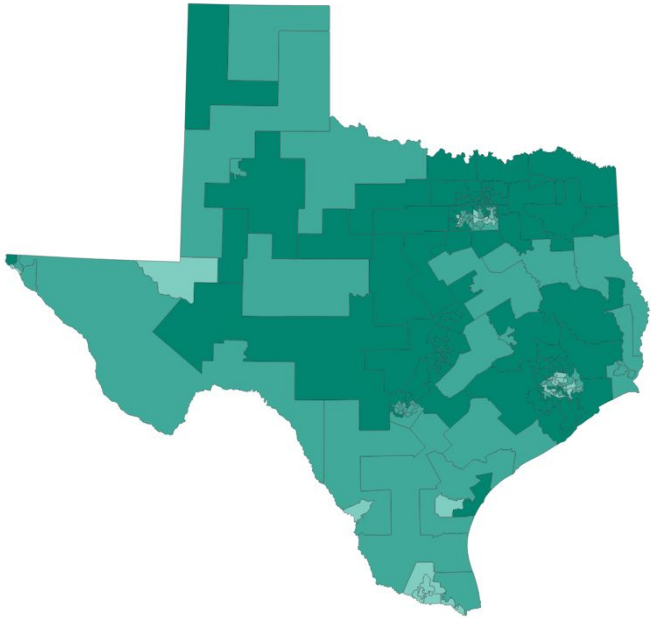
# TEXAS TEN YEAR TRENDS

June 2023

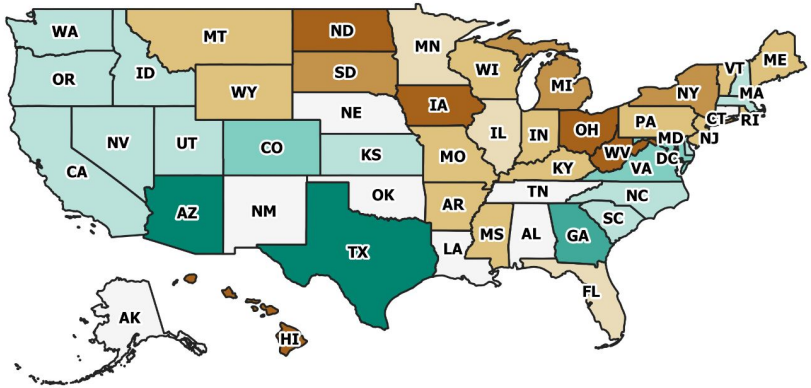
# STATE LEGISLATURES ARE THE FRONTLINE OF DEMOCRACY

# Thinking in Decades: A New Frame for Campaigns

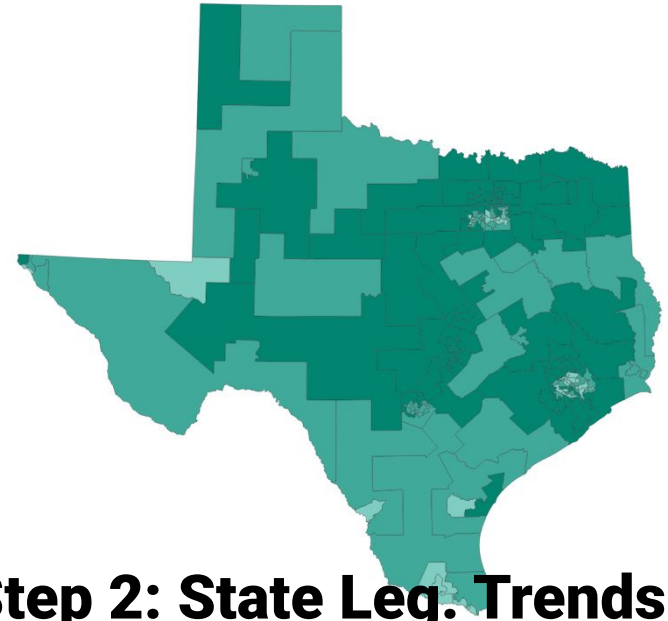


