Saving Democracy and Science: The Road Ahead

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October 28, 2026

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Third Mountain
ACTION FUND

The US slashed research for cancer, Alzheimer's, mental health — and nearly everything else

Revealed in one chart.

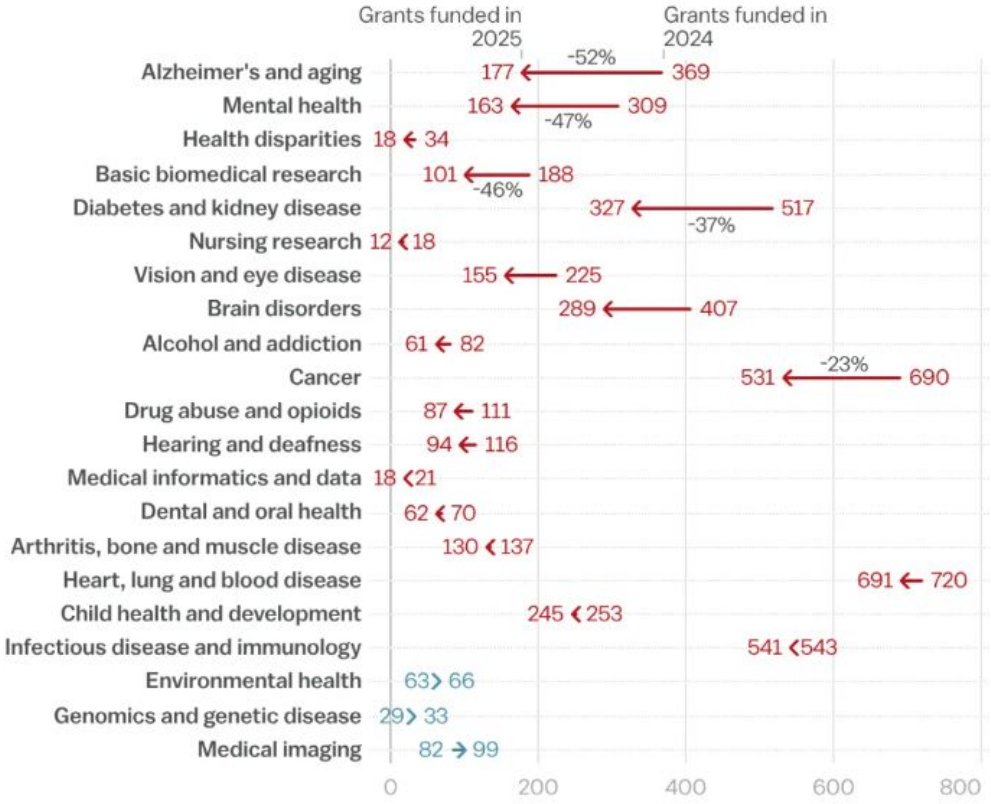
Vox

