Registered Voting Population

The turnout rate of American Indian and Alaska Native registered voters is 5 to 14 percentage points lower than the rate of many other racial and ethnic groups.

Lower Turnout

The turnout rate of American Indian and Alaska Native registered voters is 5 to 14 percentage points lower than the rate of many other racial and ethnic groups.

Top 10 States with the Highest Populations of Voting-Age Natives

The power of the Native Vote has been significant in state races and important national races.

Montana: Building a Base of Power

- Tribes’ influence leads to the appointment of a tribal member as Chair of Redistricting Commission.
- Montana creates six American Indian-majority districts.
- Nine American Indians serve in the Montana Legislature, reflecting proportion of American Indian state population.

Alaska: Erosion of Native Districts

- State population triples between 1959-2009, though no change in the number of state representatives or legislative districts.
- Ballot measure to expand the number of legislative districts fails.
- Alaska Redistricting Board merges two Southeast Districts, diminishing local Native voter impact.
- Election loss of long-serving Alaska Native State Senator Albert Kookesh due to redistricting.

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) credits her victory in the 2010 election to the significant power of the Alaska Native vote. With over 100,000 write-in votes, she was only the 2nd successful US Senate write-in candidate.

Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) was re-elected by 500 votes in 2002, with the final votes counted coming from the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) won the 2012 election by a 1% margin. Heitkamp noted that her only road to Washington, DC was through Indian Country.

Senator John Tester (D-MT) won his election by 3,562 votes, over 17,000 voters cast ballots on Indian reservations.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) was narrowly elected in 2000, creating a 50-50 tie in the US Senate.

Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) was re-elected by 500 votes in 2002, with the final votes counted coming from the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Senator John Tester (D-MT) won his election by 3,562 votes, over 17,000 voters cast ballots on Indian reservations.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) was narrowly elected in 2000, creating a 50-50 tie in the US Senate.

Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) was re-elected by 500 votes in 2002, with the final votes counted coming from the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Senator John Tester (D-MT) won his election by 3,562 votes, over 17,000 voters cast ballots on Indian reservations.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) was narrowly elected in 2000, creating a 50-50 tie in the US Senate.

Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) was re-elected by 500 votes in 2002, with the final votes counted coming from the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Senator John Tester (D-MT) won his election by 3,562 votes, over 17,000 voters cast ballots on Indian reservations.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) was narrowly elected in 2000, creating a 50-50 tie in the US Senate.

Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) was re-elected by 500 votes in 2002, with the final votes counted coming from the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Senator John Tester (D-MT) won his election by 3,562 votes, over 17,000 voters cast ballots on Indian reservations.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) was narrowly elected in 2000, creating a 50-50 tie in the US Senate.

Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) was re-elected by 500 votes in 2002, with the final votes counted coming from the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Senator John Tester (D-MT) won his election by 3,562 votes, over 17,000 voters cast ballots on Indian reservations.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) was narrowly elected in 2000, creating a 50-50 tie in the US Senate.

Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) was re-elected by 500 votes in 2002, with the final votes counted coming from the Pine Ridge Reservation.
Increase in American Indian and Alaska Native US Populations

- 1.9 million (1990)
- 4.1 million (2000)
- 5.2 million (2010)

Key Issues that Bring Native People to the Ballot Box

- Tribal Government Sovereignty
- Indian Child Welfare
- Education
- Water
- Energy
- Gaming
- Environmental Impact Issues
- Federal Budget & Spending

Elected Representation in US Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 Native US Representatives</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Proportional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If representation in Congress was proportional to the US Native population, we would have 2 Native Senators and 7 Native Members of the House.

64 Native State Legislators

- Oklahoma: 22 Native Legislators
- New Mexico: 9 Native Legislators
- Montana: 8 Native Legislators
- Arizona: 5 Native Legislators
- Maine: 5 Native Legislators
- South Dakota: 3 Native Legislators
- Washington: 2 Native Legislators
- Illinois: 1 Native Legislator
- Alaska: 5 Native Legislators
- Kansas: 1 Native Legislator
- Wyoming: 1 Native Legislator
- Minnesota: 1 Native Legislator
- North Carolina: 1 Native Legislator
- North Dakota: 1 Native Legislator

Actual vs. Proportional Representation

Source: US Census

Fast Facts