

# Presidential election comes down to 10 states – including Nevada

By Ken Rudin, NPR

In 92 days, we will either re-elect President Obama or replace him with his Republican opponent, Mitt Romney. On paper, at least, voters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia will make that decision.

But if you look at the travel schedules and campaign budgets of Obama and Romney, it's clear that the 2012 election will be decided in only ten or fewer states.

I'm not arguing for eliminating the electoral college and calling for the president to be elected by popular vote. But until that happens, and as long as states are considered solidly Democratic (such as California and New York) or solidly Republican (such as Texas), the presidential election is going to be decided by a small number of battleground states where the votes are truly up for grabs.

Obama's 2008 victory was made possible by his picking up a bunch of states that hadn't gone Democratic in years (and in some cases, decades) or states that narrowly went to George W. Bush in 2000 and/or 2004: Virginia, North Carolina, Indiana, Ohio, Florida, Colorado, Nevada, Iowa and New Mexico. All nine went for Bush in 2004. Virginia and Indiana hadn't voted for a Democrat since Lyndon Johnson in 1964. For North Carolina, it was Jimmy Carter in 1976.

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