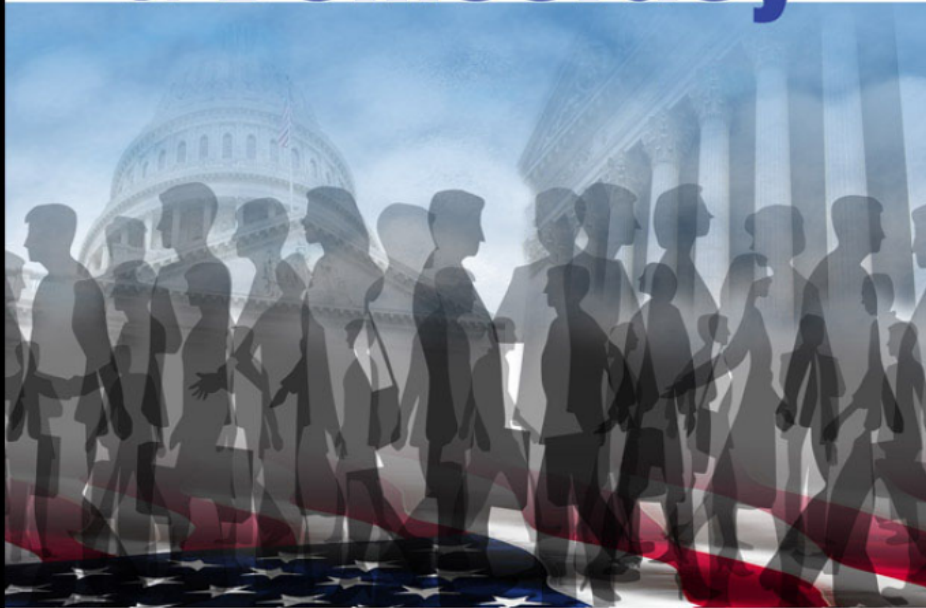


The Marketplace of Democracy



Electoral Competition and American Politics

Michael P. McDonald and John Samples, Editors

Michael P. McDonald

Visiting Fellow, The Brookings Institution
Assistant Professor, George Mason Univ.

