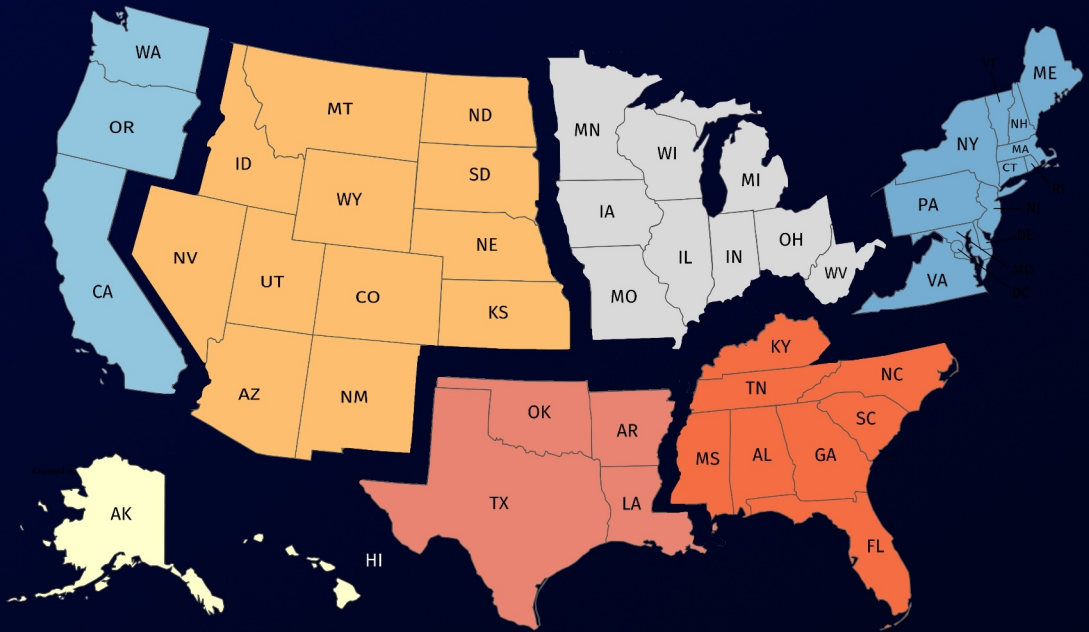


# A More Perfect Union

BRIEFS

Reimagining the United States as a European Union-style Federation



Alexander Moss

# **A More Perfect Union (Briefs)**

Reimagining the United States as a  
European Union-style Federation.

Alexander Moss

ISBN 979-8-9855678-6-1

© 2021 - 2022 Alexander Moss

# Tweet This Book!

Please help Alexander Moss by spreading the word about this book on [Twitter](#)!

The suggested hashtag for this book is [#ampUnion](#).

Find out what other people are saying about the book by clicking on this link to search for this hashtag on Twitter:

[#ampUnion](#)

*For all my fellow Americans.*

# Contents

<b>Summary</b> . . . . .	<b>i</b>
<b>Structure</b> . . . . .	<b>ii</b>
Citations . . . . .	ii
Manuscript Review and Bias . . . . .	iii
<b>Preface</b> . . . . .	<b>v</b>
<b>1. Problem Statement</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
Failed Governing Systems . . . . .	1
Rise of Authoritarianism . . . . .	4
Interest In Secession Is Rising . . . . .	5
Not A Miracle Solution . . . . .	8
<b>2. How Did We Get Here?</b> . . . . .	<b>9</b>
We Got Big . . . . .	9
No National Unity Project . . . . .	10
Life and Death Cultural Divisions . . . . .	11
We Have an Old Constitution . . . . .	13
Federalist and Anti-Federalist . . . . .	14
<b>3. Worst Case Scenarios</b> . . . . .	<b>16</b>
Unmanaged Collapse . . . . .	16

