

A TALE OF TWO CITIZENS

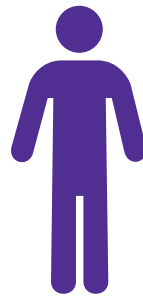


Independent Leaners DON'T Vote Like Democrats

DEMOCRATS INDEPENDENTS REPUBLICANS



**STRONG
DEMOCRAT**

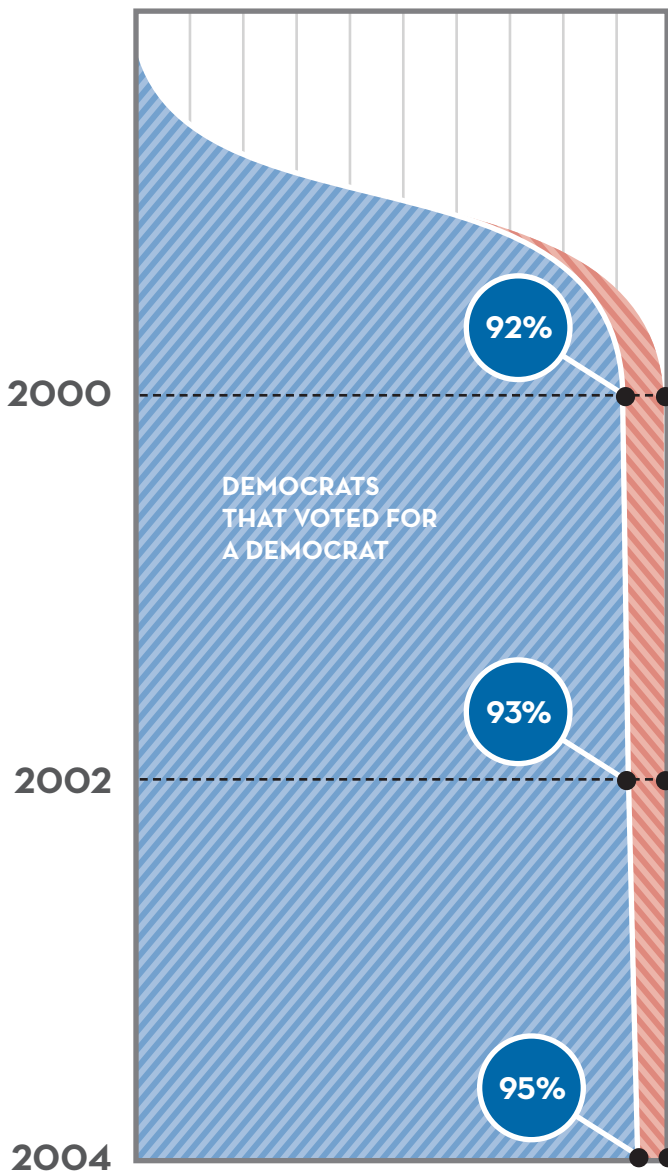


**INDEPENDENT
LEANS DEMOCRATIC**

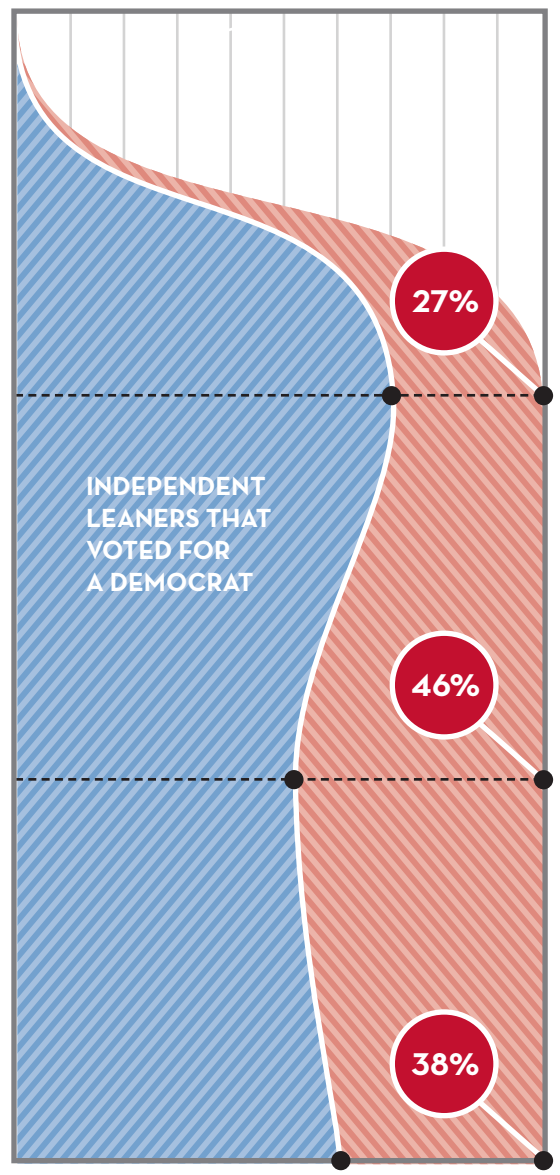
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES VOTE



