

parties provided a ballot which led to various election day tactics such as colored ballots, striped ballots, and shingle ballots.²³ Legislation for a true secret ballot, or Australian ballot, was not enacted until 1890 after several years of prompting by various reform groups.²⁴ Machine voting first appeared in Maryland in 1935 and the computer age with punched cards arrived in 1975. The reform movement was also influential in enacting primary election laws designed to overcome the advantages and skills of the party bosses at state conventions. The first Maryland presidential primary was held in 1912. The Republicans have held 13 primaries and the Democrats 10 although primary election results do not always control directly the important selection of delegates to the national conventions.

Political Parties

There have always been, in the government of men and by men, the skeletons of party politics. Those in power have sought to preserve that power by dispensing rewards and acquiring allegiances while those desiring power have sought to acquire that power by building alliances and banding together for common purposes. In presidential elections candidates have run on the ballot, or have had tickets for electors, under 28 different party labels in Maryland since 1789.²⁵ The consensus of political scientists and historians is that the development of political parties in the United States has progressed through at least five major stages.²⁶ Political activity in Maryland has reflected these eras of growth but partisan behavior in the state predates the first presidential election and naturally continued in the Federal elections.²⁷ The Anti-Federalists did not capture any electoral votes in Maryland but their leaders did attract considerable attention and caused slatemaking in 1789. The rapidly growing new town of Baltimore provided a fertile ground for the development of the Jefferson Democratic-Republicans in the 1790s which battled with the traditional Federalists for 30 years in Maryland.²⁸ The "Jacksonian era" saw Maryland in the forefront of party organization with the first state party conventions being held in 1827 and Baltimore City becoming the birthplace of the national party nominating convention.²⁹

Party fragmentation which developed in the 1850s was perhaps no better manifested in the country than in Maryland. The rise of party bosses and the counterbalancing reform movements were a part of Maryland's maturing politics, as well as the nation's, in the generations on either side of the turn of the century. The Depression-induced national voter realignment also occurred in Maryland.³⁰

Although parties have been an instrumental part of the political process, it is important to recognize the limitations and inherent weaknesses of relying heavily on party labels to analyze elections or chart the course of history. Any single election is not a sound basis on which to generalize about political parties or statewide trends because factors peculiar to a particular race, perceptions about a given candidate or public concern over critical issues of the day may blur party lines. Individual politicians are not always an accurate guide as they may switch their party affiliation for personal or political reasons. Jeremiah T. Chase was an Anti-Federalist candidate for presidential elector in 1789 and a