by **Pratik Pawar**
Mar 13, 2026, 6:30 AM EDT

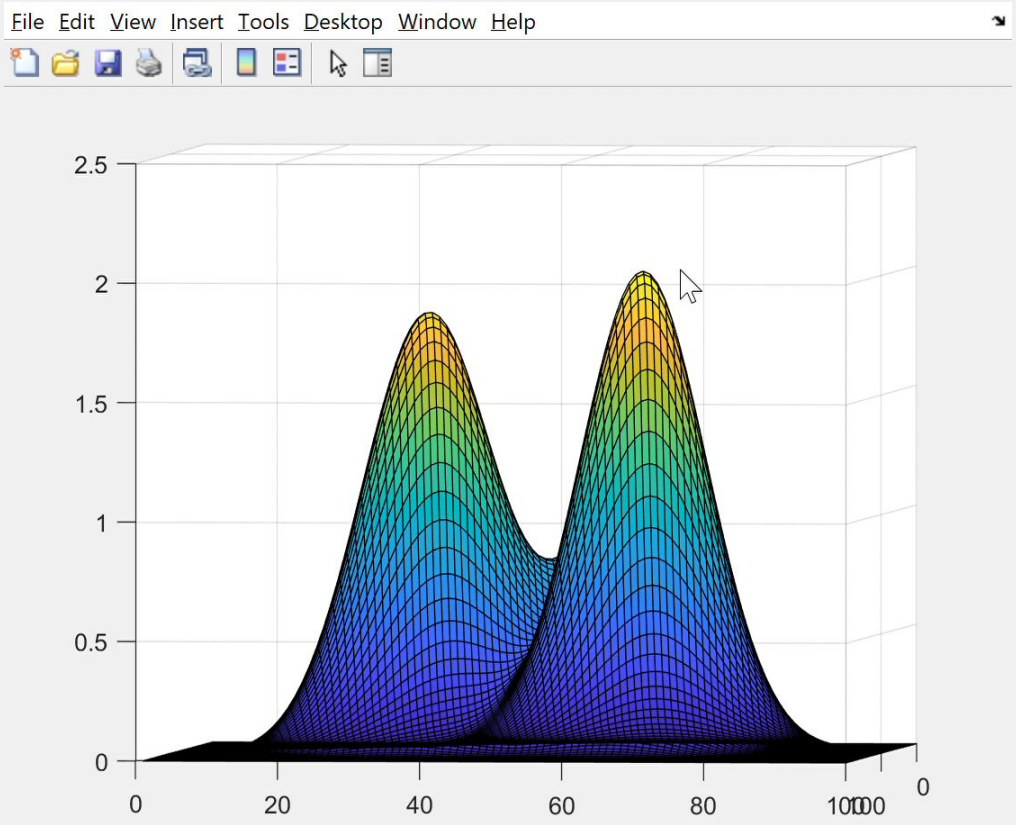


OMB Director Russell Vought

New data shows NIH funded about 5,000 research grants in 2024 and just 3,900 in 2025. Here's how the cuts broke down by area of medicine.



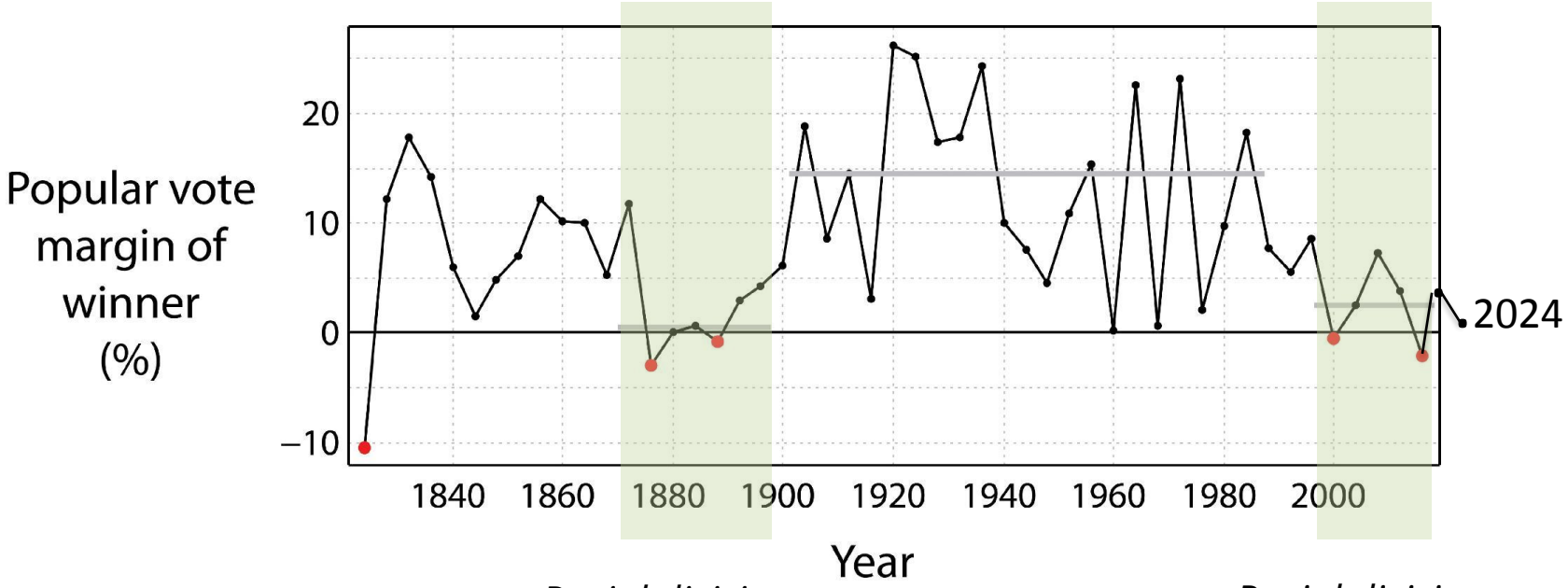
A Third Mountain: Unrepresented voters in a polarized system



