

Political Party Identification

The percentage of registered voters identifying with political parties is declining. If current trends continue, half of American voters could identify as politically independent within the next decade.

This change has been influenced by an information revolution that includes 24-hour television news channels and near universal access to the Internet. Easy access to news and diverse opinions has freed voters from a reliance on parties for political education. Moreover, voters no longer need political parties to vouch for the good reputation of candidates. Voters can make judgments based on candidate media appearances and broadcast stories.

Similarly, candidates no longer rely on the party to communicate with voters or to ask for campaign contributions. Every major modern campaign includes television ads and Internet sites focused on the candidate's message and raising money.

Which statement can be made based on both the passage and the table?

- The decrease in party identification has strengthened the influence of Republicans in state legislatures.
- The increase in independent voters has strengthened the influence of Democrats on the national level.
- The most recent data shows that Republicans controlled almost three times the number of state legislatures as Democrats.
- The best political campaigns of Republicans and Democrats use modern media to communicate with voters.

Party Control of U.S. State Legislatures, 2009-2015*

Year	Democrats	Republicans	Divided
2009	27	14	8
2010	27	14	8
2011	16	25	8
2012	15	27	7
2013	19	26	4
2014	19	27	3
2015	11	30	8

*does not include Nebraska