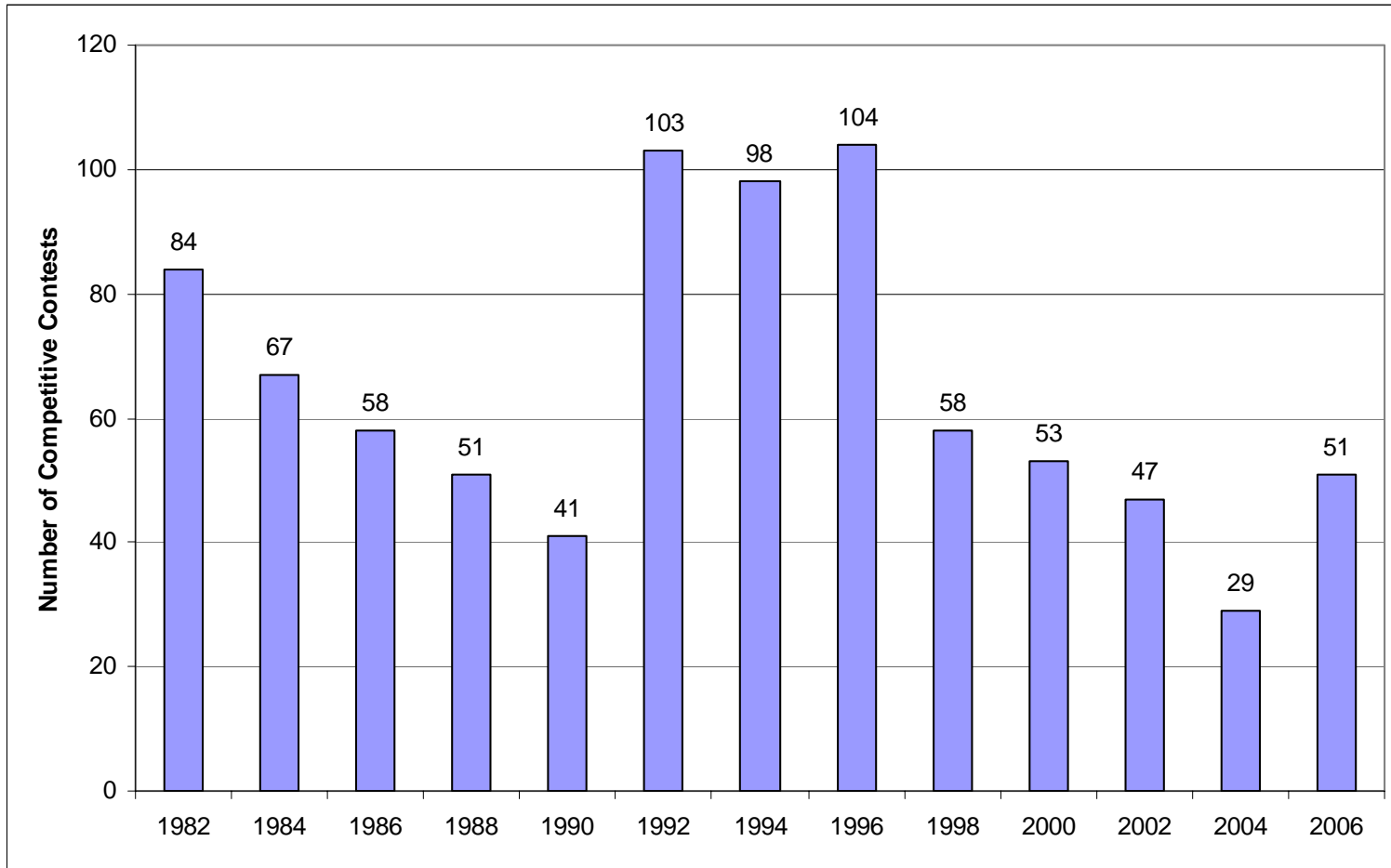
John Samples

Director, Center for Representative Gov't
The Cato Institute

Congressional Elections

Gary Jacobson, University of California, San Diego

Congressional Quarterly's Competitive Elections, 1982-2006



Number of “toss-up” or “lean” races

State Legislative Elections

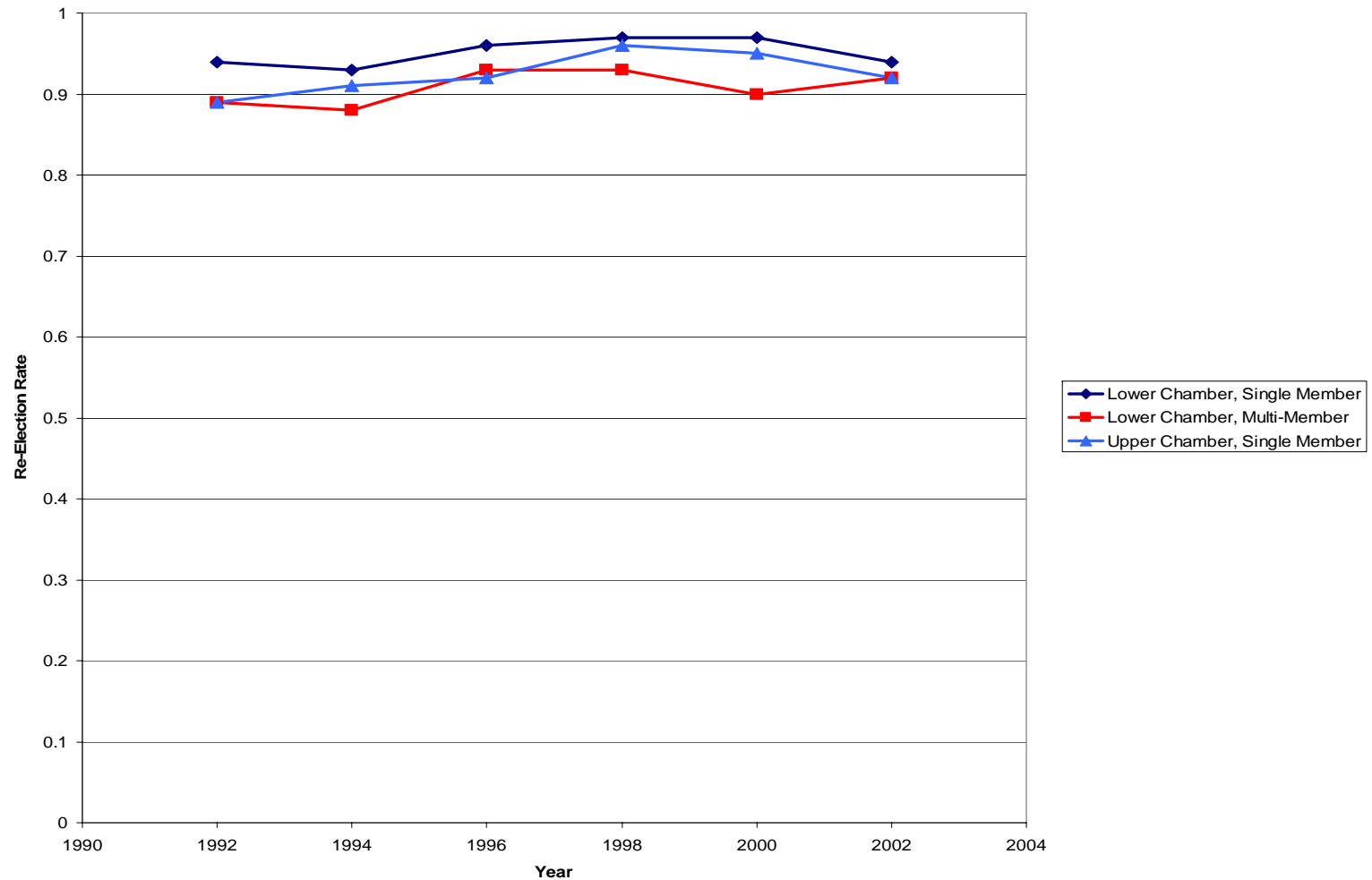