## CONTENTS

Civil War . . . . .	17
American Dictatorship . . . . .	18
Climate Collapse . . . . .	18
<b>4. Possible Solutions . . . . .</b>	<b>20</b>
Pass Legislation . . . . .	20
Fix The Constitution . . . . .	22
Break into Individual States . . . . .	22
Break into Counties . . . . .	22
Break into Multi-State Nations . . . . .	23
<b>5. Guidelines for the New Nations of America . . . . .</b>	<b>24</b>
Painless As Possible . . . . .	24
Existing State Boundaries . . . . .	25
Commonly Recognized Boundaries . . . . .	25
Viable Autonomous Entities . . . . .	27
Balanced Power . . . . .	28
<b>6. Proposed New Nations . . . . .</b>	<b>29</b>
Pacifica . . . . .	30
Great West . . . . .	33
Independence . . . . .	35
Central . . . . .	37
South . . . . .	40
North . . . . .	42
The Rest . . . . .	44
<b>7. How To Make It Happen . . . . .</b>	<b>46</b>
Political Pressure . . . . .	48
Draft Points . . . . .	49

## CONTENTS

<b>8. The Split</b> . . . . .	<b>52</b>
<b>9. Allocating the Federal Government</b> . . . . .	<b>58</b>
Revenue . . . . .	59
Expenditures . . . . .	60
Debt . . . . .	62
The Dollar & The Federal Reserve . . . . .	63
The Easy Stuff . . . . .	63
Regulatory & Science . . . . .	64
Federal Land . . . . .	64
Military . . . . .	65
Military Organization . . . . .	69
<b>10. American Union</b> . . . . .	<b>72</b>
<b>11. Next Steps</b> . . . . .	<b>76</b>
Individual Action . . . . .	77
Organized Action . . . . .	79
How Close Are We? . . . . .	80
<b>12. Frequently Asked Questions</b> . . . . .	<b>83</b>
<b>13. Essays</b> . . . . .	<b>89</b>
<b>14. Closing Notes</b> . . . . .	<b>91</b>
Not Enough Time . . . . .	91
Suggested Reading . . . . .	92

# Summary

Starting in 2017, mainstream polling firms such as Zogby, Bright Line Watch / YouGov, and the University of Virginia Center for Politics consistently find that support for breaking up the United States into regional sub-groups is growing.

As of 2021, polling across several vendors shows roughly 40% of Biden voters and 50% or more of Trump voters would vote to break the country up - stunning figures.

This book takes a “what if” - breaking up the country into new nations - and develops a roadmap for a constitutional amendment that could make this a reality with the least possible disruption.

The amendment is based on a model in which the current United States is broken into six new nations. Each new nation begins with a copy of the existing Constitution. The new nations would remain coupled in an economic and political union conceptually similar to (but uniquely different from) the Commonwealth or the European Union.

Topics covered include details on the current polling, the mechanics, the economics (including the dollar and Federal Reserve), military, foreign policy, and more.



# Structure

To make this topic manageable this book consists of a series of **briefs**, written in plain, direct language. These briefs are intended for general audiences and can be read relatively quickly.

Another title, *A More Perfect Union (Essays)* is intended for those who want to get into the weeds on various topics. For more information on this title, see <https://axmoss.com/>.

## Citations

This book uses common, easily verifiable data and citations whenever possible. In many cases this includes links to sites such as Wikipedia to encourage further reading and research. Other typical sources include the US Census Bureau and the Congressional Budget Office.

While Wikipedia is often avoided in academic material, this book is intended for general audiences. The Wikipedia articles cited include additional links to the primary sources. Readers are encouraged to explore this material in greater detail.

## Manuscript Review and Bias

I asked roughly thirty people from across a wide spectrum of American life to review draft manuscripts of this book. Some were friends and family, many were complete strangers hired through various online sites.

For a large number of the people who don't follow politics closely, simply reading the material was difficult. What most of them described was a series of symptoms I associate with prolonged trauma. For the Democrats, the Trump administration was unlike anything they had previously experienced, with the January 6th, 2020 attack on the Capital a major event. For Republicans, the Obama administration, what [the majority of Republicans believe was a stolen 2020 election](#)<sup>1</sup> was similarly traumatic. All sides have found the COVID pandemic profoundly exhausting and division.

