

State Party Organizations

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 - In some cases, party leaders literally wrote the ballots their supporters cast – gov't had no role – slips simply put into ballot boxes

Boss Tweed: All I ever wanted to be was a boss



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- Official gov't printed ballot – included names of all candidates competing in general election – eventually this led to split-ticket voting

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- Voters began to turn toward nationally focused media and away from local party committees for their political

Contemporary State Party Organization

- State parties are now more about fundraising than they once were – by 2008, Dem/Reps state party dogs raised \$479 million – a huge increase from 20 years prior.
- Larger budgets/more stable funding produced more full-time headquarters (legit rented office space, etc.)
- Volunteer base – mixed with professional staff skilled in fund-raising, voter targeting, polling, and communication
- By 1999, all but one party state central committee were housed in permanent headquarters – all but 7 employed full-time executive director
- Thus, while nature of state party has changed – still relevant – parties still recruit candidates, coordinate efforts with national and local party organizations, allied interest groups (pluralism), consultants, and activists
- Publish newsletters, employ voter-identification programs
- State parties organize seminars and campaign assistance programs for candidates for statewide office and state

Contemporary State Party Organization

- State party development does vary from state to state
- A state's history and political culture are important
 - States that have long history of formidable party orgs tend to continue to have vibrant orgs – NJ, NY, IL (Chicago!). Traditionally weaker states include KS, NE, ND, and SD
 - Political competition in state – FL GOP has a very strong party organization, and Dems are ok too
 - State laws – some states limit party's ability to support candidates – as of 2012, 32 states restricted amounts state central committees can contribute directly to statewide, leg, and judicial candidates