Dick Niemi, University of Rochester

Lynda Powell, University of Rochester

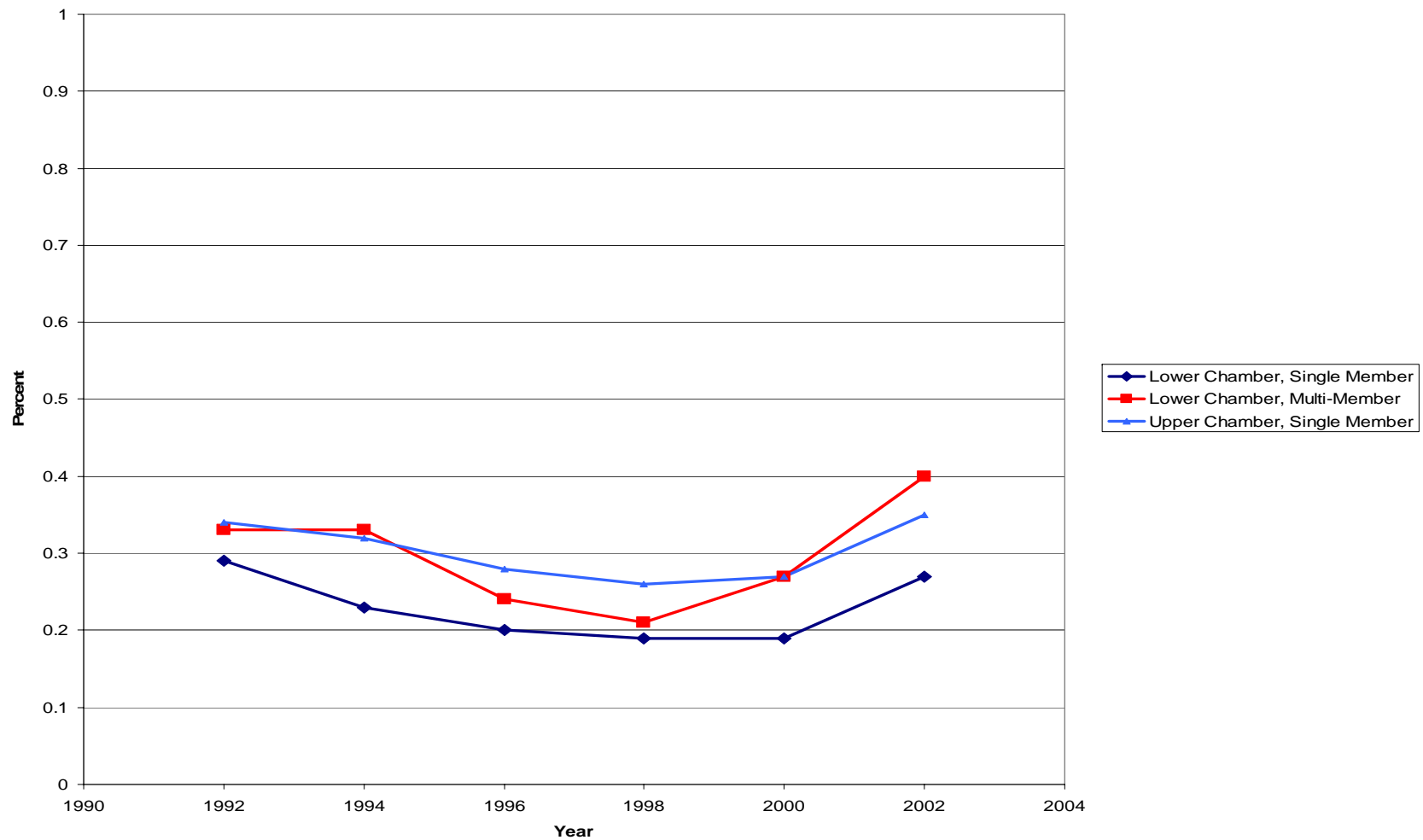
Thomas Carsey, University of Florida

William Berry, University of Florida

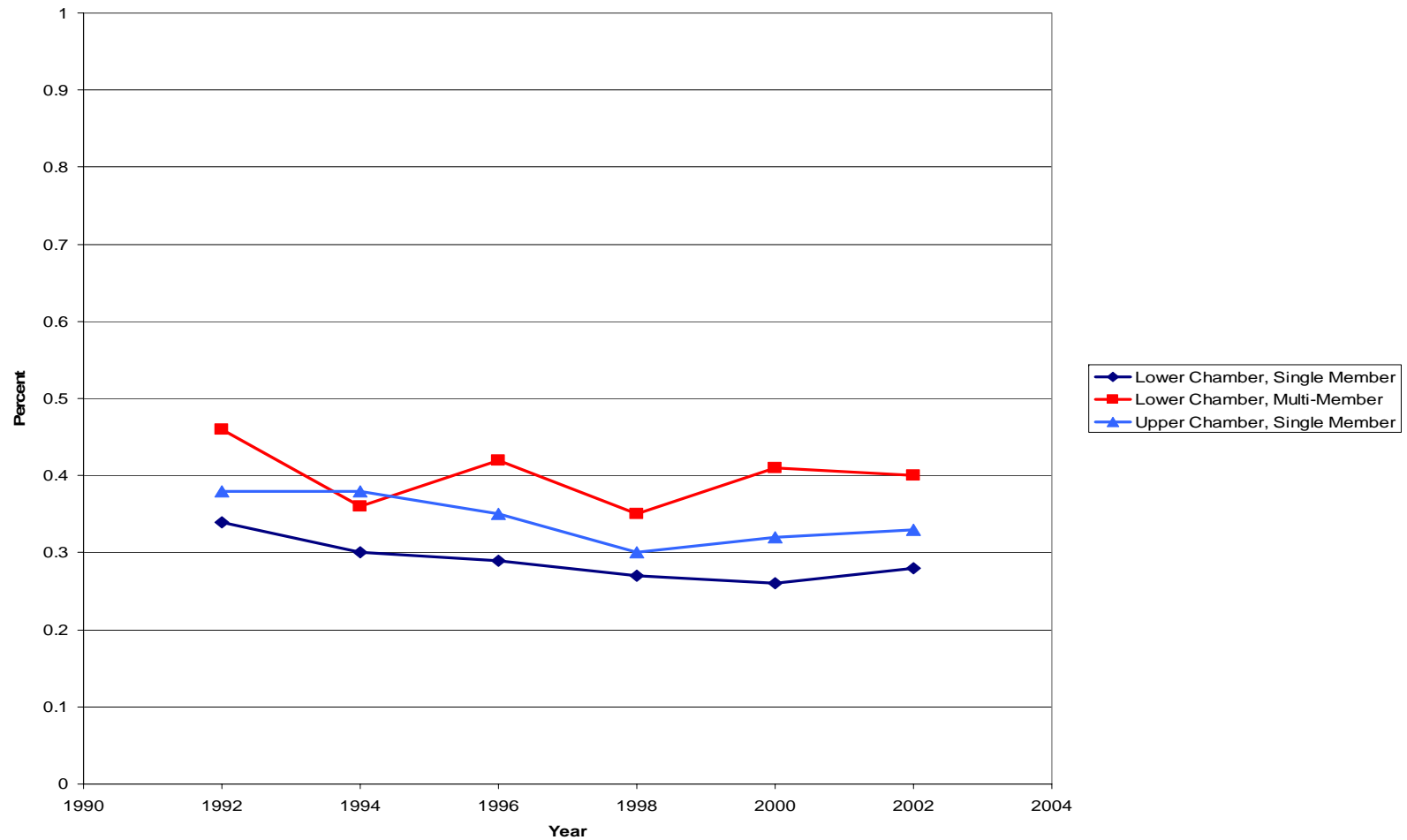
James Snyder, Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Average Incumbent Re-Election Rates to State Legislatures, 1992-2002



