

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/faithless-or-faithful-electors/>

This video discusses the concept of "faithless electors" in the context of the United States electoral system. In the U.S., citizens do not vote directly for the president; instead, they elect electors who cast their votes in the Electoral College. A faithless elector is one who chooses to vote contrary to their state's popular vote. This video practice is relatively rare but has occurred, notably in 2016, raising concerns about its potential impact on close elections.

The Constitution does not clearly dictate how states should choose or bind their electors, allowing them to decide their own methods. Currently, 32 states have laws that bind electors to vote according to the popular vote, while 18 states lack such laws, creating ambiguity in those jurisdictions.

In 2020, the Supreme Court ruled that states can bind their electors, reinforcing the trend toward ensuring that electors reflect the popular vote. This video also considers a movement known as the National Popular Vote Compact, which aims for states to commit to awarding their electoral votes to the national popular vote winner, regardless of their state result.

The author explores the moral and democratic implications of electors acting independently of voter preferences, comparing this to jury independence in the legal system. While some argue that electors can serve as a check on "illegitimate results," the prevailing view is that they should follow the popular vote to ensure democratic representation.

The discussion concludes with a recognition of the challenges inherent in amending the Constitution and the likely continuation of the current electoral framework, especially in the context of upcoming elections where the focus remains on swing states rather than the national popular vote.