# Thinking in Decades: A New Frame for Campaigns



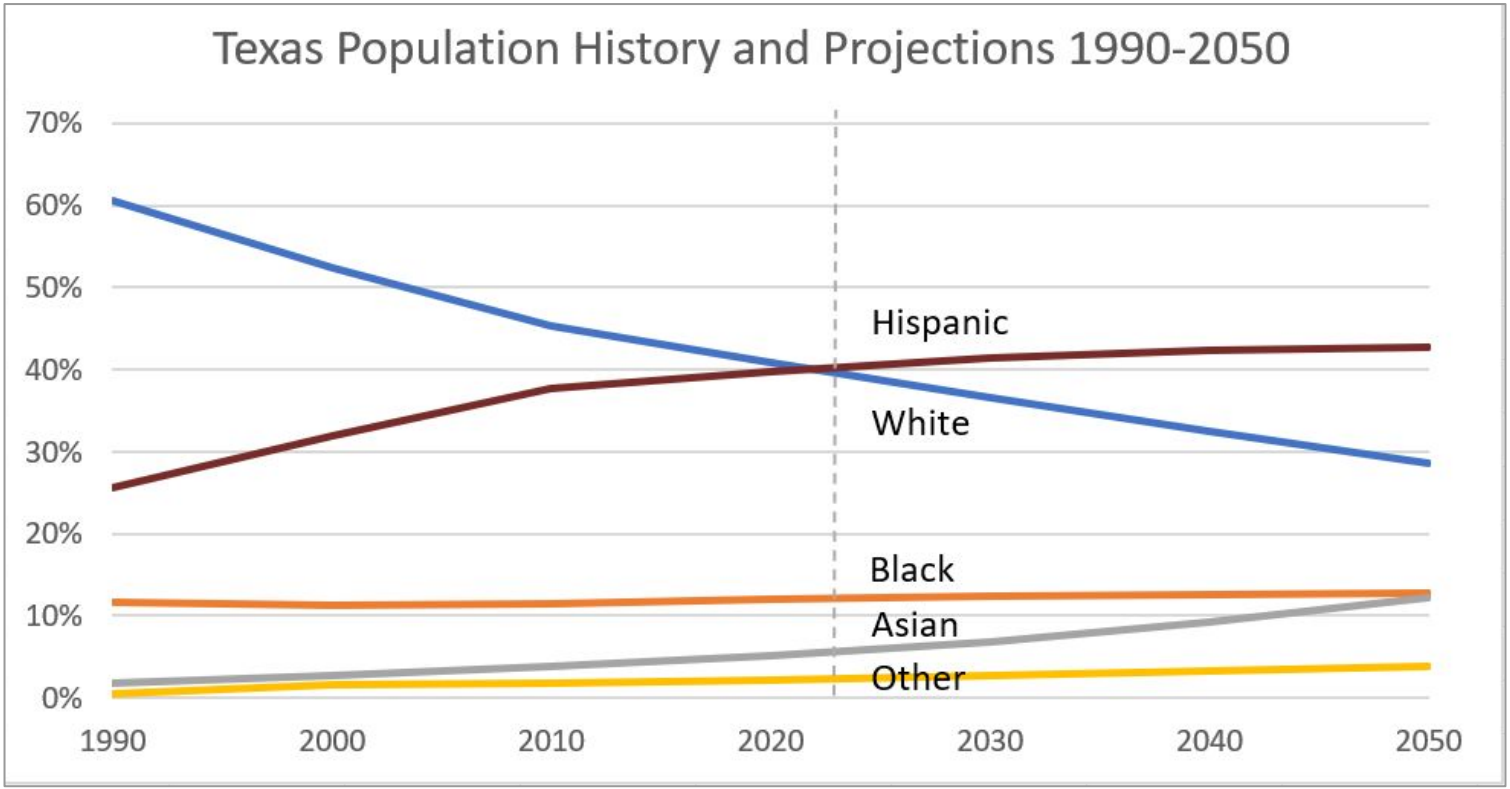

## Step 1: Forecasting State Trends and Competitiveness



## Step 2: State Leg. Trends and Tipping-Point Districts

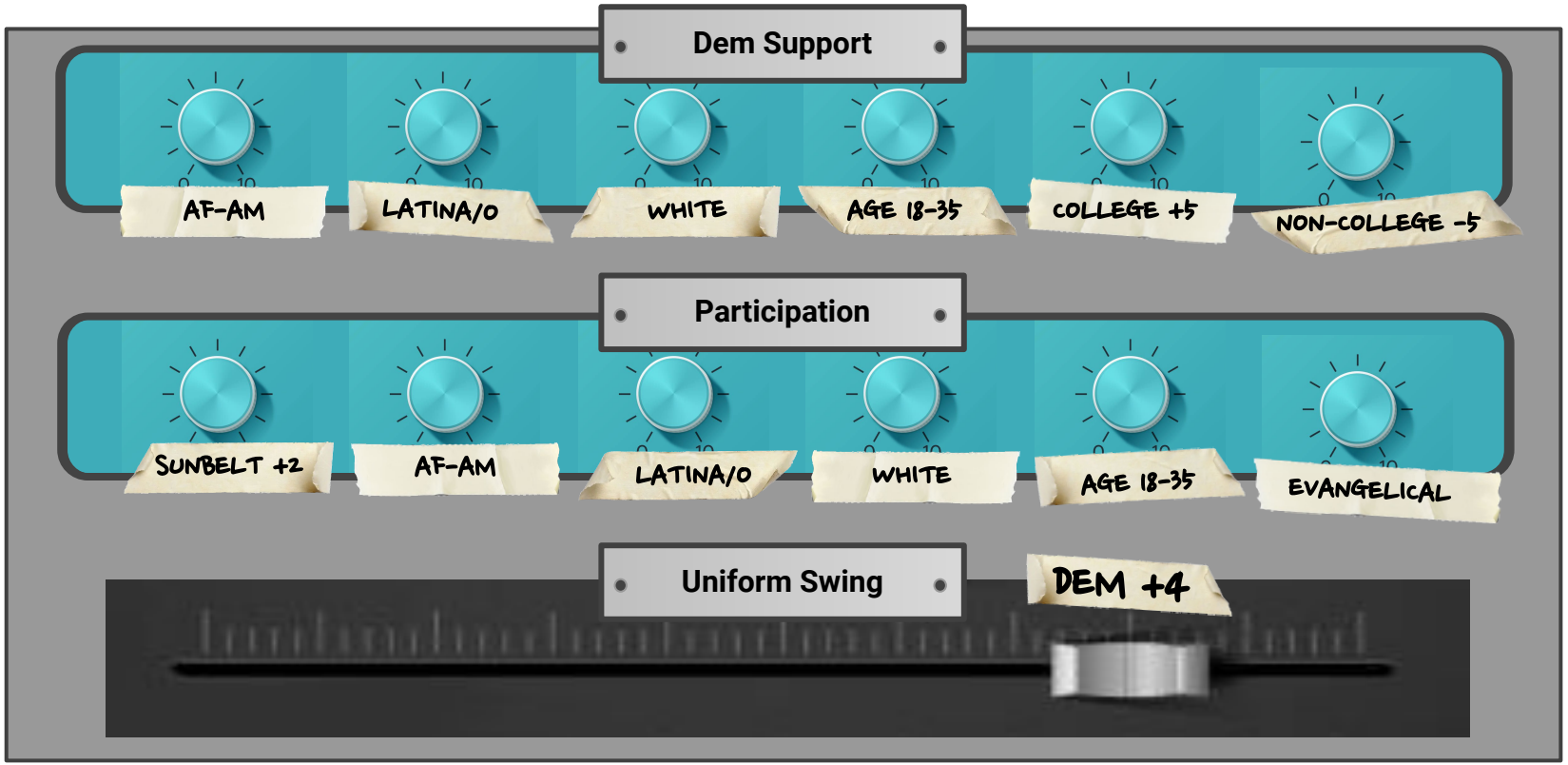