Open Seats in State Legislatures, 1992-2002



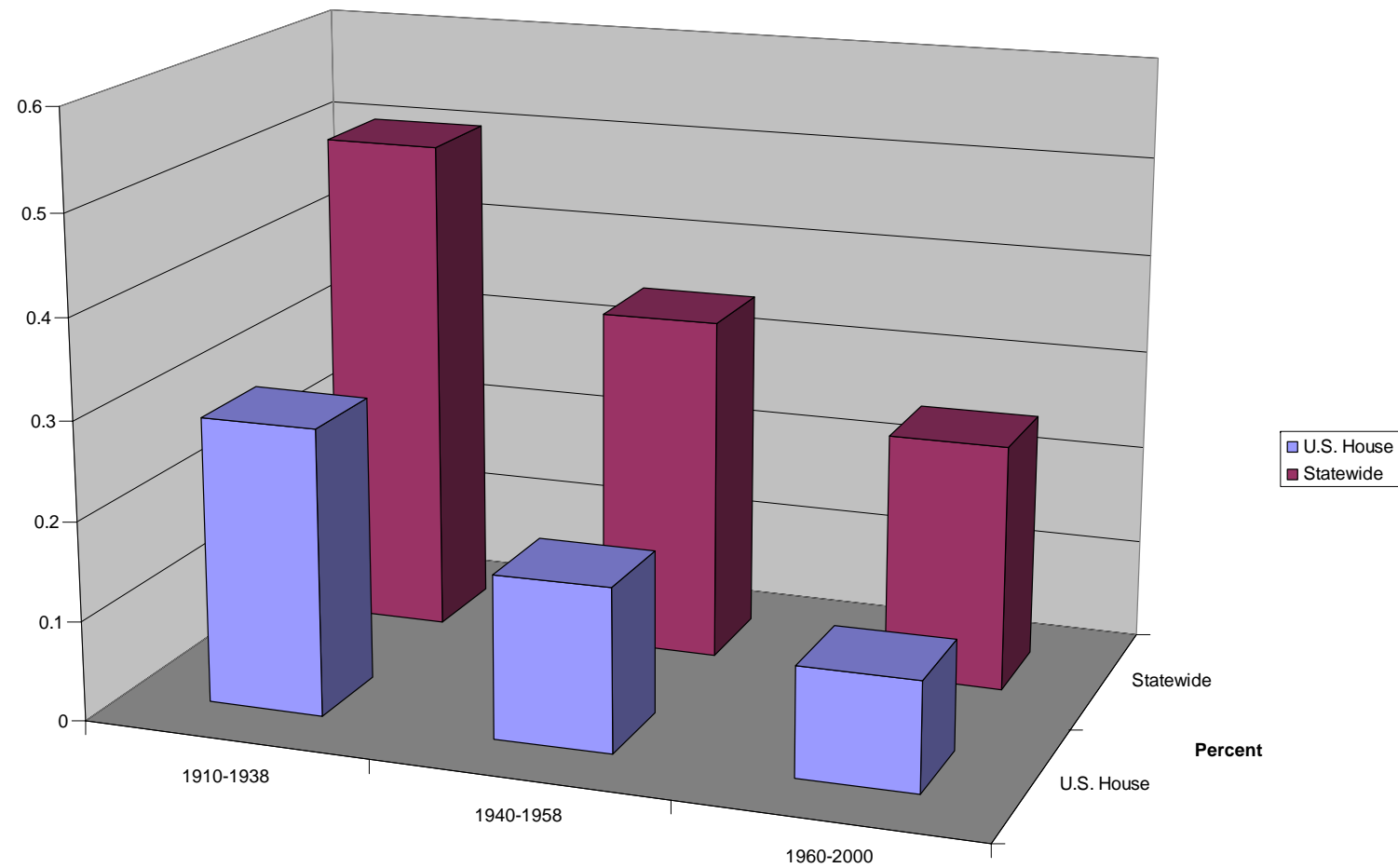
Percent Seats Won with <60% in State Legislatures, 1992-2002

Primaries

Steven Ansolabehere, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Charles Stewart III, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