Many of the reactions from the reviewers were entirely predictable for anyone following American politics. One older man from a very red state agreed with the premise (that the country would be best broken up) but essentially flipped the causation - in his mind, the rise in authoritarianism was entirely the fault of the Democrats, with the Obama administration the inciting genesis. Another older man from the South agreed with the bulk of the material, but disagreed with my characterization of the Civil War as a matter of slavery. Still another claimed that it was impossible for me to characterize myself as a centrist if I didn't acknowledge that

---

<sup>1</sup><https://news.yahoo.com/poll-two-thirds-of-republicans-still-think-the-2020-election-was-rigged-165934695.html>

the Democrats were the source of American collapse.

Perhaps the most interesting feedback to me came from a liberal academic in Berkeley, who pointed out that left-leaning individuals concerned about the South seem to ignore the challenges facing populations of color in Oakland and the greater Los Angeles area.

Another individual, an immigrant who teaches political science and fled an authoritarian takeover in his home country felt that I was dramatically understating the risks we face.

It's impossible to write a book advocating any position in the current American political environment without accusations by one side or the other of bias.

I choose to view it as a sort of ink blot test, in which the reaction to this material is most useful as a tool for understanding yourself and your relationship with the federal government. Ironically, the very divisions confirmed by the reviewers served to reinforce the central thesis of the book.

If you believe that the source of challenges in this book are Democrats, you can probably just do a mental find-and-replace while you read and substitute the names Obama, Pelosi, Schumer, and Ocasio-Cortez for Trump as you see fit.

Treat this book as a starting point for an idea. It's an alternative to civil war. It's a bit of science fiction. It's a reasonable modernization of the current federal government into a more democratic institution.

Regardless, I hope you enjoy the material and take it for what it is - a spark of an idea for the future.

# Preface

I remember reciting the Pledge of Allegiance first thing every morning in elementary school.

*“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”*

Even as a kid I remember thinking the pledge seemed a bit strange. Old-fashioned. One day my public school class discussed the principle of separation of church and state. I was confused – didn’t I just pledge allegiance under God?<sup>2</sup>

Of course, the dollar bill in my pocket had an eyeball floating in a pyramid on it. Clearly there was a lot I didn’t understand about the adult world.<sup>3</sup>

As I went along through high school and college, I found myself drawn to political science – and not just because it explained the weird eyeball-and-pyramid stuff. Political science is in many ways applied philosophy, and it clarified so much about the world around me. What was going on with the Cold War and the threat of nuclear annihilation?

---

<sup>2</sup>“Under God” was added in 1954 by Congress to “distinguish the United States from the state atheism promoted by Marxist-Leninist countries.” Before 1954 there was no mention of God in the pledge. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pledge\\_of\\_Allegiance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pledge_of_Allegiance)

<sup>3</sup>It’s called the “Eye of Providence,” and in 1776 “was a conventional symbol for God’s benevolent oversight.” [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eye\\_of\\_Providence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eye_of_Providence)

Why was the economy set up this way? What happened with Vietnam? Why a forty-hour work week, and not thirty or fifty? Everything from the legalistic details to the ways politicians campaign in poetry and govern in prose was (and still is) fascinating.

Most of all, even after everything I have learned about my country, I still find the rhetoric of the founders inspiring.

*We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*

– **Preamble to the United States Constitution**

Try reading the opening of the Declaration of Independence with fresh eyes. After all this time, it's still astonishing. Thousands of years of monarchs and emperors and kings, to instead declare that we are *equal*. And that we deserve better.

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, —That whenever any Form of*

*Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.*

**– Opening of the Declaration of Independence**

I majored in political science in college. Unlike many of my peers, I didn't go on to work in the State department. Instead, I moved to Silicon Valley and spent the next two decades in technology. Everything I learned in college - the pragmatic philosophy, the legal concepts, public speaking, the ability to write decent prose quickly - all of it is still useful today.