# Step 1: Build a ten-year projection of partisan trends and competitiveness in all 50 states

# Start with demographic trends




*Sources: Decennial US Census; Texas Demographic Center (January, 2019)*

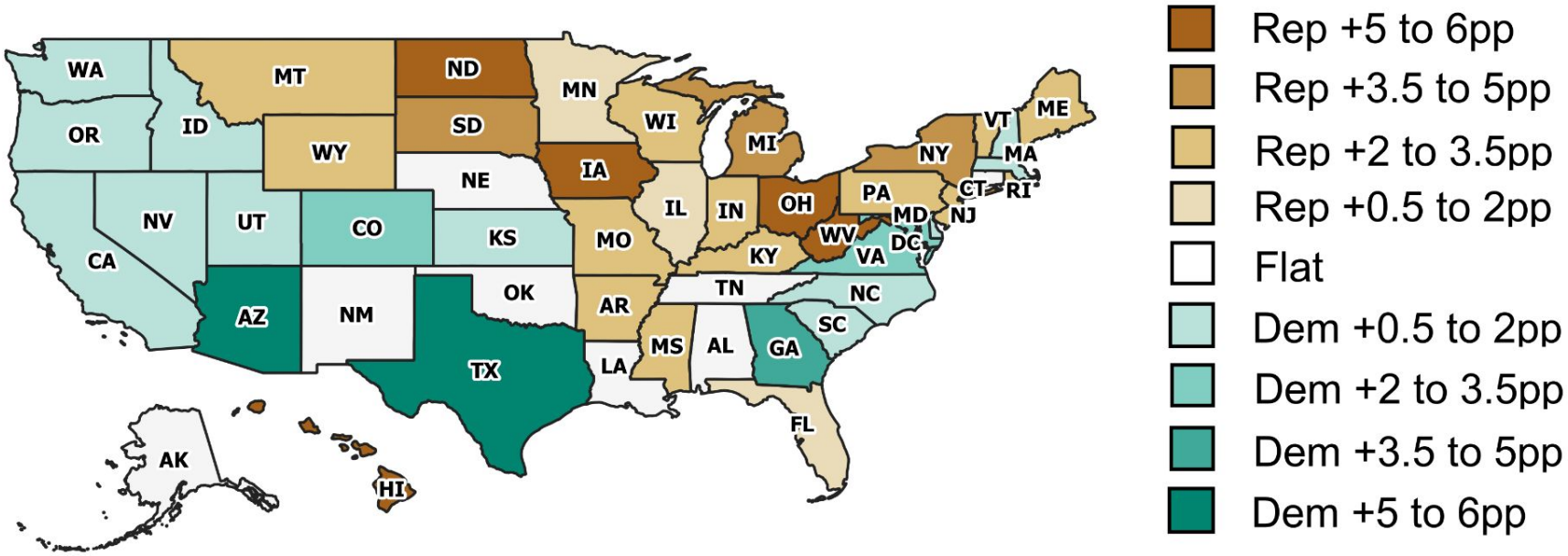
# Next, run through 100+ electoral scenarios



