Systematically Evaluating Apportionment Methods

Ideal method should

- Stay within the quota
- Avoid the population paradox
- Avoid the Alabama paradox
- Avoid the new states paradox
- Avoid systematic bias toward large or small states

Recap

Paradoxes

- The divisor methods are the *only* methods that avoid the Population paradox
- All divisor methods avoid the Alabama paradox
- All divisor methods avoid the New States paradox

Staying within the quota

- There is no method that avoids the population paradox and stays within the quota.

Claim

- Webster's Method is the only unbiased divisor method

Apportionment in 1920s

In 1920, argument about Hill's method vs. Webster's method

1929 Law
The president will send to the Congress the results of the census and the apportionment of the 435 members of the House based on:

- The method used in the preceding apportionment
- Webster's method
- Hill's method

If Congress does not apportion itself, then apportionment is based on the method last used.

Current Situation

- In 1930, Hill's and Webster's method agreed
- In 1940, Hill's method gave an extra seat to the Democrats
- Hill's used since