DEMOCRATS THAT VOTED FOR A REPUBLICAN



INDEPENDENT LEANERS THAT VOTED FOR A REPUBLICAN



Many pundits argue that Independent voters aren't truly Independent—most lean one way and stay there. But following these voters over time reveals that Independents who lean don't consistently fall with partisans. In fact, nearly half of the Independents who said they leaned Democratic in 2000 voted Republican two years later, compared to just 7% of strong Democrats.

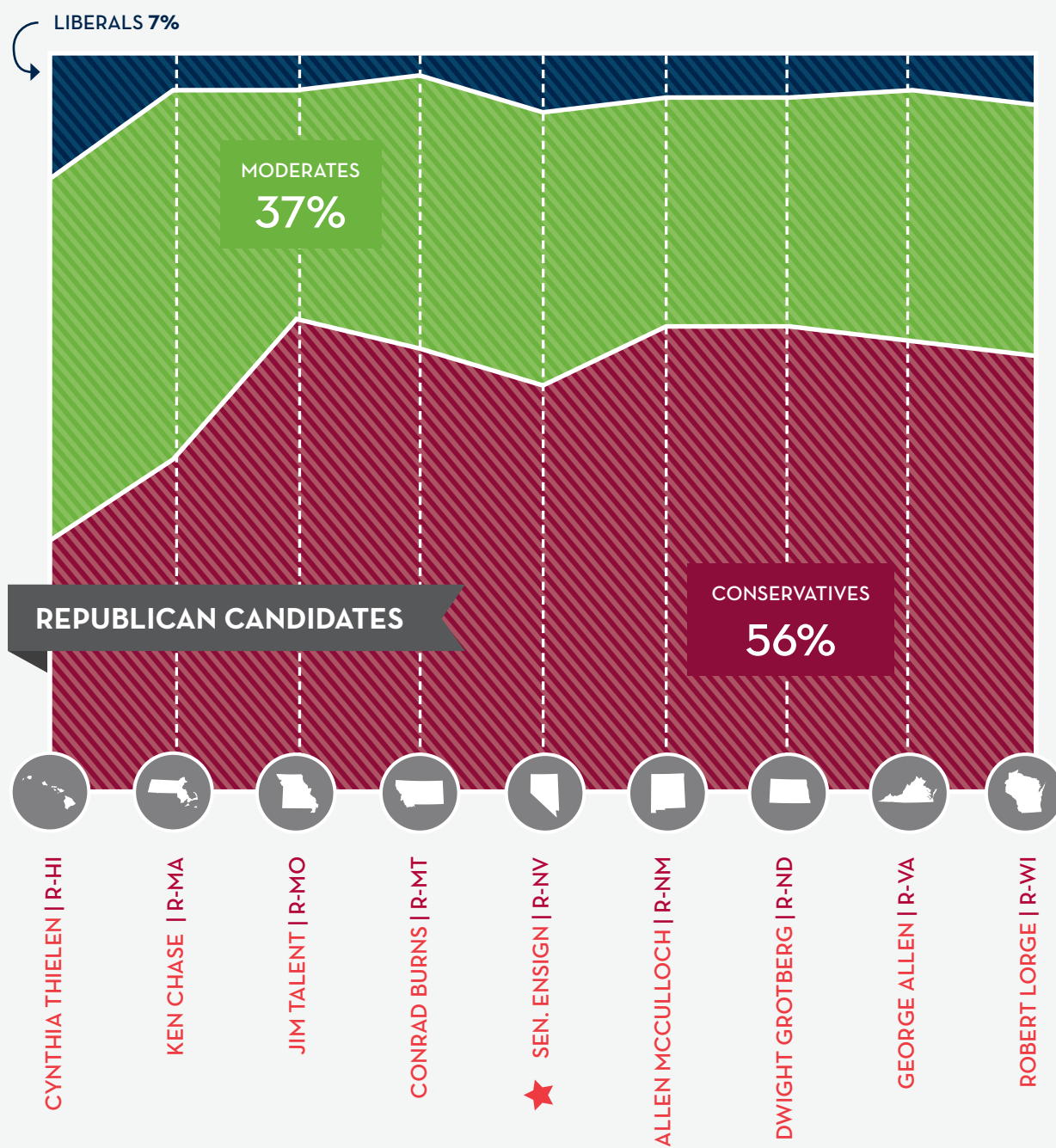
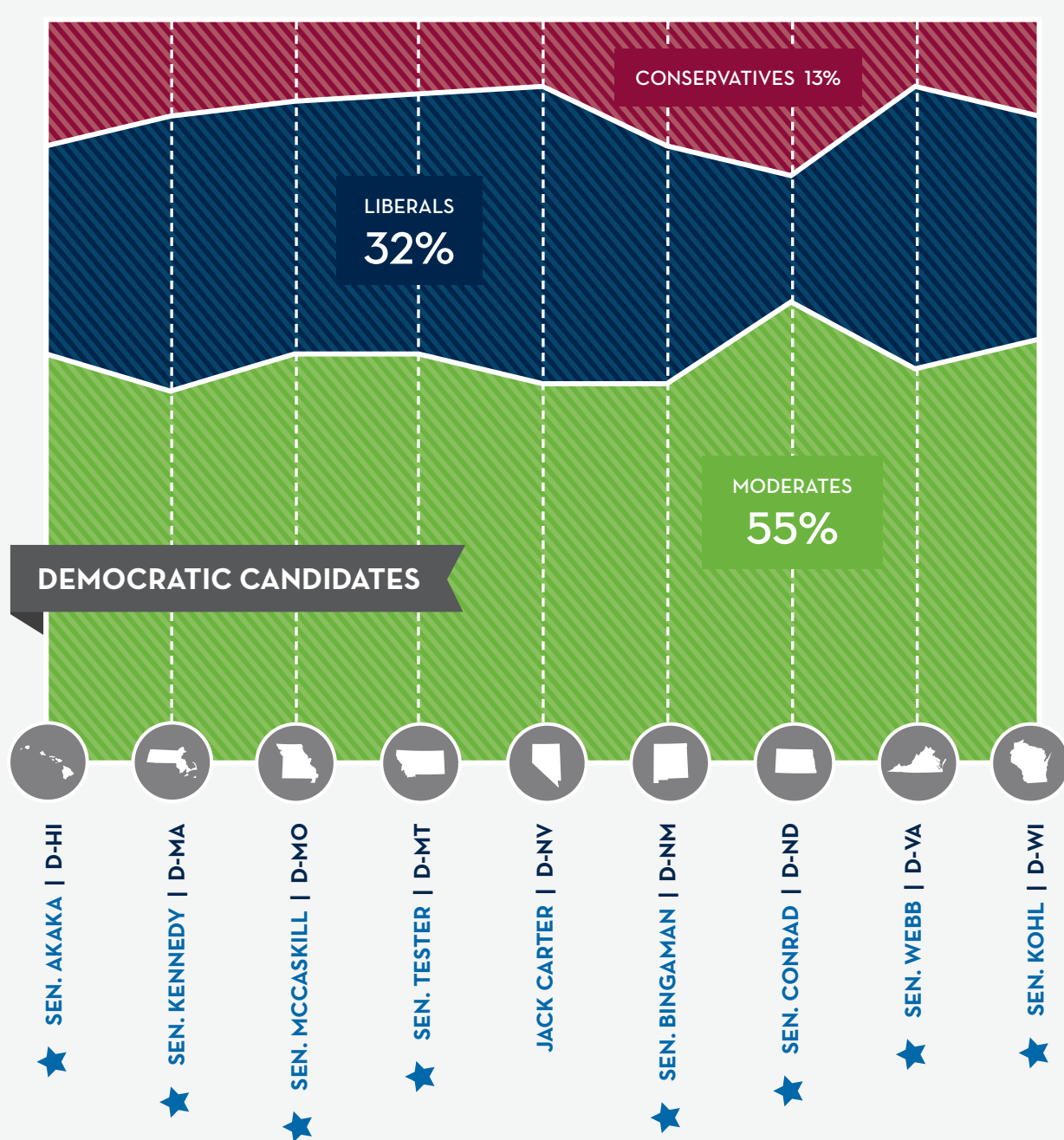


WHO'S THE BASE?



Moderates Dominate Winning Democratic Senate Coalitions

LIBERALS MODERATES CONSERVATIVES



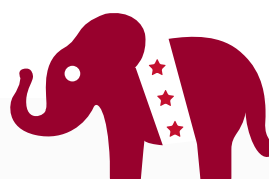
★ = WINNER

Both parties often talk about mobilizing their “base.” But when it comes to winning Senate races, Democrats must recognize that the base of their vote is actually MODERATES, not liberals. In every Senate battleground in 2006, more moderates than liberals voted for the Democratic candidate. And in each, moderate voters made up AT LEAST 50% of the Democratic Senate vote—dwarfing the number of liberal voters in every single race.