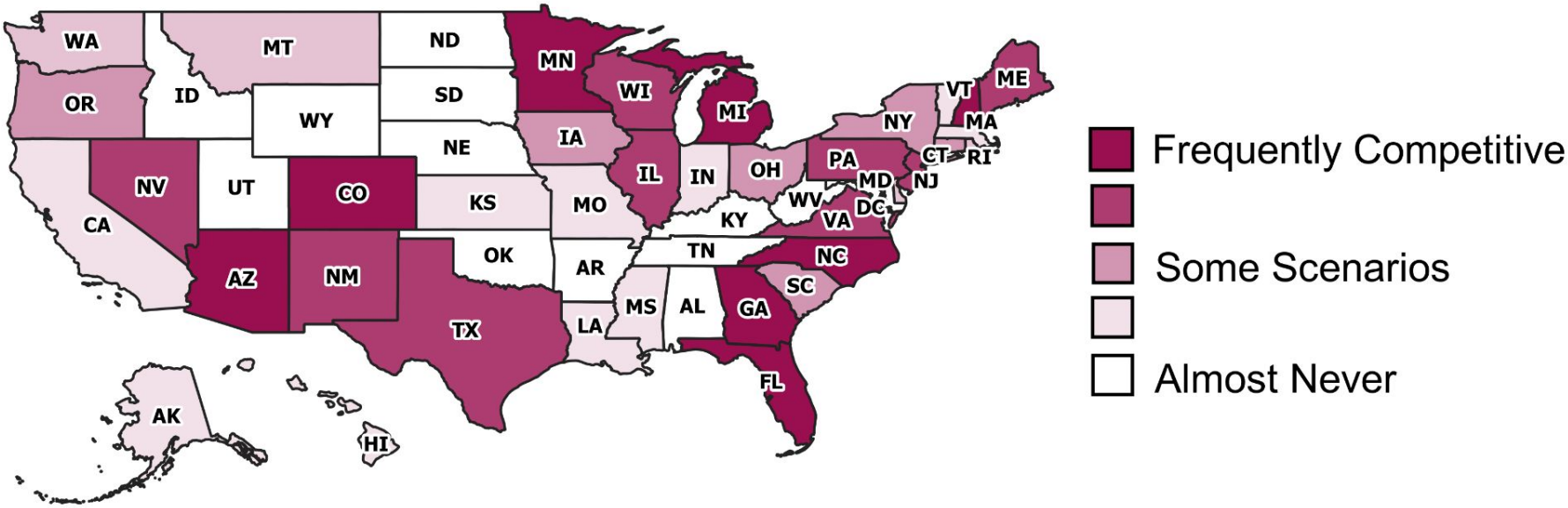
# What drives electoral change in the states

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Factor #1: National partisan mood or "uniform swing"** | The entire electorate swings due to macro factors such as the state of the economy | By far the biggest factor in any single election cycle, can make large plus or minus swings from cycle to cycle |
| **Factor #2: Voter alignment** | Voter subgroups change their party or candidate support (examples: growing education polarization, Latino support) | Second-biggest factor in an election year, can shift from cycle to cycle, can result in durable long-term changes if realignments stick |
| **Factor #3: Demographic trends** | Maturation, mortality, and migration of subgroups over time | A much smaller factor in a single election cycle but changes accumulate over time and can be transformative over decades |