I consider myself a centrist. I like the idea that liberals suggest new social plans and programs, and that conservatives challenge the economic models underlying the proposals. As long as everyone is engaging in good faith efforts, things will generally work out. While the United States gets a lot wrong, it also gets a lot right as well. For a human endeavor, the country and is an astonishing achievement.

But something changed over the years. A sense that there is something darker developing in the country. In particular, Republicans talked less and less about small government and more and more about apocalypse. The term bad faith came

up more and more often<sup>4</sup>. Democrats went from being fellow citizens to the enemy.

Then along came Trump.

I don't view Trump specifically as the problem. I view Trump as the public avatar for something deeper. It's the transformation of the Republican party into an overtly anti-democratic, authoritarian entity. And it's not just Trump specifically - it's the people that voted for him. I believe that they know exactly who and what Trump represents, and that they chose him over the other Republicans in the 2016 primary because that is exactly what they wanted - despite the deep opposition from the traditional Republican leadership.

The idea of a future authoritarian leader taking control of the federal government - one who is smart, motivated, energized and organized - is utterly terrifying.

The twentieth century was marked by authoritarians who murdered by the millions. The takeover of the world's largest military by a fascist leader is a nightmare for the entire world.

I love my family, my friends, my community. I love the rhetoric of being an American - freedom, justice, democracy. I want to live in a society that lives up to those ideals.

I would love for Americans to come together again in an honest celebration of those ideals. But I don't think it's going to happen in my lifetime. The gaps in values and goals are too big. I take those who voted for Trump at their word - they want a different society from the one I want. They have a

---

<sup>4</sup>*Bad faith is a sustained form of deception which consists of entertaining or pretending to entertain one set of feelings while acting as if influenced by another. It is associated with hypocrisy, breach of contract, affectation, and lip service. ... It may involve intentional deceit of others, or self-deception.* - [Wikipedia, bad faith](#)

different view of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I do not want a civil war for myself, my community, or my son.

Perhaps my fears are overwrought. Perhaps things will calm down over the next few years. Perhaps the doom loop of escalating authoritarianism has an exit I cannot see.

But. Just in case. Perhaps another option would be prudent.

The idea for an off-ramp – for this book – first came to me in the early days of COVID. The Trump administration was denying COVID was even an issue, and so states were forming compacts to manage the response.<sup>5</sup>

What if the states... just gave up on the federal government and passed an amendment to make the state level compacts permanent? I'll confess that the idea of a pandemic managed by the governments of California, Oregon, and Washington felt (and still feels) a lot better to me than one managed by the federal government. A watershed moment.

Once I had the basic idea – a simple amendment to break up the country into clumps of states – it just wouldn't go away.

When you are a political science major, you have to get good at writing an essay *fast*. A thousand words is easy, three thousand in a day is no big deal. Every time I read the news, I would pour my stress and thoughts into another essay on the topic.

Just a way to try to get over the stress.

---

<sup>5</sup>AP News, *Governors form compacts to coordinate reopening society*, April 13th, 2020. Also, Wired, *State Alliances Are Leading the US Fight Against COVID-19*



Then, two things happened in 2021. First, a poll came out from YouGov covering the idea of secession along virtually the same state groups I was using in my notes. A mainstream polling firm was now actively tracking sentiment for the idea. YouGov ran it twice, once in January 2021 and again in June 2021... and it showed support was *growing*. For many regions it was over 40%, and in some *over 60%*.<sup>6</sup>

To repeat: 47% of Democrats in California, Oregon and Washington *already* support breaking away, and 66% of Republicans in the South. That's... incredible.

Second, I started sharing my ideas with friends. It was (and still is) a bit nerve-wracking. "Hey, I'm thinking about how to break up the United States into six nations" seemed like a pretty fringe thing to talk about.