What we want from democracy:

- Representation
- Responsiveness
- Deliberation

Close Presidential Elections in Two Gilded Ages



The state we're in: Autocratic legalism





Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban worked with the Heritage Foundation to develop Project 2025, the blueprint for what we're seeing now in action.

President Trump has issued dozens of executive orders since he took office on 20 January 2025, many illegal.

These orders have upended government across the board, including elections, foreign aid, science, and health.



The founders intended Congress to be in charge

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

our story CONTINUES 250

Legislative Branch

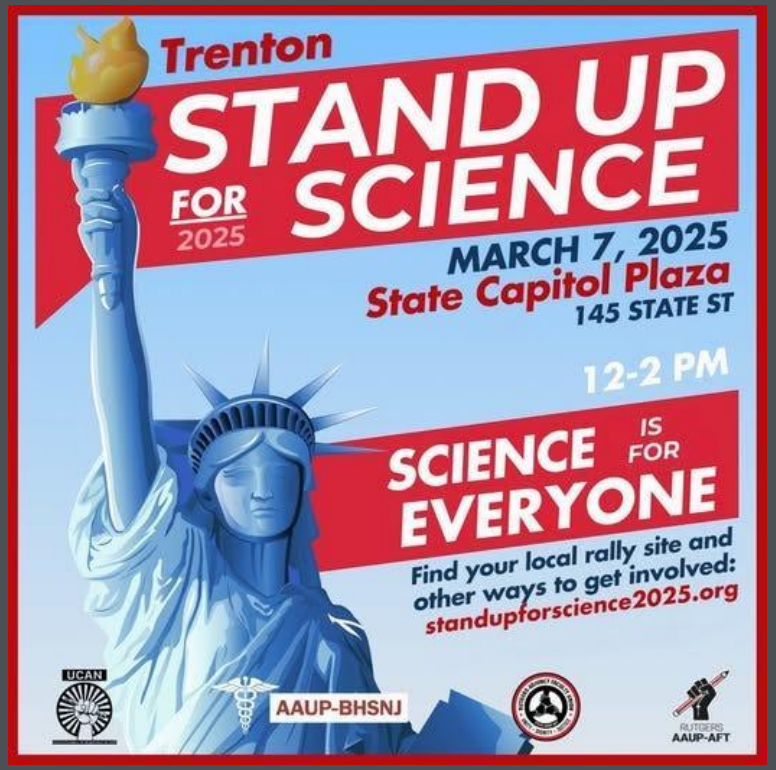
ARTICLE I

Section 4: Elections
Section 7: Legislation
Section 8: Taxes, Naturalization, Spending, Progress of Science, War, Laws

ARTICLE III

Section 1: Establish courts, including number of circuits and Supreme Court justices
(Judiciary Act)




Trenton
STAND UP FOR SCIENCE
2025
MARCH 7, 2025
State Capitol Plaza
145 STATE ST
12-2 PM
SCIENCE IS FOR EVERYONE
Find your local rally site and other ways to get involved:
standupforscience2025.org
UCAN
AAUP-BHSNJ
AAUP-AFT


IN AMERICA, WE DON'T DO KINGS
They've defied our courts, deported Americans, disappeared people off the streets, attacked our civil rights, and slashed our services. The corruption has gone too. far. No thrones. No crowns. No kings.