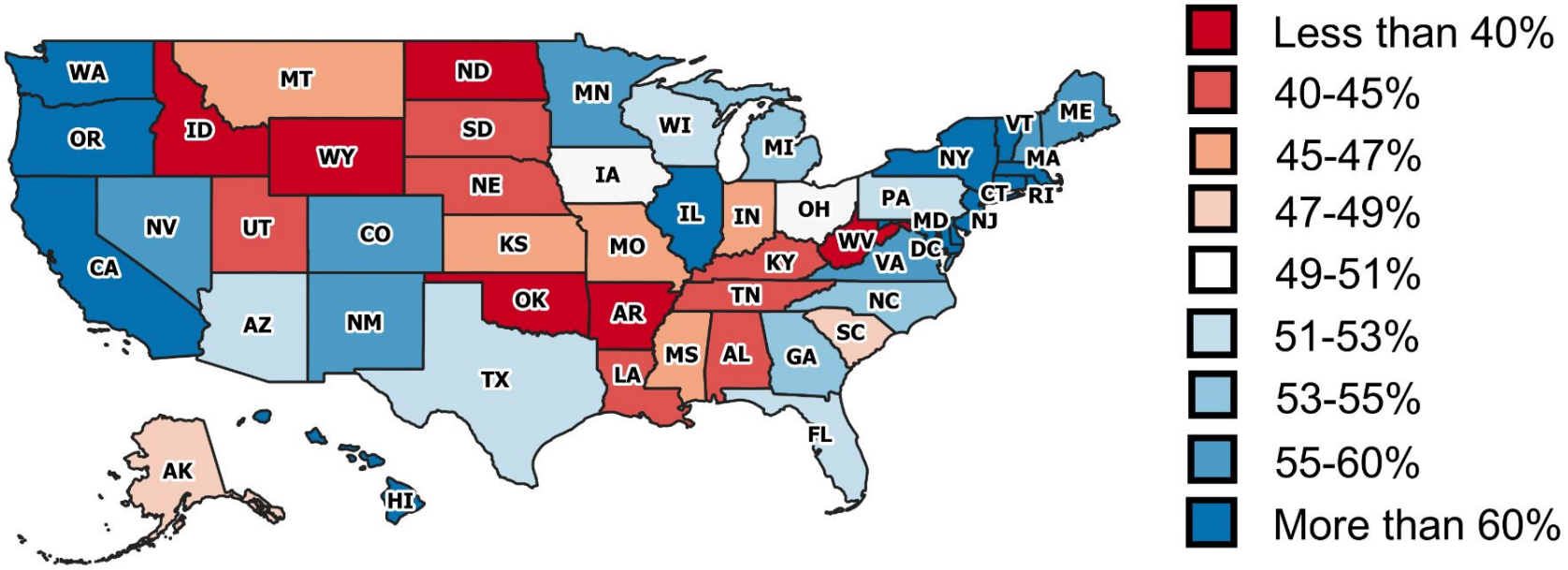
# Projected Partisan Trends: 2020 to 2030



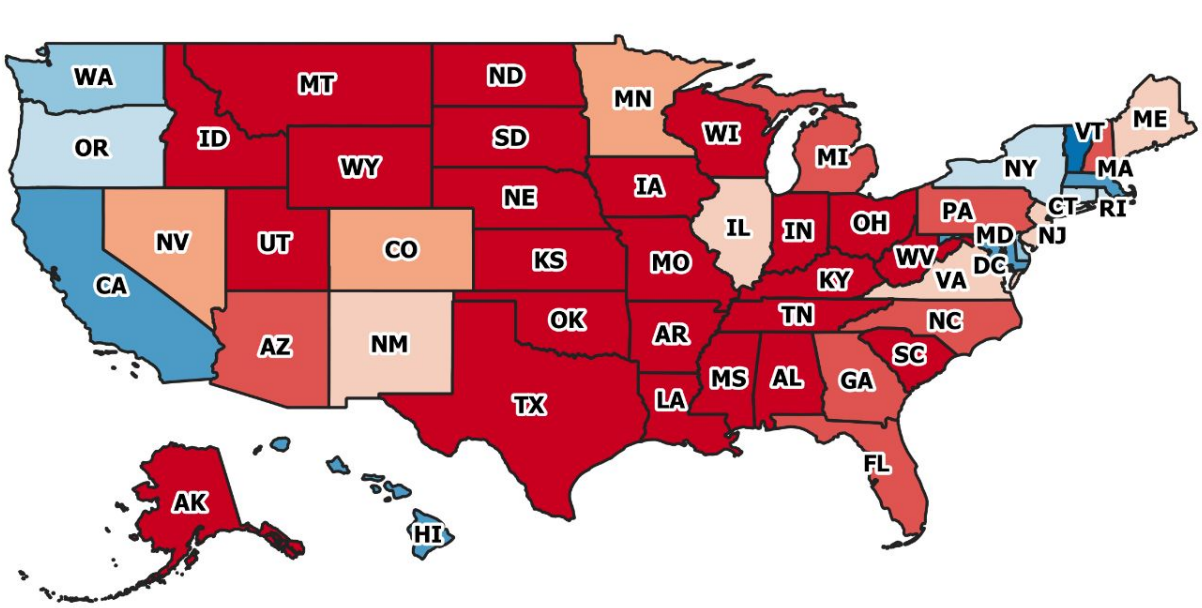
# Scenarios: Frequency of Competitiveness

