

# Missouri State Archives

## Finding Aid 5.18

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### OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE

### ELECTIONS

### PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS, 1872-

*Abstract:* Records (1872-2020) related to presidential electors and the electoral college, including certificates of nomination, election, ascertainment, and votes cast; correspondence; declarations of candidacy; meeting minutes; official ballots; and procedural information and background material.

*Extent:* 0.8 cubic ft. (2 Hollinger boxes)

*Physical Description:* Paper

*Location:* MSA Stacks

### ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

*Access Restrictions:* No special restrictions.

*Publication Restrictions:* Copyright is in the public domain.

*Preferred Citation:* [Name of Document], [Date]; Elections; Presidential Electors, 1872- ; Office of Secretary of State, Record Group 5; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

*Acquisition Information:* Various agency transfers.

*Processing Information:* The material for this series was pulled from miscellaneous elections and commissions files. In the future, any commissions material related to presidential electors will be placed in this series. Processed by Mary Kay Coker on November 30, 2007. Added records (1988) to the collection on February 9, 2011. Added more records (1904-2008) pulled from campaign finance reports, miscellaneous elections, and declarations of candidacy on August 29, 2014.

## HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The electoral college is a federal system that was designed to balance the popular vote against the rights of less populous states in the election of president and vice president of the United States. While most people think that they are voting for a candidate, they are in fact voting for a presidential elector nominated from that candidate's party. According to state law, "A vote for any candidate for president and vice president shall be a vote for their electors" (RSMo 115.243). The candidate with the most popular votes usually wins the electoral college but not always, as in 2000 when Al Gore won the popular vote but George W. Bush won the presidency. Although there have been faithless electors who have voted other than their party desired, it is rare and has never influenced the outcome of a presidential election.

Presidential electors never meet as a body but instead convene at their respective state capitols in December to cast their votes. In Missouri, presidential electors are chosen from each congressional district plus two from the state at large (RSMo 128.010). The state committee of each established party sends a list of its nominees for presidential elector to the secretary of state with a signed and notarized declaration of candidacy from each nominee (RSMo 115.399). If an elector fails to appear at the seat of government (Jefferson City) at the appointed time, as happened in 1996, the remaining electors appoint another to fill the vacancy (RSMo 128.130).

## PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS, 1872-2020

*Arrangement:* Chronological

### Scope and Content

This series contains records relating to presidential electors and the electoral college in Missouri. Coverage is haphazard until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The two documents most often found here and required by federal law are the certificate of ascertainment and the certificate of vote.

The certificate of ascertainment gives the names of the electors chosen by the voters and the total number of popular votes received; it also names all other candidates for elector and the number of votes received. The certificate of vote states the number of electoral votes, as opposed to popular votes, cast for president and vice president. Multiple original copies of these documents are produced and sent to various agencies, including the National Archives and Records Administration.

Other records in this series include certificates of nomination, declinations of nomination, certificates of election for electors, meeting agenda and minutes, official ballots, voting procedures, campaign finance reports, and media coverage. In 1996, when an elector failed to appear, there were ballots and a certificate of appointment to fill the vacancy.

Only certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for presidential electors are found here. Those for presidential candidates are found in the series *Declarations of Candidacy, Certificates of Nomination, Petitions, and Withdrawals*. The following certificates of nomination for presidential electors that were combined with the state ticket were left in that series: Democratic (1892, 1896, 1900, 1932, 1944, 1948, 1952), People's Party (1892), Prohibition Party (1944), Republican (1900), and Social Democratic (1900). Some crossover can be expected and if a document is not found in one series, it might be found in the other.

### Container List

Box	Folder	Date	Contents
1	1	1872	Certificate of election of electors
1	2	1892	Certificates of nomination and declination for Democratic and Republican electors
1	3	1896	Certificates of nomination and declination for Democratic, National Party, and People's Party electors
1	4	1904	Campaign finance reports for electors
1	5	1908	Certificates of nomination and declination for Democratic, Independent, People's Party, and Republican electors

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1	6	1912	Certificates of nomination and declination for Democratic, Progressive, Republican, and Socialist Labor electors; campaign finance report for candidate for elector at large
1	7	1916	Certificates of nomination for Republican and Socialist electors; campaign finance reports for electors
1	8	1920	Certificate of nomination for Republican elector
1	9	1924	Certificate of nomination for Republican electors
1	10	1928	Certificates of nomination for Democratic and Republican electors and delegates
1	11	1932	Certificates of nomination for Democratic and Republican electors and delegates
1	12	1936	Declarations of candidacy for Socialist electors
1	13	1940	Resignation of Republican elector
1	14	1944	Certificates of nomination for Democratic and Republican electors
1	15	1948	Ballots for vice president; certificate of election for Republican elector; certificate of vote; record of meeting of electors
1	16	1952	Certificate of nomination of Republican electors; minutes of meeting of electors; agenda of meeting of electors; record of meeting of electors; certificate of vote
1	17	1956	Booklets (2) entitled "Provisions of the Constitution and the United States Code relating to Presidential Elections"; certificates of nomination for Democratic and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
1	18	1960	Certificates of nomination for Democratic and Republican electors and delegates
1	19	1964	Certificate of vote; certificate of ascertainment
1	20	1968	Certificates of nomination for American Party, Democratic, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote; minutes of meeting of electors; letter and newspaper clipping on meeting
1	21	1972	Certificates of nomination for Democratic and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote

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| 1 | 22 | 1976 | Certificates of nomination for Democratic, Independent, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote; congratulatory resolution of Democratic electors   |
| 1 | 23 | 1980 | Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Independent, Libertarian, Republican, and Socialist Workers electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote   |
| 1 | 24 | 1984 | Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote   |
| 1 | 25 | 1988 | History of electoral college; expense report; certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, New Alliance Party, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote   |
| 1 | 26 | 1992 | Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, Independent, Natural Law Party, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote; press release; general information on the electoral college; instructions from US Senate; agenda for electors with sample expense report and sample ballots; a report by Elections Division intern H. Steve Williams dated June 11, 1992, entitled, "Report: The Impact of the Ross Perot Campaign on the Electoral College" |

- 2 1-2 1996 Booklet entitled "Provisions of the Constitution of the United States Code relating to Presidential Elections," dated May 1996; certificates of appointment and election of electors; electoral college voting procedures; official ballots for electoral votes for president, vice president, and to fill a vacancy amongst electors; list of statutes concerning electors; correspondence; press release; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of appointment to fill vacancy; certificate of vote; certificate of ballots; newspaper clipping; certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, Natural Law, Reform, Republican, and U.S. Taxpayers electors; and miscellaneous background material
- 2 3 2000 Official ballots for vice president; lists of electors; blank ballot form; correspondence; certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Constitution, Democratic, Green, Libertarian, Reform, and Republican electors; certificates of election for electors; instructions from National Archives; certificate of ascertainment; appointment to fill vacancy amongst electors; certificate of vote (copy only)
- 2 4 2004 Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Independent (Nader), Libertarian, and Republican electors; official ballots for electoral votes for president and vice-president; correspondence; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
- 2 5 2008 Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, Republican, and Write-In (Cynthia McKinney) electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
- 2 6 2012 Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Constitution, Democratic, Libertarian, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote; blank ballot form; website printout from [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov) entitled "U.S. Electoral College: Who Are the Electors? How Do They Vote?"

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| 2 | 7 | 2016 | Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Constitution, Democratic, Green, Libertarian, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; appointment to fill vacancy amongst electors; certificate of vote |
| 2 | 8 | 2020 | Certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote   |