

**African-Americans, Anger, Fear and Youth Propel Turnout to Highest Level Since 1964***Possible Pro-Democratic Realignment, GOP Disaster*

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 17, 2008)—A major surge in African-American voting, polling data showing 90 percent of citizens seeing the nation on the wrong track, fear of a deep recession with personal implications, and the organizing efforts of college-educated youth, all conspired to produce both a 2008 Obama victory and the highest general election voter turnout since 1960.

According to a report, based on final and official returns from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, released today by American University's Center for the Study of the American Electorate (CSAE):

- In all, 131,257,542 Americans voted for president in 2008, nine million more than cast their ballots in 2002 (against only a 6.5 million increase in eligible population).
- The turnout level was 63 percent of eligibles, a 2.4 percentage point increase over 2004 and the highest percentage to turn out since 64.8 percent voted for president in 1960. It was the third highest turnout since women were given the right to vote in 1920.
- Overall turnout increased in 37 states and the District of Columbia. The greatest turnout increases occurred in the District of Columbia (13 percentage points), followed by North Carolina (10.3), Georgia (7.6), South Carolina (7.4), Virginia (7.1), Colorado (6.3), Mississippi (5.9), Alabama (5.5) and Indiana (5.2).
- Overall turnout records were set in Alabama, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia.
- Democratic turnout, as measured by their share of the aggregate vote for U.S. House of Representatives (see note 4), increased by 5.4 percentage points to 31.6 percent of the eligible vote, their highest share of the vote since 33.4 percent voted Democratic in 1964 and the largest year-to-year increase in Democratic turnout since women were enfranchised in 1920. Democratic turnout increased in 46 states and the District of Columbia and declined in only four.

“Given where the enormous rise in Democratic turnout and where those turnout increases occurred—all, with the exception of Colorado, in states (and the District of Columbia) with a large percentage of African-Americans—it is virtually certain that African-Americans were a major factor in Democratic turnout increase

and Democratic victories in Indiana, North Carolina and Virginia,” said Curtis Gans, CSAE’s director. “It is also virtually certain that when the Census Bureau comes out with its biennial survey on reported registration and voting, African-American turnout rates will have exceeded white turnout rates for the first time ever.”

Republican turnout declined by three percentage points to 25 percent of the electorate. The six point advantage the Democrats had in the eligible vote was the largest since the Lyndon Johnson landslide against Barry Goldwater in 1964—8.8 percentage points. Republican turnout declined in 44 states and the District of Columbia and increased in only six—none by a greater amount than two percentage points.

“The decline in Republican turnout was the principal reason that overall voting rates did not reach record proportions or ‘the highest since 1908’ as some academics predicted,” Gans said. “It is likely that GOP voting decline started at the top of the ticket—with some of the culturally conservative Republicans not seeing McCain as one of their own while moderates were appalled by the selection of Gov. Palin, McCain’s hawkish view on foreign policy and his tendency, at least in the campaign, to shoot from the lip. A portion of GOP registrants also likely perceived, as the campaign wound down, a Democratic landslide which made some discouraged and demobilized.

“It is also possible that some ‘Reagan Democrats,’ those who shared Democratic economic concerns but were driven to the GOP by 1970s Democratic excesses and cultural issues, didn’t vote. In these times, cultural issues took a back seat to economic concerns, but some who might have come back to the Democratic fold probably didn’t vote—some because of racial concerns but others by the perception of elitism which had been driven home by Sen. Clinton and joined by Sen. McCain, following Obama’s off-hand and ill-thought-out ‘bitter remarks’ in San Francisco, during the primary season,” Gans said.

### **The Case for Potential Political Realignment:**

Democrats scored gains in every region of the nation. Their turnout in western states was 34.6 percent of eligibles, the highest since 1960; in the industrial Midwest (33.5 percent of eligibles), highest since 1964; in the farm Midwest (34.5), highest since 1964; in New England (42.9), highest ever; in mid-Atlantic states (34.4), highest since 1964; in mountain states (31.4), highest since 1964; in the Southwest, heavily skewed because of Texas’ disproportionately-sized population in the region (21.8) highest since 1992; and the south (26.3), the highest since 1992, the last election before the 1994 anti-Clinton mid-term which tipped southern Congressional supremacy to the GOP.

The Democrats also extended their leads in regions where they already had strength and narrowed the gap where they have been behind. In the west, where Democrats had been ahead 30.5 percentage points to 24.8 for the Republicans in 2004, the 2008 margin was 34.6 to 20.4. In New England where the pro-Democratic margin was 30.7 to 19, the 2008 margin was 42.9 to 15.2. In the mid-Atlantic states, where the Democratic lead had been 27.5 to 23.8, it widened in 2008 to 34.4 to 21.4. In the industrial Midwest, a 2004 GOP lead of 30.8 to 29.3 turned into a Democratic lead of 33.5 to 26.8. The GOP’s 35.3 to 31.2 advantage in 2004, turned into a Democratic advantage of 34.5 to 30.6.

In two regions which have been Republican strongholds, the Democrats substantially narrowed the gap. What had been a 28.8 to 20.1 percentage point advantage in the south, narrowed to less than a percentage point (27.2 to 26.3). In the mountain states, what had been a 34.9 to 26.6 GOP advantage, narrowed to 33.3 to 31.4.

Perhaps equally pertinent are the places which recorded the highest GOP turnout of eligibles—Montana (42.2), Delaware (37.4), Idaho (36.9), Kansas (35.1), Wyoming (33.8), Alaska (33.4), Alabama (33.0), Utah (31.9) and Oklahoma (31.3). With the exception of Delaware, these are all states either in the deep south or with lilly-white populations.