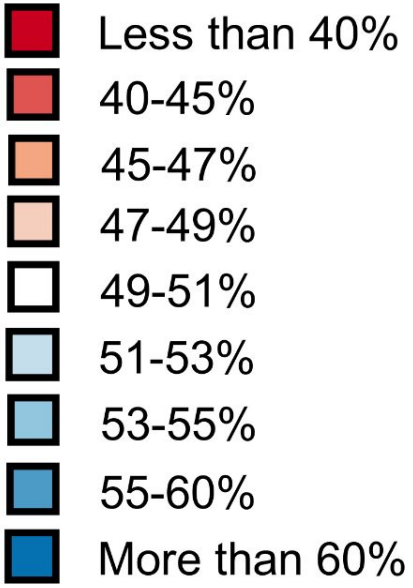


# Very Good Year for Dems (Analogous to 2018)



# Very Bad Year for Dems (Analogous to 2014)



# What moves the needle in Texas

- **Time favors Texas.** We expect the state to be +5pp more Democratic in ten years, second only to Arizona in rate of improvement.
- **2nd fastest growing state.** Most international migrants are coming from Asia while the largest group of domestic migrants are from California; both groups strongly lean Democratic.
- **Sensitive to movement in support among voters of color.** Both broad movement in support levels among voters of color and movement only among Latino voters has a statewide impact on performance.
- **Room for growth among college-educated voters.** Like other southern states, college White support is lower in Texas than in northern states.

# Comparison: Non-College White support -1pp

*How much each cohort would have to increase in Dem support if it alone had to counterbalance white support dropping by 1 point:*

| Race/Ethnicity | College | Non-College |
|---|---|---|
| Latino/a | +3.8 pp | +1.4 pp |
| Black | +5.1 pp | +2.9 pp |
| Asian | +9.0 pp | +20.2 pp |
| White | +0.9 pp | -1 pp |

# Comparison: College support +1pp

*How much Dems could lose in support among non-college voters if support among college educated voters increased by 1 point:*

| Race/Ethnicity | College | Non-College |
|---|---|---|
| All | +1 pp | -0.8 pp |

# Comparison: Latino/a turnout + 1pp

*How much each cohort could lose in Dem support if it alone counterbalanced Latino support increasing by 1 point:*

| Race/Ethnicity | Voter Participation |
|---|---|
| Latino/a | +1 pp |
| Black | -2.8 pp |
| Asian | -9.4 pp |
| White | -1 pp |

# Winning statewide in 2030

- Holding everything else equal, we expect Texas to be ~5 points more Democratic on margin in 2030 than 2020.
- That will put TX at 47-48% Dem performance statewide in a neutral year. A strong year for Democrats, analogous to 2018 or even 2020, would put the state in play without any state-specific boosts.

# Example winning scenarios in 2030

| Cohort | Support | Share of Electorate |
|---|---|---|
| Asian | 71% (+5) | 4% |
| Black | 96% (+5) | 14% |
| Hispanic | 63% (+5) | 26% |
| White college | 42% | 28% |
| White non-college | 26% | 26% |

| Cohort | Support | Share of Electorate |
|---|---|---|
| Asian | 66% | 4% (+2%) |
| Black | 91% | 14% (+2%) |
| Hispanic | 58% | 26% (+2%) |
| White college | 44% (+2) | 28% |
| White non-college | 28% (+2) | 26% |

# National Strategic outlook

- Overall we see a more defensive outlook for Democrats in the coming decade, with losses in bad years cutting deeper than gains in good years
- Midwest remains competitive through the decade
- Democrats should also be prepared to defend some western and northeastern states, especially in bad years
- Limited but clearly-defined playing field for growth in the sunbelt, with time being a factor in our favor