Congressional action: setting the stage in 2027

The short game (2027): Legislate and investigate

Exercise oversight over

elections and rights (Department of Justice)

military (Pete Hegseth)

health and science (RFK Jr.)

The long game (2029 and after): Structural reform

Restore Congress's primacy over the executive and judiciary

A new Voting Rights Act with racial and partisan protections

The Freedom To Vote Act (S. 2247, 117th Congress)

OFFICIAL PRIMARY ELECTION MAIL-IN BALLOT
BOLETA DE VOTO POR CORREO OFICIAL DE LAS ELECCIONES PRIMARIAS
July 7, 2020
Township of Commercial
2nd Congressional District - Democratic
2° Distrito Congresional - Demócrata

CELESTE M. RILEY
Cumberland County Clerk
Secretario del Condado

"IT IS AGAINST THE LAW FOR ANYONE EXCEPT YOU THE VOTER TO MARK OR INSPECT THIS BALLOT."

"ES ILEGAL QUE OTRA PERSONA EXCEPTO USTED, EL VOTANTE, MARQUE O INSPECCIONE ESTA BOLETA."

ATTENTION UNDECLARED VOTERS: YOU MAY ONLY VOTE FOR CANDIDATES OF ONE PARTY.

ATENCION ELECTORES NO DECLARADOS: PUEDEN OTAR COLAMENTE POR LOS CANDIDATOS DE UNSOLO PARTIDO.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

Please read the following before marking your ballot:

1.) Use ONLY a pencil or ink pen (black or blue) to mark your ballot. Do not use red ink.
2.) Completely fill in the oval to the right of each of your selections.
MARK BALLOT LIKE THIS
John DOE →
3.) To vote for any person whose name is not printed on this ballot: fill in the oval across from the words "Personal Choice" next to that office. Write the name of the person for whom you wish to vote on the blank line. You may vote for no more than the number of votes allowed.
4.) After marking the ballot, place it in the designated envelope and seal. Be sure ALL information requested on the certificate has been completed. Place sealed envelope containing the ballot in an addressed envelope, seal and mail. Your ballot must be received by the County Board of Elections before the closing of the polls.
5.) Be sure to sign in your own HANDWRITING and in CERTIFICATE.

INSTRUCCIONES IMPORTANTES A LOS ELECTORES

Favor leer lo siguiente antes de marcar la boleta:

1.) Use SOLAMENTE un lápiz o bolígrafo (tinta negra o azul) para marcar su boleta. No use tinta roja.
2.) Rellene el óvalo enteramente a la derecha de cada una de sus selecciones.
MARQUE LA BOLETA ASI ESTA FORMA.
John DOE →
3.) Para votar por cualquier persona cuyo nombre no está impreso en esta boleta, rellene el óvalo que aparece a la larga de las palabras "Selección Personal". Escriba en blanco, escriba el nombre de la persona por quien usted desea votar. No se puede escribir cualquier nombre ya impreso en la boleta.
4.) Después de haber marcado la boleta electoral colóquela en el sobre designado y sellelo completa TODA la información que se solicita en el certificado. Después coloque el sobre con la boleta en el sobre pre-dirección impresa, sellelo y envíelo por correo. La Junta Electoral del Condado debe recibir esta boletas que llenas las antes de cierre de las urnas.
5.) Asegúrese de firmar EL CERTIFICADO CON SU PROPIO PUÑO Y LETRA.