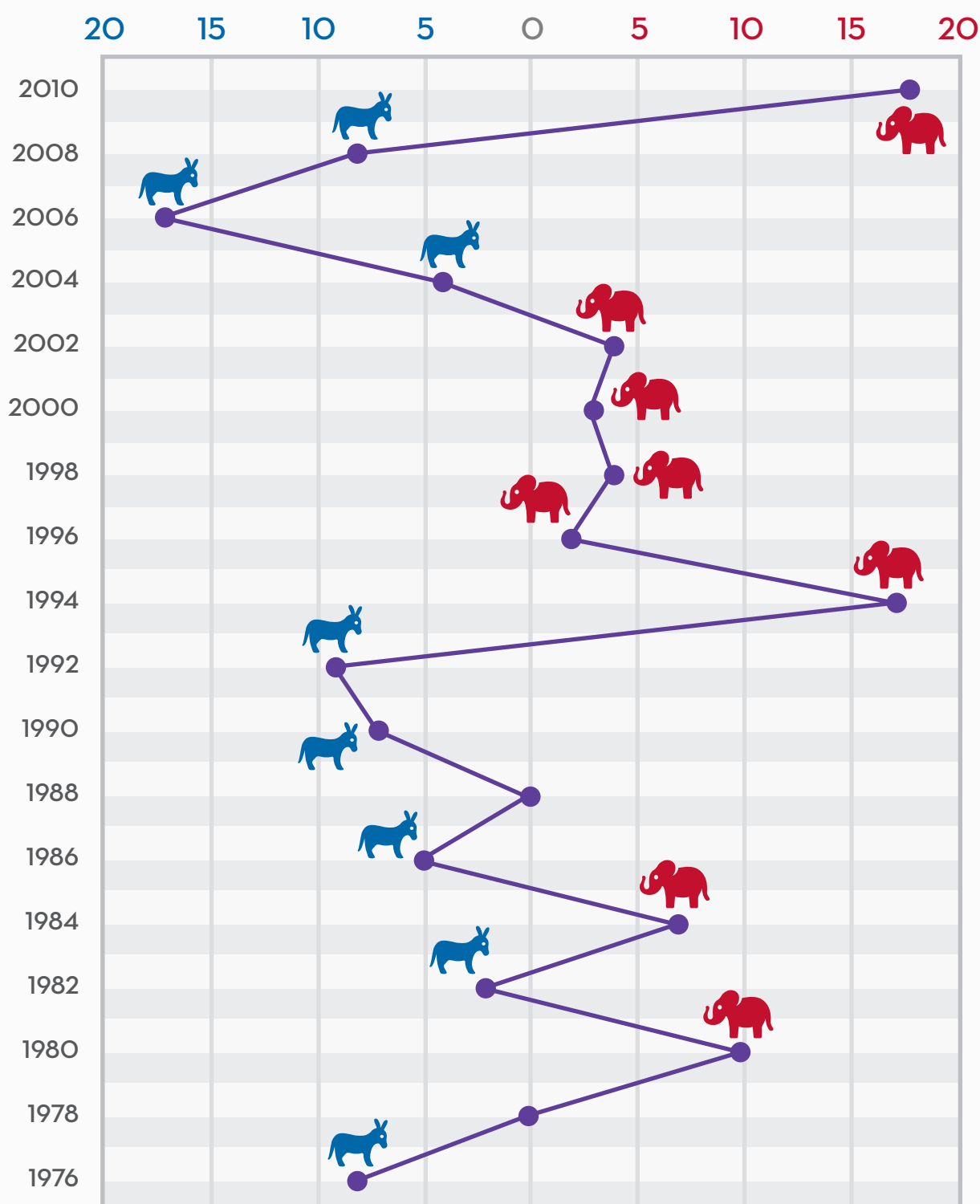
SWINGING INDYS

Independent Voter Volatility in House Elections



DEMOCRATIC MARGIN WITH INDEPENDENTS

REPUBLICAN MARGIN WITH INDEPENDENTS



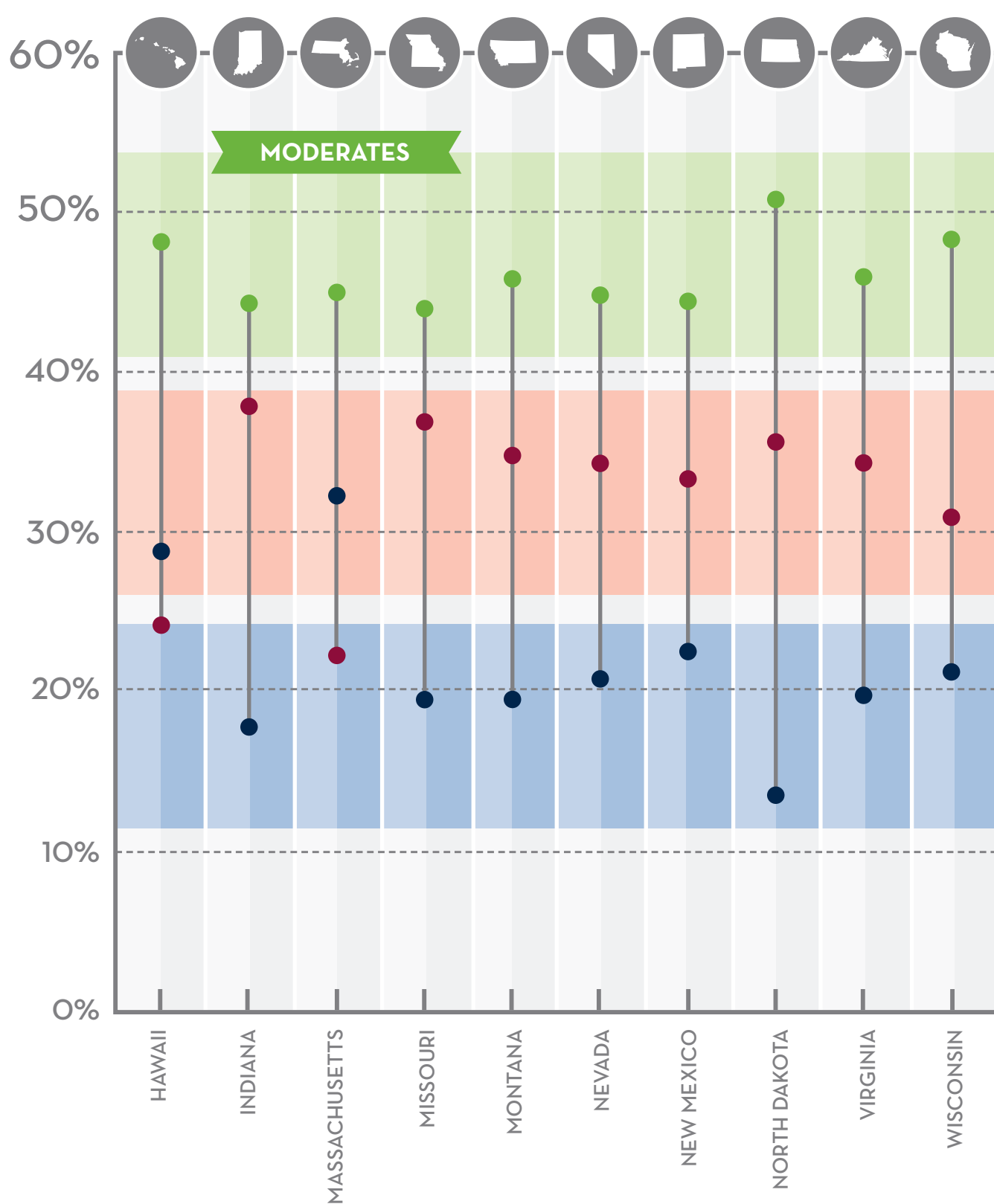
Historically, Independents tended to split their vote for House members between the Democratic and Republican Parties by only a few points. But recently, Independents have become more volatile. In 2006, Independents voted for Democrats by 17 points. But in 2010, they picked Republicans by 18 points. Independents aren't party loyalists. They swing between the parties—more dramatically now than any time in the past 30 years.