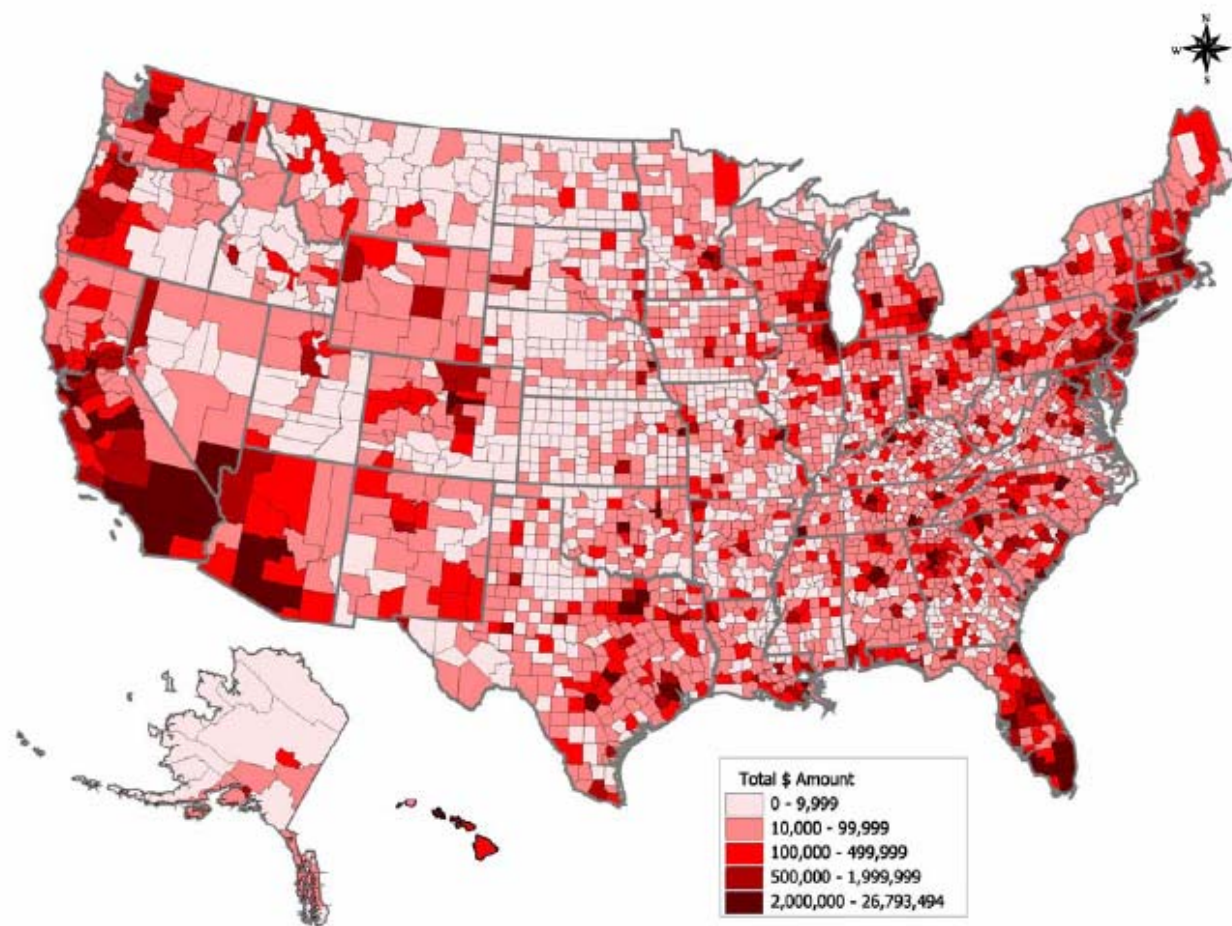
James Snyder, Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Competitive Primaries