# Step 2: Map trends to state legislature maps

# TX
# TEXAS

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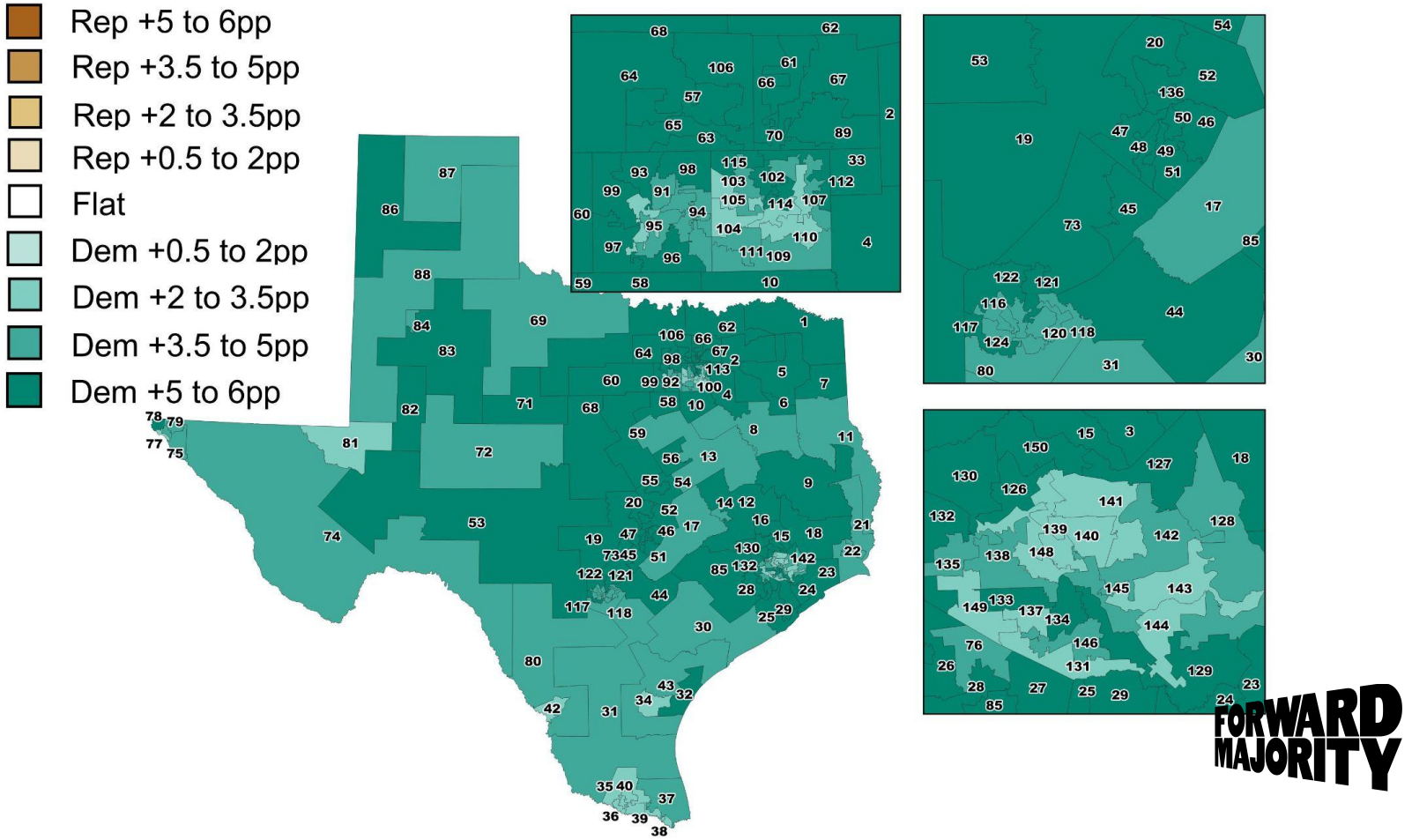
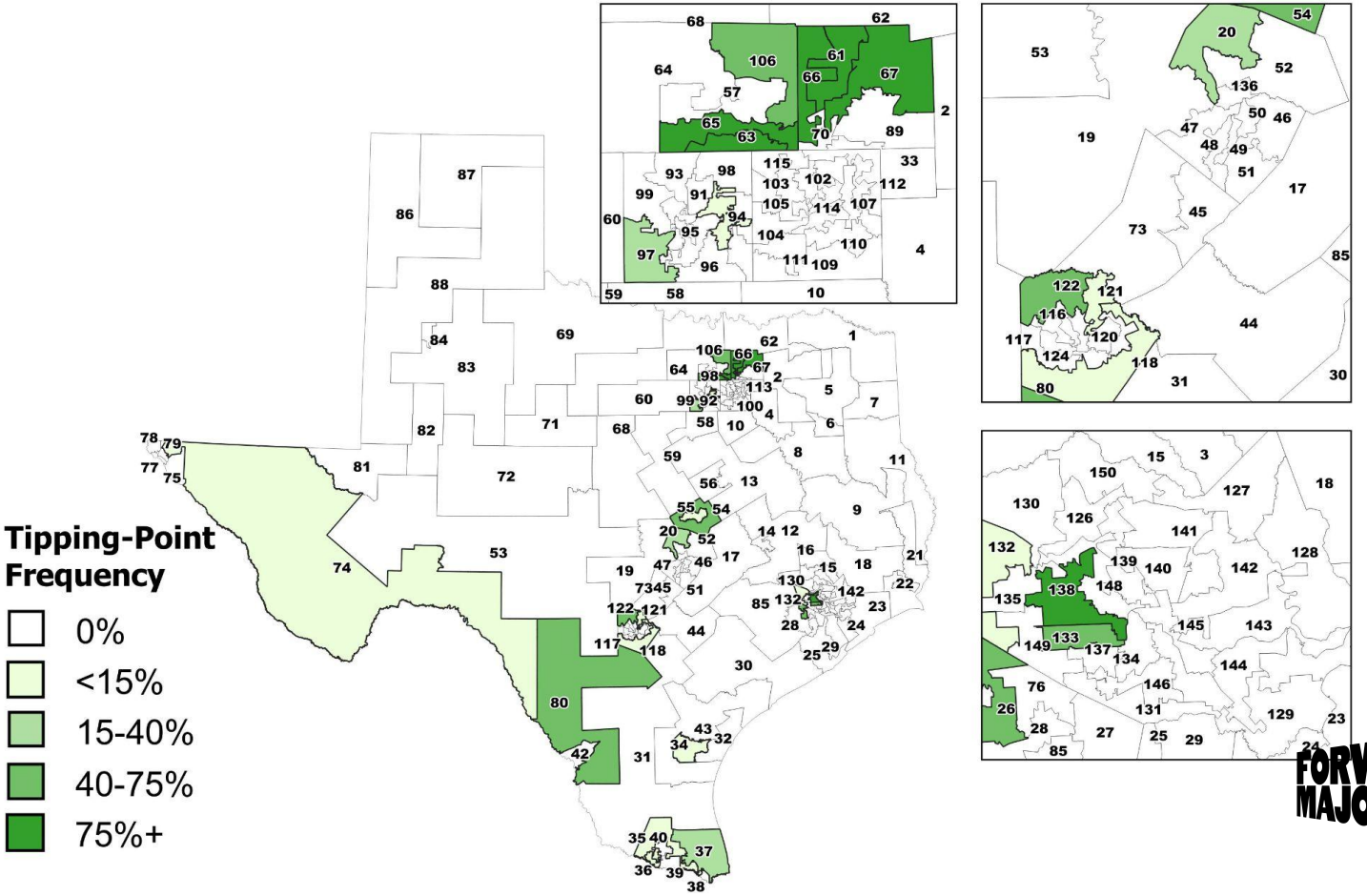
# Texas State House: Ten-Year Partisan Trends