MODERATES RULE

The Middle Determines Who Controls the Senate



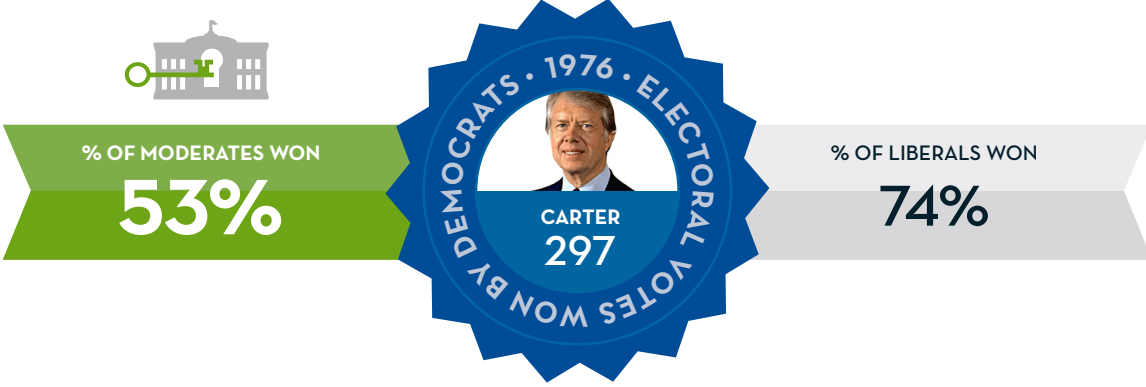
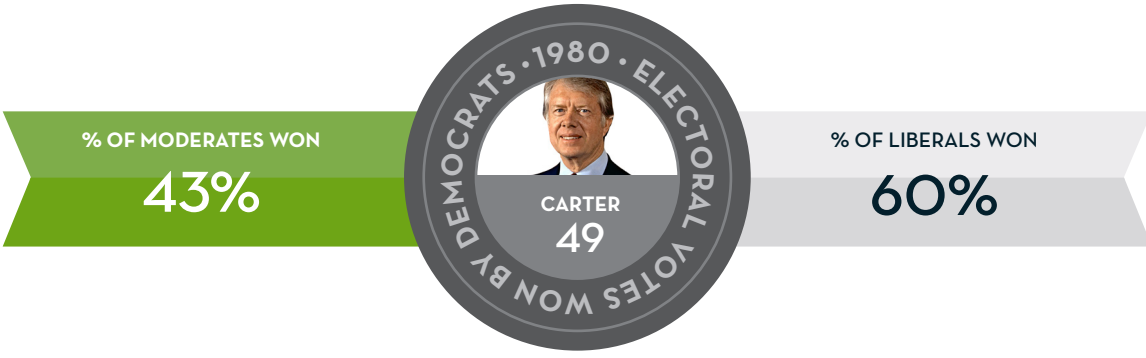
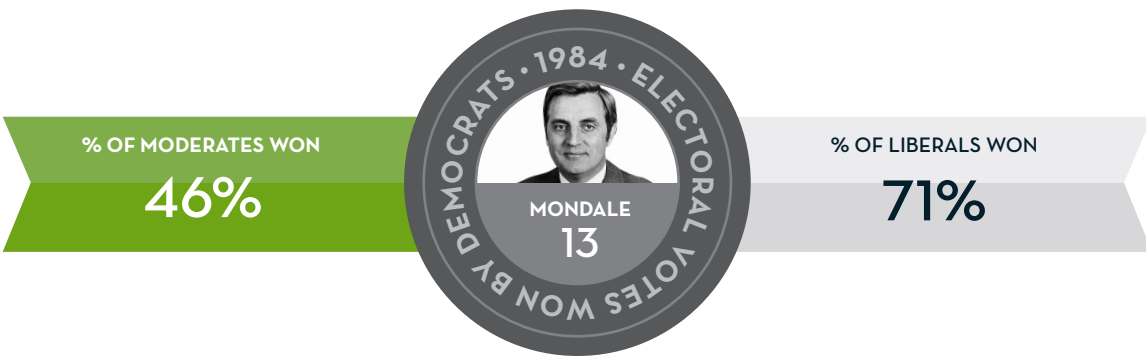
IDEOLOGY OF ELECTORATE IN SENATE BATTLEGROUND STATES



In every single 2012 Senate battleground state, moderates make up the biggest chunk of voters. In 8 of 10, conservatives outnumber liberals substantially, making moderate voters even more important to Democrats. Without winning moderates by a significant margin, most Senate Democratic candidates can't measure out a path to victory.