To my surprise, I found that people were interested in the idea, but they had a *lot* of questions. How would it work? What about the South? Could it really happen? What about the military and the nuclear weapons?

A surprising number said they had already been thinking about it. I suppose given the polling data I shouldn't have been surprised, but still.

Those two things - the polling and the conversations - made me decide to pull all my notes and essays into this book.

For the sake of everyone - not just in the United States, but the entire world - I hope we can figure this out.

My hope is that by having the conversation, it will change how we all look at our country. Perhaps the discussion will

---

<sup>6</sup><http://brightlinewatch.org/still-miles-apart-americans-and-the-state-of-u-s-democracy-half-a-year-into-the-biden-presidency/>

inspire us to come together, to fix the existing system, and reinvigorate the federal government for future generations.

But, just in case we can't come together, it's probably a good idea to have an escape hatch.

*P.S. To my elementary school teacher: I'm sorry about considering the "indivisible" part to be potentially negotiable. I still love my fellow Americans, and I hope we can all work things out.*

# 1. Problem Statement

Before proposing a solution, it's important to clearly state the problem.

The focus for this book is the federal government as an institution and the Constitution as the operating agreement for the nation.

Issues at the state, county, and municipal level are specifically excluded from the problem statement. The changes proposed later in this book are specifically designed to minimize impacts on these institutions - at least until the new nations begin passing new amendments and legislation.

This book is focused on democracy as the only legitimate source of governmental authority. The foundation of democracy is the idea that people who vote are clearly expressing their intentions and desires. If someone votes for Trump, Clinton, or Biden, you must take them at their word that they are of sound mind and are expressing themselves democratically. Anything else is doubting democracy as a system.<sup>1</sup>

## Failed Governing Systems

Unfortunately, regardless of your opinions, the current system simply does not allow for democratically expressed positions

---

<sup>1</sup>If you find this a challenging concept, check out the essay *Who is Running The Show*.

to be turned into action. Consider the process involved for a party to pass any Federal legislation:

### **1. Win the House**

This includes getting around voter suppression and gerrymandering.

### **2. Win the Senate**

This includes getting at least 60 votes in order to break a filibuster.

### **3. Win the Presidency**

The President can veto any bill and send it back to the House and Senate, requiring both houses to pass the bill with a two-thirds majority.

As a workaround, the President can issue executive orders, subject to court review.

### **4. Survive Court Challenges**

The Supreme Court can choose to strike down or redefine legislation at it sees fit. The only way to remove a Supreme Court justice is via impeachment (which requires 50% of the House and two-thirds of the Senate). Adding judges (packing) or changing the composition of the court requires legislation as described above.

### **5. Survive Implementation & Regulatory Capture**

Once the program is in place, it needs to be funded and reasonably well run. This can be subverted by the executive

branch at any time – for example, by defunding. Or it can be subject to regulatory capture – for example, by appointing friendly former industry management to the organization ostensibly responsible for oversight of that same industry.

The bar for passing and successfully implementing legislation has become ludicrously high. This incredibly high bar for passing legislation forces the president to take more and more sweeping executive actions in order to be responsive to the voters. This in turn puts more and more pressure on the Court as a backstop for executive action. This creates a more and more intense set of reinforcing feedback loops.

This loop is extraordinarily bad for democracy. Pressure to respond to a President’s base combined with congressional dysfunction forces more executive orders, which puts more pressure on the Court as a backstop, leading to less a less democratic outcome. Everyone becomes increasingly frustrated, demoralized, and pessimistic about the entire endeavor.