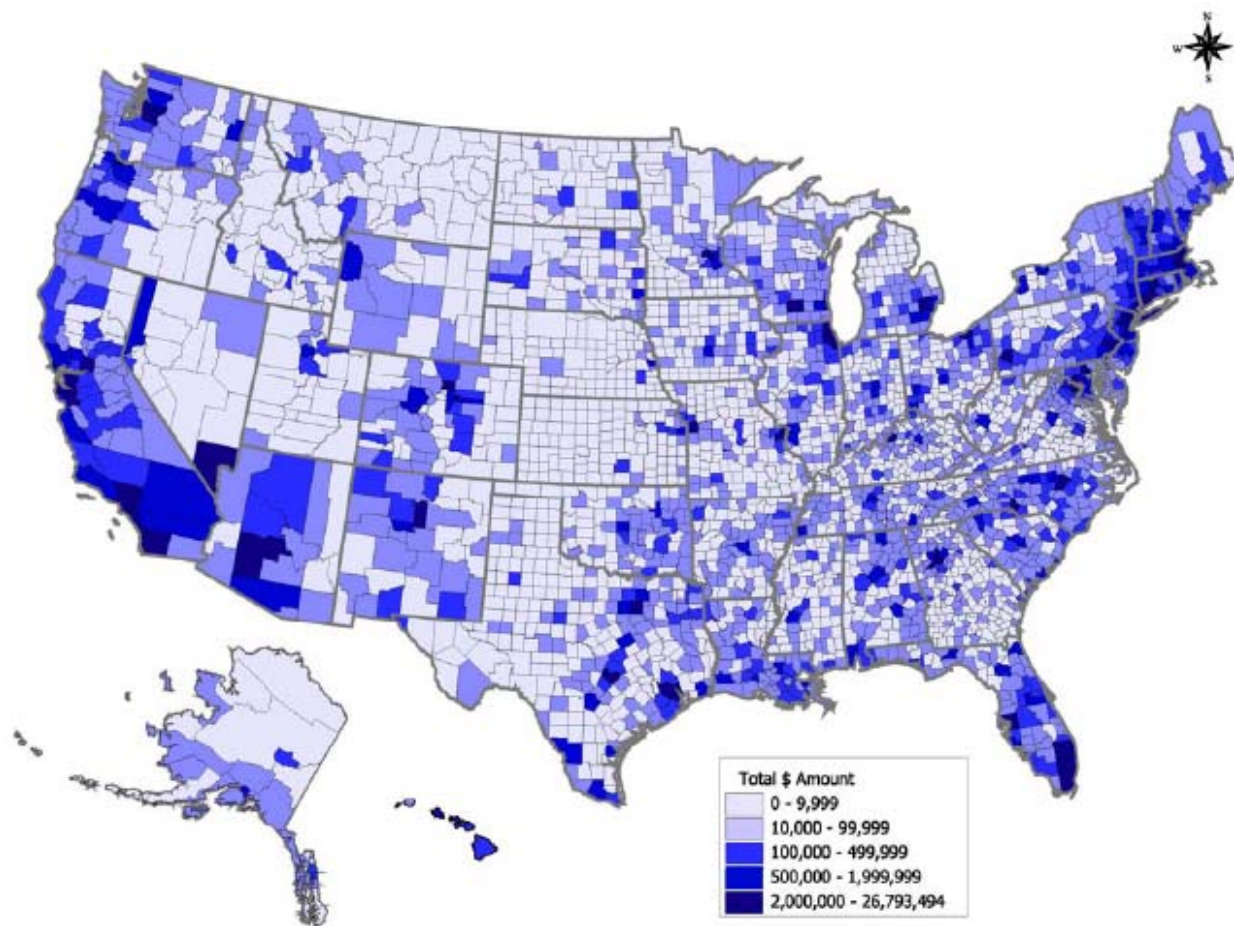
Campaign Donations

James Gimple, University of Maryland
Francis Lee, University of Maryland



Note: Alaska's scale has been reduced to fit map

Figure 1. Republican Contribution Amounts in the 2004 Election Cycle, by County



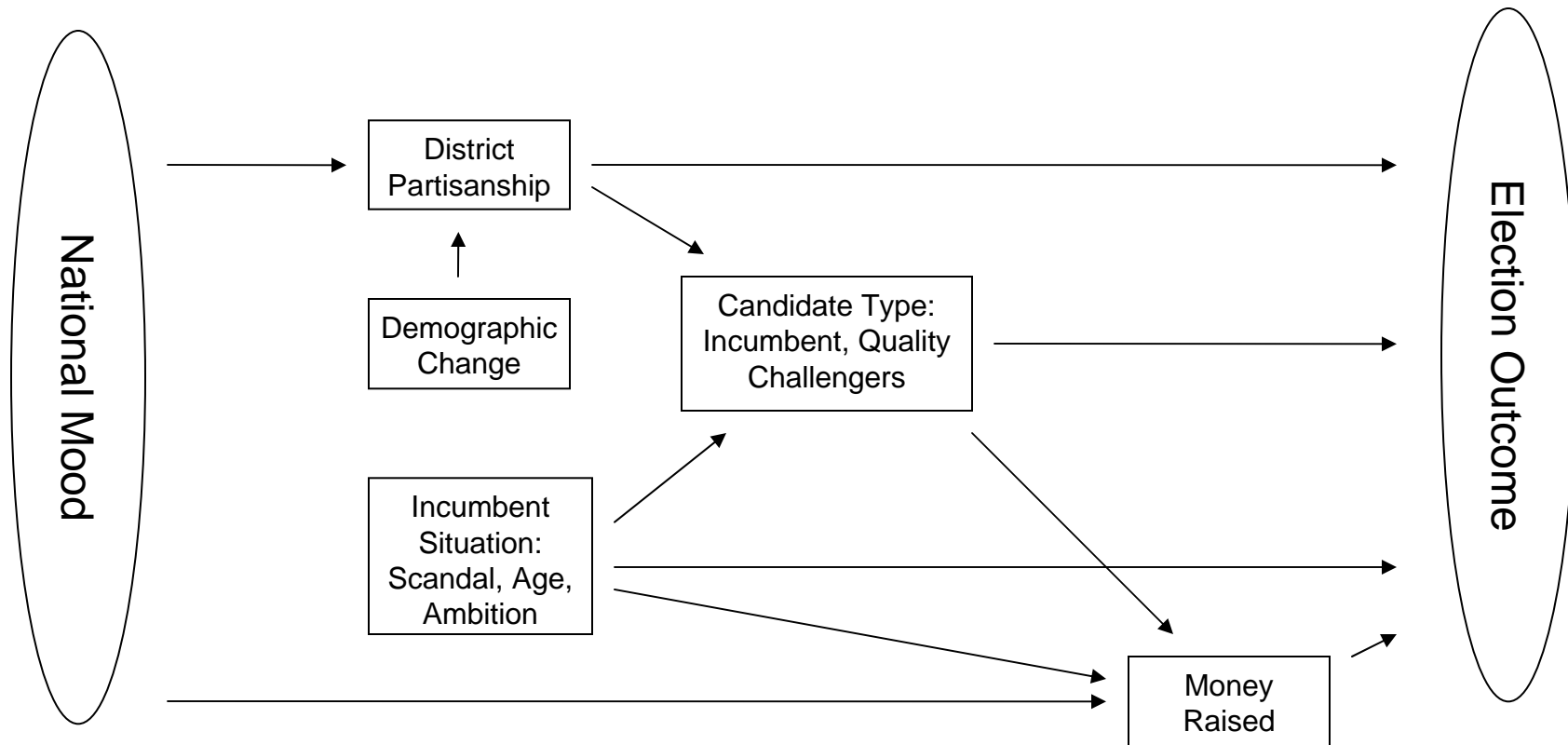
Note: Alaska's scale has been reduced to fit map