# Texas State House: Tipping-Point Districts

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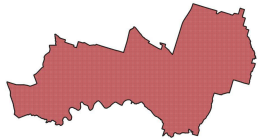
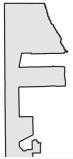
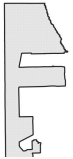
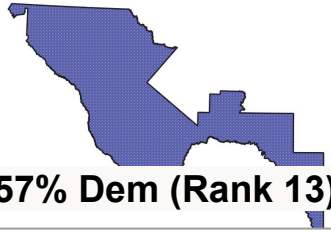
# How scenarios impact district competitiveness

| HD | Region | +5pp non-college, +5pp voters of color | +5pp college, -5pp non-college | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 55 | Temple/ Central Texas | **50% Dem (Rank 4)** |  **46% Dem (Rank 13)** | Diverse district, nat'l avg. college-educated (40%), sensitive to scenarios, needs favorable to be competitive |
| 66 | Suburban Dallas |  **51% Dem (Rank 1)** |  **51% Dem (Rank 6)** | Less diverse (71% white) and large college-ed (59%) pop. makes district competitive under most scenarios/ not sensitive |
| 74 | Del Rio and far west Texas |  **57% Dem (Rank 13)** | **50% Dem (Rank 3)** | Large Latinx (62%) district is likely safe but small college-ed pop. (31%) makes district sensitive to non-college decline |

# Demos of Tipping-Point Districts in TX House

| Demographic | Tipping Point | Non-TP | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dem 2-way | 48% | 48% | 0% |
| Black % | 11% | 13% | -3% |
| Hispanic % | 18% | 24% | -6% |
| White % | 64% | 57% | 7% |
| Asian % | 6% | 4% | 2% |
| Other % | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| College % | 51% | 43% | 8% |
| Non-College % | 49% | 57% | -8% |
| Catholic % | 52% | 52% | 0% |
| Evangelical % | 50% | 52% | -2% |
| Democrat % | 50% | 52% | -2% |

# Comparing Chambers

# Chamber competitiveness in the year 2030

| State Chamber | Seats representing a majority | 2030 Dem Baseline of majority-making seat in a neutral year | Dem Swing Required to flip chamber |
|---|---|---|---|
| AZ Leg | 16 | 48.8% | 1% |
| GA House | 91 | 44.8% | 5% |
| MI House | 56 | 47.2% | 3% |
| MI Senate | 20 | 47.9% | 2% |
| NC House | 61 | 48.7% | 1% |
| NC Senate | 26 | 45.5% | 5% |
| PA House | 102 | 47.8% | 2% |
| PA Senate | 26 | 46.9% | 3% |
| TX House | 76 | 45.9% | 4% |
| VA House | 51 | 55.1% | -5% |
| VA Senate | 21 | 56.7% | -7% |

# Marrying Strategy & Program

# Long-Term and Cycle-Specific budget tracks

| | Cycle-Specific | Long-Term |
|---|---|---|
| **Targets** | • Electoral environment<br>• Candidate quality<br>• Issue landscape | • Tipping-point districts more resistant to change<br>• Must be sustained realignments |
| **Tactics** | • Near-term optimized<br>• Candidate-specific persuasion | • Optimized for multi-cycle impact<br>• Partisan-targeted voter reg |

# BUILDING POWER IN THE DECADE TO COME

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