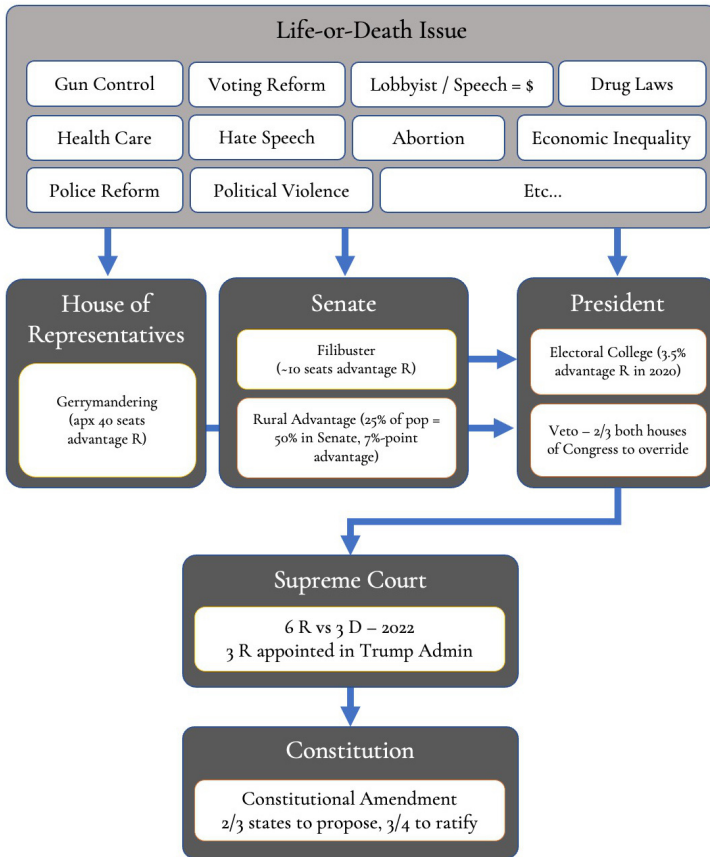
It is the position of this author that legislative reform is highly unlikely. It is not realistic to expect significant reforms under the current system. The bar for legislation is simply too high.<sup>2</sup>

If a democracy is not responsive to the needs of the citizens, what is it?<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup>As a reminder, while the Founders did intend for legislation to be difficult, most of these issues confronting democracy today simply were not conceived of back then – including but not limited to gerrymandering and the filibuster. The Founders considered political parties anathema.

<sup>3</sup>If you are curious, the Economist prepares a [Democracy Index](#) to review the state of democracy in 167 countries. In 2016 the United States fell from a “full democracy” to a “flawed democracy.”



<https://www.supremecourt.gov/about/biographies.aspx>  
<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/democracy/news/2019/10/01/475166/impact-partisan-gerrymandering/>  
<https://pollsandtrends.com/how-rural-states-are-over-represented-in-the-u-s-senate-and-presidential-elections/>  
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/advantage-gop/>

*Root Cause Analysis*

## Rise of Authoritarianism

The other half of the problem statement is the rise of authoritarianism, specifically in the United States by the takeover of

the Republican party by Donald Trump.

This could be a very long section of this book, but most readers already have a well-developed opinion on the authoritarian nature of Trumpism. This book is not intended to change your mind about Trumpism - but it is intended to offer a solution for both supporters and opponents.

In a worst-case scenario, the control of the United States Federal Government - including the world's most powerful, nuclear armed military - falls to an intelligent, energized, charismatic authoritarian leader, ushering in a generation or more of darkness across the world.

If you haven't found the last few years of American politics to be traumatic enough, you can find more stuff of nightmares in the essay *Worst Case Scenarios*<sup>4</sup>.

## Interest In Secession Is Rising

The [Wikipedia article, Secession in the United States](#)<sup>5</sup> has many interesting articles on the history of secession movements. The excellent *Break It Up: Secession, Division, and the Secret History of America's Imperfect Union*<sup>6</sup> by Richard Kreitner provides a highly readable overview of historic secession movements.