Figure 2. Democratic Contribution Amounts in the 2004 Election Cycle, by County

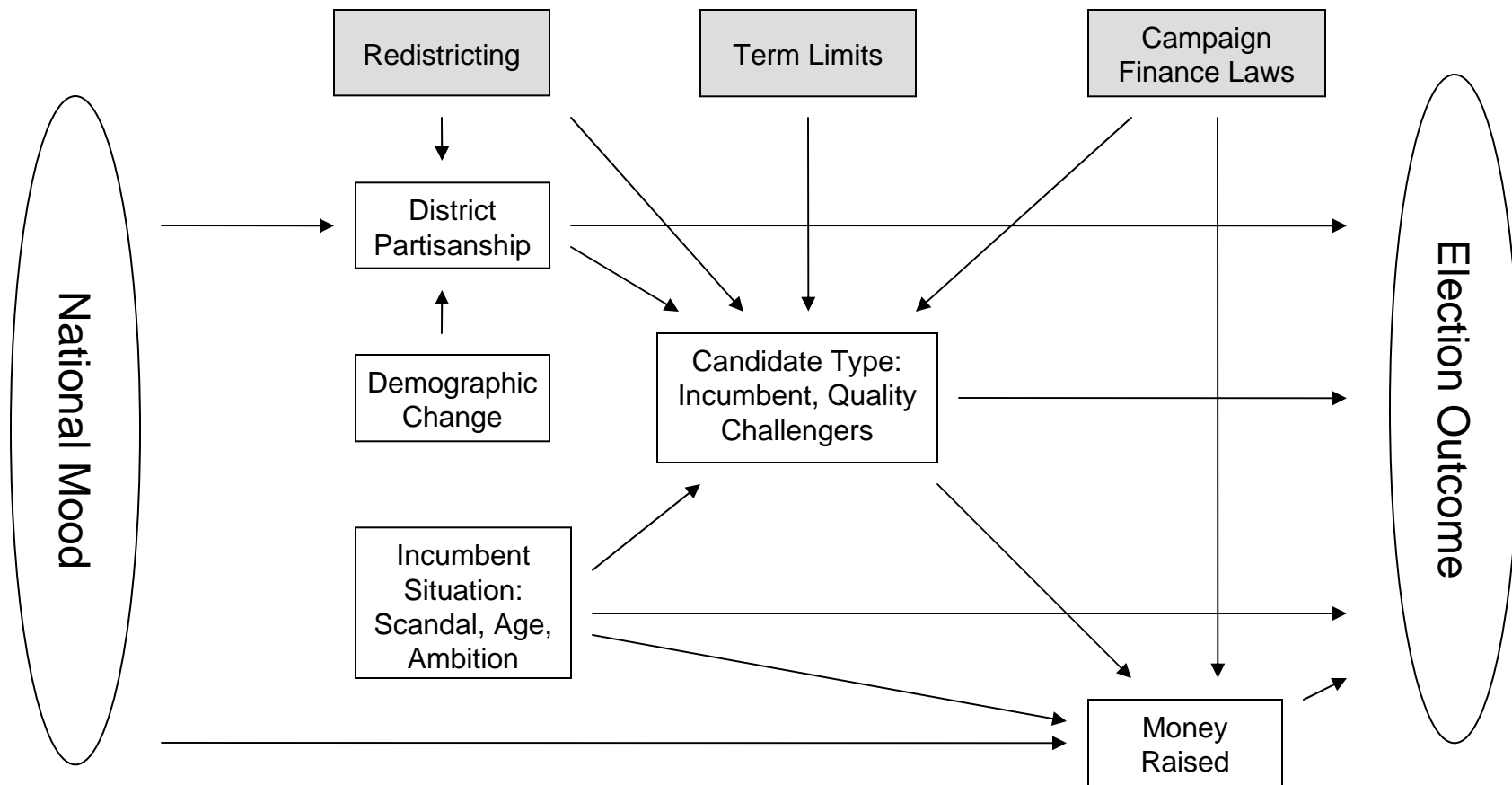
The Election Process Within a District



The Election Process Within a District



The Election Process Within a District



The Rube-Goldberg Election Machine

■ Legal Framework

- Nathaniel Persily University of Pennsylvania

■ Redistricting

- Michael McDonald, George Mason University

■ Term-limits

- Bruce Cain, University of California, Berkeley; and Thad Kousser, University of California, San Diego

■ Campaign Finance

- Jeff Milyo, University of Missouri; and David Primo, University of Rochester
- Ken Mayer, University of Wisconsin

■ Minor Parties

- Paul Herrnson, University of Maryland

■ Initiatives

- John Matsusaka, University of Southern California
-

General Findings

- Competition Varies Among Levels of Office
 - Tailor reforms to the office
 - Reforms Can Have Seemingly Perverse Effects on Competition
 - Example: Clean Elections encourage candidates to run where they have little chance of winning, which increases levels of contestation, but lowers overall levels of competition
 - Reforms Can Create Perverse Incentives
 - Example: Term Limits encourage candidates to wait for open seats
-

Reform Recommendations

- There is no magic bullet, the electoral process is complicated
 - You may only get one chance to get it right, choose wisely
 - Consider combining state constitutional amendments with statutes to fill in details and to provide flexibility if something doesn't work as planned
-

Current Research

- Examining Redistricting Effects on State Legislative Elections and Districts
 - Post-Redistricting Election Outcomes (including 2004 election and primary data)
 - 2000 Presidential Vote in State Legislative Districts before and after redistricting
 - (Would greatly appreciate help in AR, DE, KY, MI, MS, MT, OR, ND, NE, RI, SD, TN, UT, and WY)
-