Form 2 - Commercial

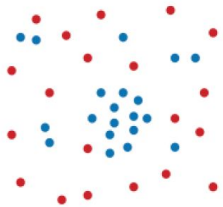
OFFICE TITLE TITULO OFICIAL	A Democratic Demócrata	B Democratic Demócrata	C Democratic Demócrata	D Democratic Demócrata	E Democratic Demócrata	F Democratic Demócrata	PERSONAL CHOICE SELECCIÓN PERSONAL
Choice for President Vote for One Escoger para Presidente Vote por Uno	1A Joseph R. BIDEN	1B Bernie SANDERS					Personal Choice NO PERSONAL CHOICE FOR DELEGATES NO HAY SELECCIÓN PERSONAL PARA DELEGADOS
A VOTE FOR PRESIDENT IS A VOTE FOR ALL DISTRICT DELEGATES 1st District Delegates to Democratic National Convention UN VOTO PARA PRESIDENTE ES UN VOTO PARA TODOS LOS DELEGADOS DEL DISTRITO Delegados del Distrito 1° a la Convención Nacional Demócrata	CUMBERLAND COUNTY DELEGATE CANDIDATES TO BE ELECTED John J. BURZICHELLI, Jr. Lenora HOOYTEK Gina Marie SANTORE	REMEMBER: DO NOT WRITE Anne BABB-CHIKIN Crystal HARRIS Jeremiah SCHENERMAN					
United States Senator Vote for One Senador de los Estados Unidos Vote por Uno	2A Cory BOOKER	2B Lawrence HAMM					Personal Choice
House of Representatives Vote for One Cámara de Representantes Vote por Uno	3A Brigid CALLAHAN HARRISON		3C Will CUNNINGHAM	3D Robert D. TURKAVAGE	3E John FRANCIS	3F Amy KENNEDY	Personal Choice
Sheriff Vote for One Alguacil Vote por Uno	4A Robert A. AUSTINO						Personal Choice
Board of Chosen Freeholders Vote for Three Junta Directiva (Freeholders) Vote por Tres	5A Carol MUSSO					5F Jack SURRENCY	Personal Choice
	6A Bruce COOPER					6F Donna PEARSON	Personal Choice
	7A George CASTELLINI					7F Tracey WELLS-HUGGINS	Personal Choice
Township Committee Vote for One Comité de la Municipalidad Vote por Uno	8A Fletcher JAMISON		8C LaRue SMITH				Personal Choice

Election rules shape our democracy

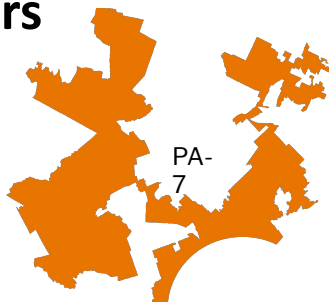
Ending a deceptive ballot format

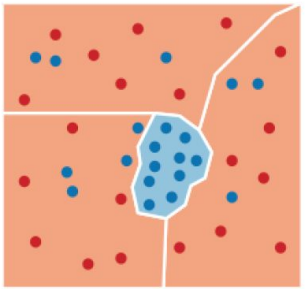


Gerrymandering: Where politicians choose their voters

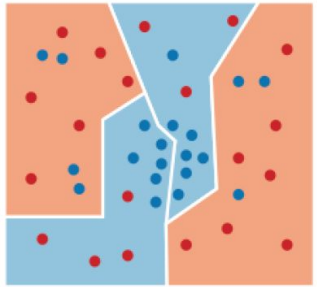


No District Lines
20 blue dots
20 red dots

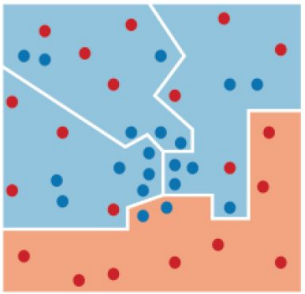




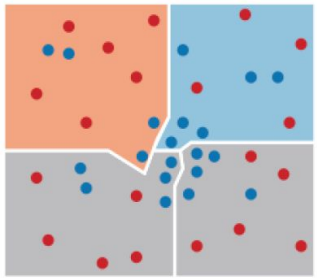
Red Gerrymander
1 blue district
3 red districts