MODERATES HOLD THE KEYS

Dems need **60%** to win the White House



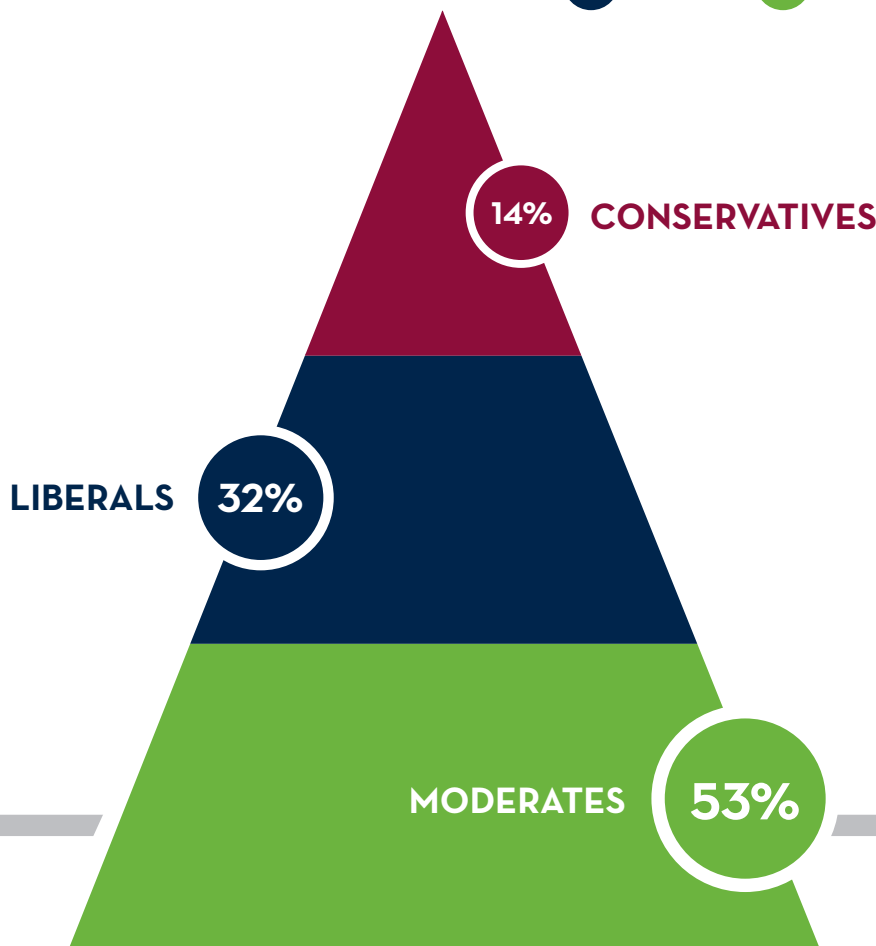
To win in the electoral college, a Democratic Presidential candidate needs to dominate among moderate voters. A simple majority isn't enough—Democrats generally need 60% to declare victory. The only Democrat to nab the White House without hitting that mark was Carter in 1976, but he pulled over 30% of conservatives, a level no Democratic candidate has even approached in the years since.

MODERATE MAJORITY



DEMOCRATS WIN MOST OF THEIR PRESIDENTIAL VOTES FROM THE MIDDLE

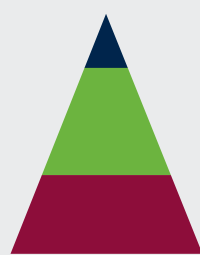
LIBERALS MODERATES CONSERVATIVES



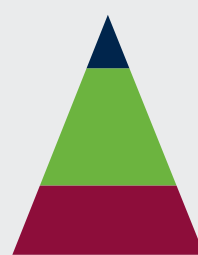
DEMOCRATIC AVERAGE



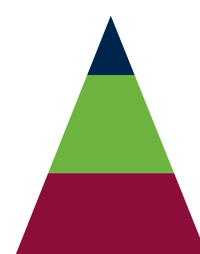
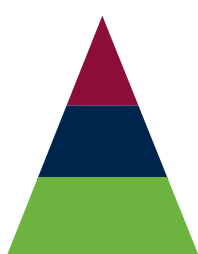
2008



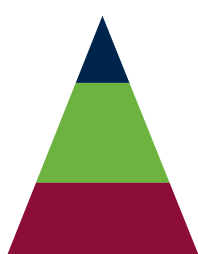
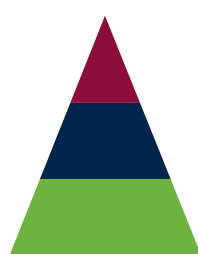
2004