Redistricting

Michael McDonald

The Brookings Institution

George Mason University

Gerrymandering and Competition

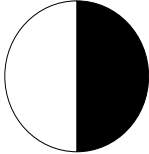
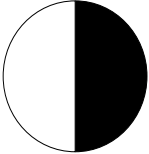
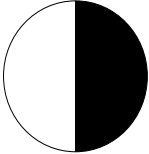
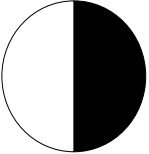
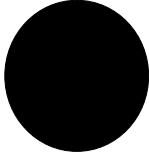
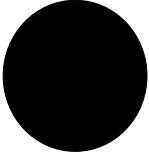

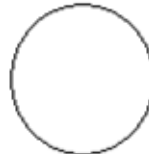
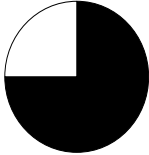
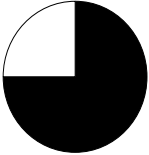
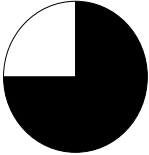
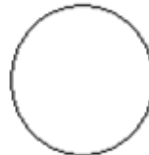
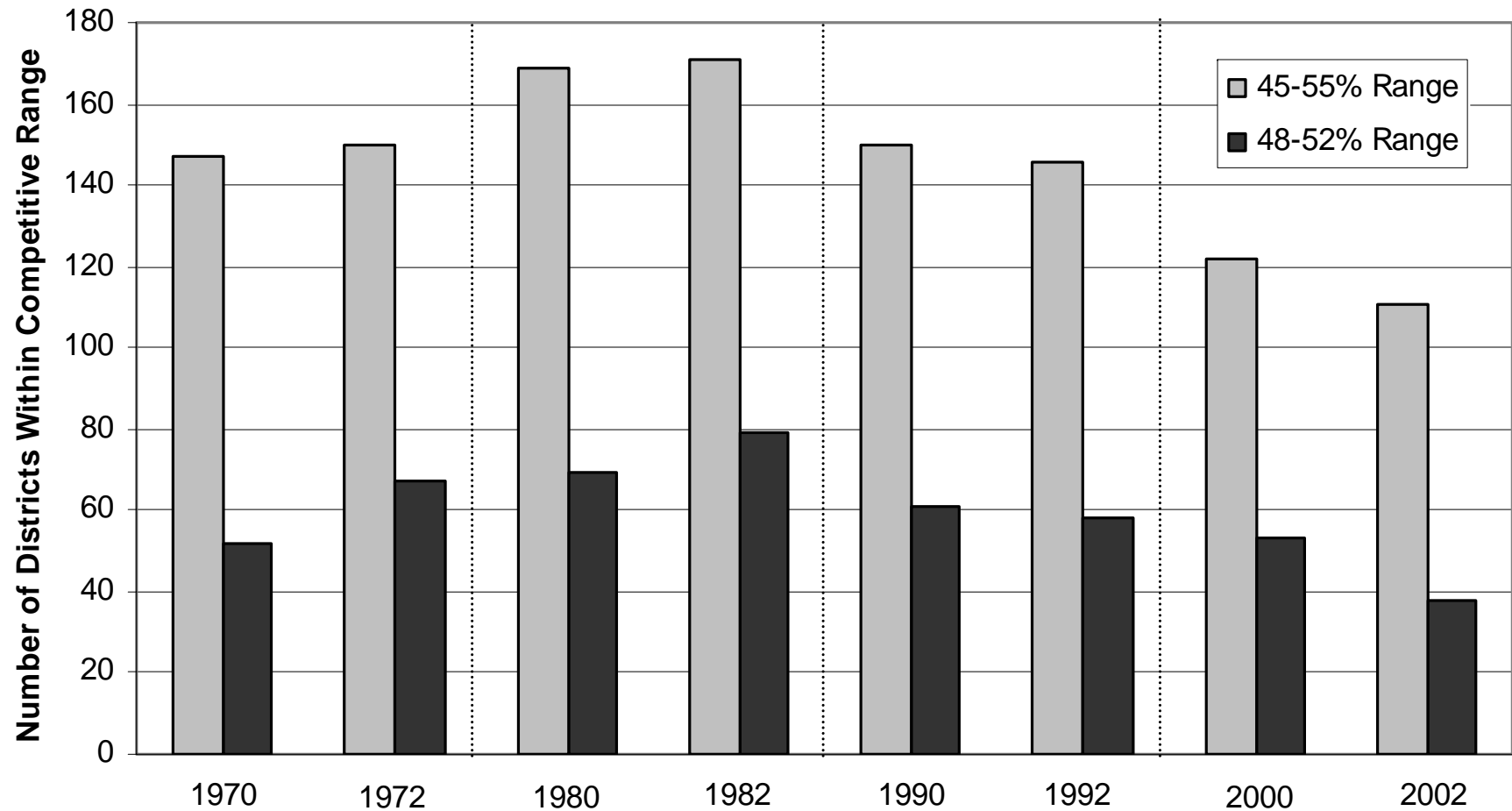
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	Total
Competitive Districts					
Expected Seats	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.0
Bipartisan Gerrymander					
Expected Seats	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
Partisan Gerrymander					
Expected Seats	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	3.0

Figure 2: Three Configurations of Four Equi-populous Districts in a Hypothetical Evenly Partisan Jurisdiction

Patterns in District Competition



Note: Counts of the number of districts with a "Normalized" Two-Party Presidential Vote within a competitive range before and after a redistricting

Pro-Republican Bias in Congressional Districts