In the modern era, John Zogby Strategies articles include coverage in 2017 with *New Poll On Americans' Support*

---

<sup>4</sup><https://axmoss.com/essays/>

<sup>5</sup>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secession\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secession_in_the_United_States)

<sup>6</sup><https://amzn.to/39cOo6L>

*Secession, 2017*<sup>7</sup> and in 2018, *Secessionist Sentiment Remains a Plurality Among Likely Voters, 2018*<sup>8</sup>. In September 2021, University of Virginia Center for Politics polling<sup>9</sup> found “roughly 4 in 10 (41%) of Biden and half (52%) of Trump voters at least somewhat agree that it’s time to split the country.”

Bright Line Watch, working with YouGov, conducted polls in **January**<sup>10</sup> and **June**<sup>11</sup> of 2021 and found support continuing to rise over that period.

---

<sup>7</sup><https://johnzogbystrategies.com/new-poll-on-americans-support-for-secession-webinar-on-tribal-analytics-and-trump-report-card/>

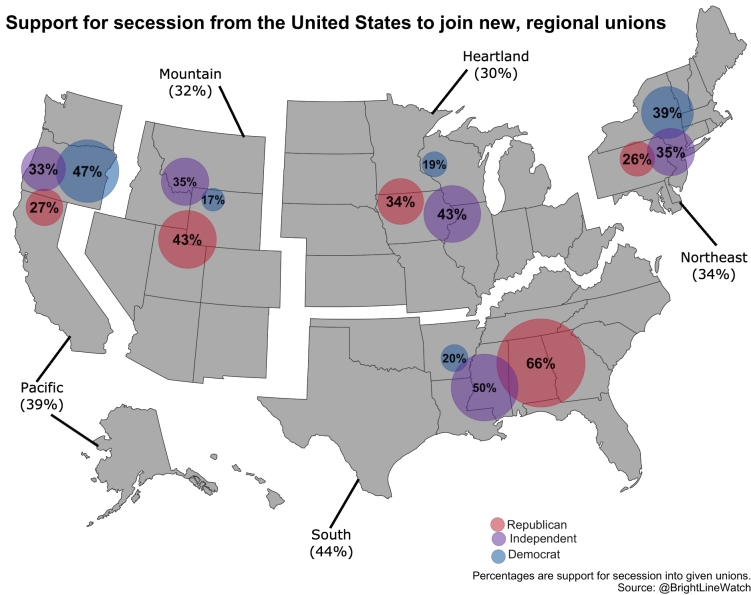
<sup>8</sup><https://johnzogbystrategies.com/secessionist-sentiment-remains-a-plurality-among-likely-voters/>

<sup>9</sup><https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/new-initiative-explores-deep-persistent-divides-between-biden-and-trump-voters/>

<sup>10</sup><http://brightlinewatch.org/american-democracy-at-the-start-of-the-biden-presidency/>

<sup>11</sup><http://brightlinewatch.org/still-miles-apart-americans-and-the-state-of-u-s-democracy-half-a-year-into-the-biden-presidency/>





*YouGov June 2021 Secession Support*

If you belong the majority party in a region, you are **more** likely to support secession. Republicans in the South and Democrats on the West Coast and Northeast are significantly more likely to support secession.

Virtually every secession movement today focuses on a specific region - the Pacific Coast, the South, Texas - and fails to consider any larger picture. By providing a model for all regions to break apart cleanly and coherently, it makes the entire process much more likely to be handled in an organized, peaceful manner.

In brief, democracy is in deep trouble and authoritarianism is on the rise. People are *already* looking at secession as a solution.

## Not A Miracle Solution

A common rhetorical device to oppose a new idea or plan is sometimes referred to a “opposition to an insufficient miracle.” In other words, if an idea does not solve *all* problems it is deemed insufficient.

The problem statement for the ideas in this book is explicitly *not* to solve all problems. It will not (in and of itself) solve climate change, or authoritarianism, or racism. At the most basic levels, the goals are to increase and invigorate democracy, reenergize the dreams of American citizens, eliminate the rising tensions and risk of civil war, and prevent the apparatus of the world’s largest nuclear military from falling into fascism and plunging the world into darkness for at least a generation.

This book is, with all apologies, already ambitious enough.