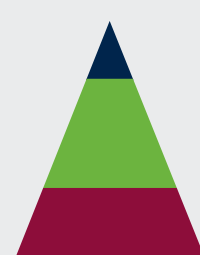
2000



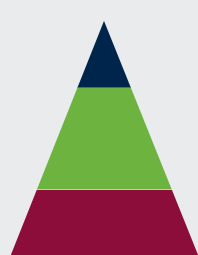
1996



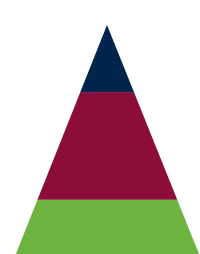
1992



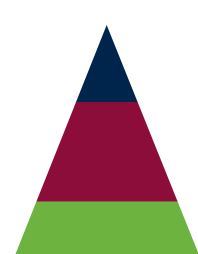
1988



1984



1980



1976

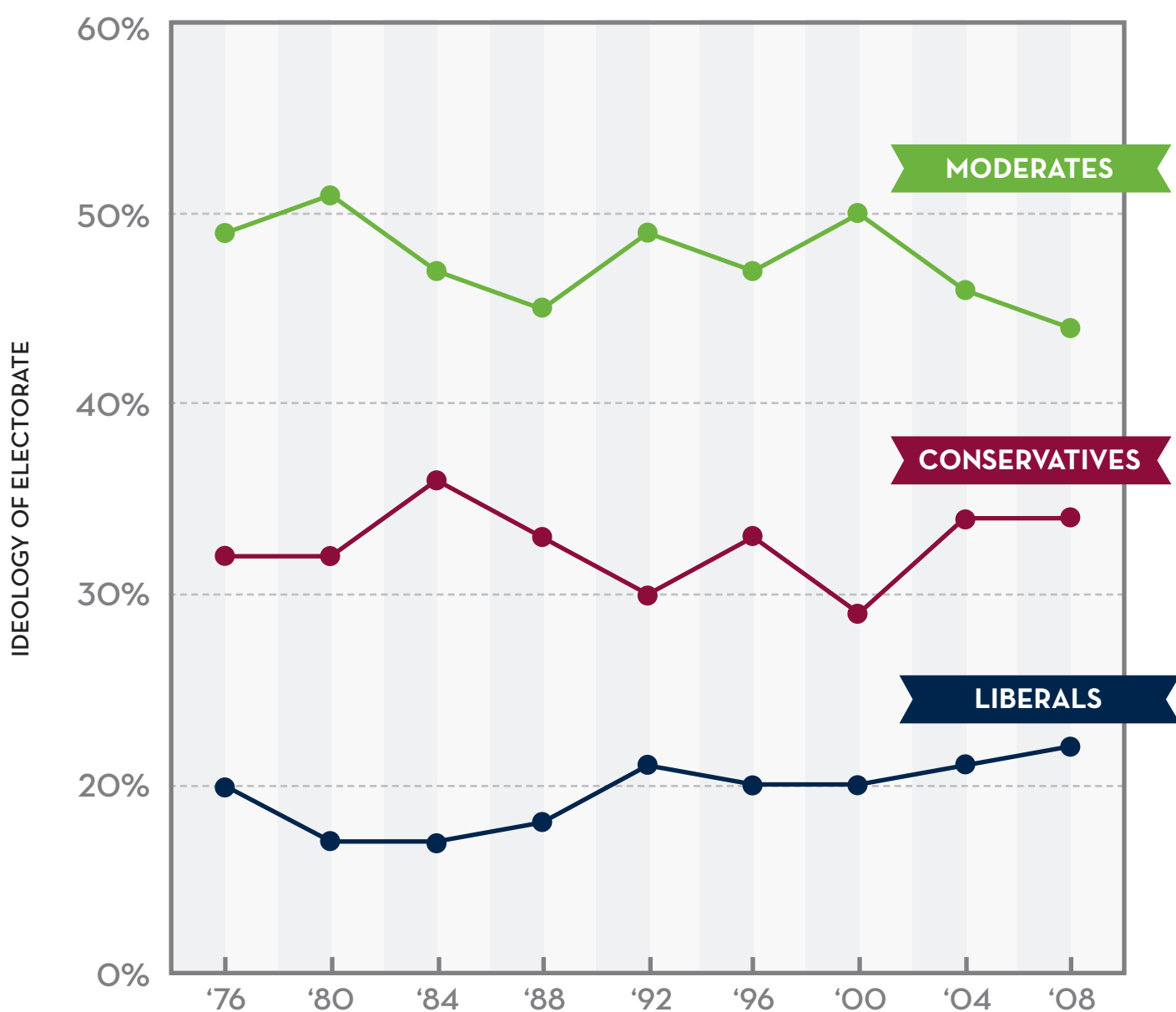
▲ = WINNER

In every single Presidential election in the modern era, moderates have made up a majority of those voting for the Democratic candidate. The same is not true of Republicans; in fact, since 1984, conservatives have consistently been the largest source of their votes. Win or lose, moderates make up the base of Democratic Presidential coalitions.

IT'S A MOD, MOD, MOD, MOD WORLD



Most Voters are
MODERATES in
Presidential Elections



The Republican Party focuses on mobilizing its conservative base to win elections. The Democratic Party focuses on mobilizing its liberal base. But the bulk of votes are in the middle. Presidential elections have featured more moderate voters than either liberals or conservatives in every year since exit polls began asking the question. In the battle for the White House, moderates dominate.

INDEPENDENTS

DOMINATE SKYLINE IN 2012

DEMOCRATS INDEPENDENTS REPUBLICANS



The architecture of the American electorate has changed since the last Presidential election. The number of people who identify as an Independent has skyrocketed, and both parties have shed members. According to Pew, 38% of the country now consider themselves Independent—surpassing previous peaks in the early 1990s. Public opinion polls and voter registration data all point to the same conclusion: the skyline this November could feature more Independent voters than we’ve seen in decades.