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In the words of Peyton Manning, “Omaha! Omaha! Omaha!”¹ Manning shouted this throughout the end of his career as an audible to indicate that his offense was changing the play right before the snap, but it could just as well indicate the small geographic area in the U.S. that will determine the upcoming 2024 Presidential Election. The voters of Nebraska’s 2nd Congressional District could possibly determine the next President, only because of the unique rule which Nebraska has adopted for allocating its electoral votes.

Before getting into why this is the case, let’s first think broadly about how we elect our President. When a society is confronted with a social/public choice which is made by way of voting, it is often the case that the voting rules can impact the decision – that is, with fixed voter preferences/votes, two different sets of voting rules could lead to two different outcomes or choices.

As anyone who follows politics even casually knows, we have always elected our President indirectly by way of the Electoral College, as opposed to directly by way of a national popular vote.

the Election of 2008, in which President Barack Obama defeated Senator John McCain by getting 67.84% of the Electoral Votes (365 to 173), a percentage roughly equal to the average winning percentage in the 1800s and almost 10 percentage points less than the average winning percentage of the 1900s.

Recent Presidential Elections have become such close contests in part because there are many states that vote reliably for Republicans, many states that vote reliably for Democrats, and a relatively small number of “swing states.” Looking ahead to the 2024 election, as of early August 2024, there are six states that could be considered “swing states,” which could reasonably go to either Donald Trump or Kamala Harris: Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. We make this claim based upon information reported on the websites <https://www.270towin.com/> and <https://electionbettingodds.com/>.

Figure 1 illustrates the projected electoral map on the site [270 to Win](https://www.270towin.com/) as of 8/8/24. The shades of blue (Democrat/Harris-Walz) and red (Republican/Trump-Vance) from lightest to darkest indicate states that “lean” toward a candidate, are “likely” wins for a candidate, and are “safe” for a candidate. The swing states are shaded in gray.

Figure 1 – Projected Electoral Map with Swing States Undecided

If we allocate the six swing states to respective candidates based upon the “state level probabilities” indicated on the [Election Betting Odds](https://electionbettingodds.com/) webpage as of 8/8/24. 24.99-1 (o)--2 (8)i1 BD 0.11 0 T

whether it is Republicans or Democrats who emulate Manning in a victorious chant of, “Omaha! Omaha! Omaha!”