



## **JUST THE FACTS!**

**TITLE: "MR. PRESIDENT"**

**EPISODE #: 44**

### **HOST**

Welcome back to Just the Facts!, the weekly vid-cast from FactCheck.org, I'm Emi Kolawole. And, while it may not be breaking news, it is history: Sen. Barack Obama was elected the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. So we found it only fitting that we would spend our 44<sup>th</sup> episode answering some of the questions facing the next President.

### **GRAPHIC: QUESTION 1**

First of all, what happens to both his and his running mates' Senate seats?

Both president-elect Obama and vice president-elect Joe Biden will be leaving open Senate seats behind. According to Illinois state law the Governor, Rod Blagojevich, is responsible for appointing someone to fill Obama's empty Senate seat. The same goes for Delaware where Governor Ruth Ann Minner is [responsible](#) for appointing somebody to fill Joe Biden's empty seat. Since both Governor's are Democrats, it's likely that they will appoint Democrats to fill the seats. Thus, not changing the party count in the Senate.

### **GRAPHIC: QUESTION 2**

When, exactly, is the Electoral College Vote? And where do those 538 electoral votes go?

Contrary to its name, the Electoral College is not a place. It's a process. So let's walk through it.

### **GRAPHIC: ELECTORAL COLLEGE**

Each state is allotted a specific number of Electoral College votes. And prior to the general election, slates of electors are nominated, usually by each political party at state conventions or at central committee meetings. Then the popular vote determines which electors are appointed. If you looked carefully at your ballot when you voted, you'd have noticed that you voted for the electors for the candidates, not the candidates

themselves. The newly-appointed electors meet in their state on Dec. 15 to select the President and Vice President. The Constitution does not require electors to make their selection in line with the popular vote, but 27 states have laws that bind an electors' choice to the popular vote. The Electoral College votes are scheduled to be sent to Congress on Jan. 6, where they will be counted. It takes 270 electoral votes to win.

### **GRAPHIC: QUESTION 3**

#### **HOST**

Obama's had a Secret Service detail for a while. When did he get one? When would he have had to get one?

When he was a candidate for president, Barack Obama received a Secret Service detail in [May 2007](#). If he hadn't, he would have been required by law to be given Secret Service protection 120 days prior to the general election.

### **GRAPHIC: QUESTION 4**

How does the next administration find the stapler?

The president-elect and his administration don't take power without a little help. While it's true that the president-elect and the sitting president are allowed to appoint anyone they like to their transition teams, the U.S. General Services Administration is required to provide assistance during the transition process. [The Presidential Transition Acts of 1963 and 2000](#) require that the GSA provide the incoming administration with temporary office space, consultation prior to the general election on communications systems and "orientation activities" for the president's nominees and appointees, among other services.

### **GRAPHIC: QUESTION 5**

What about the President's Intelligence report?

The President-elect is given access, early on in the transition process to an intelligence report also known as The Presidential Daily Brief or the PDB. Barack Obama received his first intelligence briefing on [Thursday, Nov. 6](#). And the PDB can be on whatever topics the President likes, and is compiled by top officials within the Central Intelligence Agency. The Vice President-elect received his intelligence briefing also on Thursday.

And that's it for this episode of Just the Facts! Thank you so much for joining us on this fantastic ride, and be sure to keep checking back to [FactCheck.org](#) for more facts on the new administration. And, if you're a teacher, be sure to check [FactCheckED.org](#), our companion site, for new lesson plans. As for "Just the Facts!", I'm going to take a week

for a break, and I'll be back on Nov. 22. So, thanks for watching, I'm Emi Kolawole, and see you in two weeks.