Bipartisan Gerrymander
2 red districts
2 blue districts



Blue Gerrymander
3 blue districts
1 red district



Competitive Districting
2 competitive districts
1 red district
1 blue district

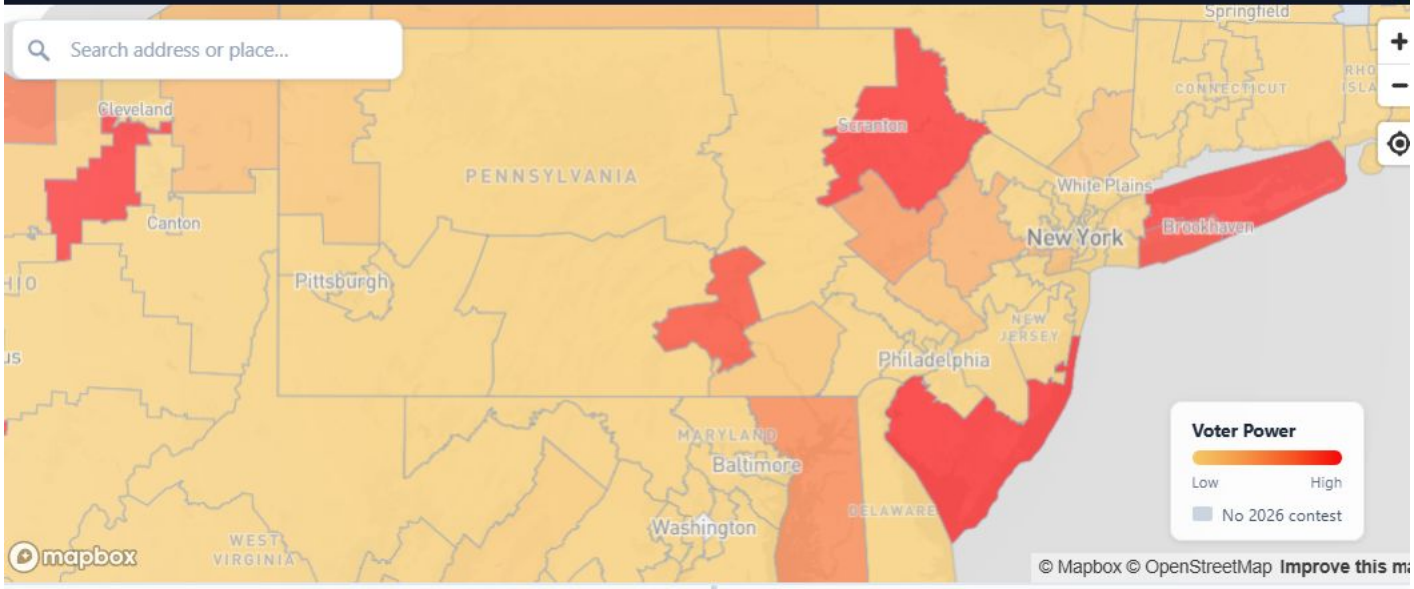
votemaximizer.org

Finish update

Vote Maximizer 2026

About

Donate →



Click any district on the map to see your path to action.

Each contest is scored by **Voter Power** — how much your vote, donation, or volunteer shift can influence the outcome. House and Senate races also have a **Donation Power** score showing where a dollar goes furthest. Higher scores mean higher leverage. Use these scores to find where your civic engagement goes furthest.

Democracy Moneyball

Find the races where your dollar goes furthest. Switch the list to **Donation**

My Area | Top Contests | US House | Senate | Governor

5	**FL-9** Florida	Toss-up	100
6	**FL-16** Florida	Toss-up	100
7	**NJ-2** New Jersey	Toss-up	100
8	**NC-11** North Carolina	Toss-up	100

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http://thirdmountainaction.org

Bringing the Sciences to Democracy