The GOP is out of contention in New England and the west. It is getting out of contention in the mid-Atlantic states and the industrial mid-west, its bases of former support in the farm Midwest, mountain states and south are eroding. The only places where the GOP enjoys a durable advantage are Idaho, Utah, Kansas, Nebraska, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Oklahoma and Texas. And with the growth of the Latino population, Texas will likely be at least a toss-up state within the next decade.

Within the next few decades, white Americans, the only demographic sub-group from which the GOP draws significant numbers of voters, will be in the minority.

The only way that the Republican Party can restore its majority status is if Obama fails utterly, and they win via the negative vote or if they reconstitute their advocacy and actions (and not with symbols) so that they have some programmatic appeal to an increasing diverse America.

Similarly, the Democrats can solidify their hold on the future only if the Obama administration is seen as effectively responding to the many and deep crises of today in a manner that recalls Roosevelt facing the depression or Lincoln with respect to slavery and secession.

### **Mobilization and Youth Participation:**

An analysis of exit polls by Peter Levine and his colleagues at Tufts University, showed that youth turnout (18-24) increased by one percentage point over 2004 and that both voting and activism was largely by the college educated and resident. This was the same group which, with strong anti-Bush and anti-Iraq war views, participated at a high rate in 2004 and drove overall youth turnout to within three percentage points of the post-18-20 enfranchisement high of 49.6 percent of eligibles voting in 1972. It is likely that the 2004 gain will mean that youth turnout was much closer to the 1972 high in reported turnout when the Census Bureau survey on reported voting is released.

But the more important contribution of the college-educated young was in providing the sinew for Obama's extensive grassroots organization which was, in part, responsible for the large increase in Democratic turnout.

This election and the election of 2004 provided a lesson about mobilization. In the 2004 election there was a large gap in President Bush's favor with respect to positive feelings about the candidates. Most Republicans were voting affirmatively for Bush, while the primary motivation for nearly a majority of Democratic voters was not pro-Kerry, but anti-Bush. The situation was precisely the opposite in 2008, with substantially more Democratic voters expressing affirmative views about Obama than Republican voters about McCain.

In 2004 both parties had strong voter identification and get-out-the-vote efforts, but the GOP was able to draw substantially more voters to vote early and on Election Day. The opposite was true in 2008.

Which suggests that mobilization efforts—no matter how sophisticated they are and how comprehensive their reach—are as successful as the ground they till in terms of affirmative voter sentiment.

## Convenience Voting:

As in CSAE's preliminary general election release, the data from this election shows that convenience voting—mail voting, no excuse absentee voting, early voting and even election-day registration—does not help turnout and may hurt.

Of the 12 states which had turnout declines in 2008 as compared to 2004, 10 had some form of convenience voting. Of the 13 states which had the greatest increases in turnout, seven had none of the forms of convenience voting.

The states with the largest decreases in turnout were Maine (minus 3.6 percentage points) with election day registration, West Virginia (minus 3.5) with early voting, Oregon (minus 2.8) with all-mail voting; Wisconsin (minus 2.5) with election day registration and South Dakota (minus 2.4) with no-excuse absentee balloting. Four of the eight states with Election Day registration reported lower turnout.

These findings corroborate what CSAE has found over the years looking almost each biennium at the effects of convenience voting on turnout. With the exception of 1998, CSAE has found that states which adopt these reforms have a worse performance in the aggregate than those which do not (except Election Day registration which usually, at least in its initial application and for a few elections thereafter, helps turnout). In years of turnout increase, the increases in states with convenience voting (and especially mail and no-excuse absentee voting) are lesser than the states which have not so adopted. And in years of decrease, the decreases in these states are greater.

There is no secret why this is so. Except in California and Washington—where one can place oneself on a permanent absentee list and automatically get an absentee ballot—and Oregon with its all-mail voting, the people who get absentee ballots must request them and thus are likely to be voters on Election Day. Some just leave their ballots on the kitchen table.

Perhaps more importantly all the devices which allow voters to vote during a period before Election Day have the effect of diffusing mobilization activities over several days rather than one day when the concentration of resources would have the most effect. The Obama campaign might have liked early voting in 2008 because they had the motivation on their side and could check out their voters. Similarly the Bush campaign liked early balloting in 2004 for the same reasons. But systemically, these devices don't help turnout and may hurt.

There are other reasons why these devices—especially no-excuse absentee and mail voting—are harmful. They effectively eliminate the secret ballot—making it easier for votes to be bought, ballots filled out to be discarded, and collective peer pressure to be applied. All of these issues are reasons which the Australian or secret ballot was instituted in the first place at the turn of the last century.

There is another problem that affects all forms of convenience voting except Election Day registration. Suppose Osama Bin Laden had been captured the Saturday before the election, or there was a domestic terrorist act or there was a provable assertion about moral turpitude. There would have been likely 40 million irrevocable ballots cast without that information. To take another example, suppose the 2008 election was closer and the profile of the early voter was as in 2004—60-40 percent Republican. And suppose Sen. McCain on the Saturday before the election had a heart attack and died. The irrevocable votes might have had the effect of elevating Gov. Palin to the presidency, an office a majority of Americans did not deem her qualified for.

The question is why with all of these potential problems and with no positive impact on turnout do more and more states adopt them when there are better procedural approaches which focus on Election Day. Every state should have New York's hours (6 a.m. to 9 p.m. or three hours one each side of the working day). There should be adequate number of polling stations (machines) to handle the type of turnout we had in 2004 and 2008. There should be adequate numbers of pollworkers, trained and paid, to facilitate the voting process. There should be two types of information pamphlets provided the voter—one elucidating election procedures, the other providing the biographies and self-ascribed issue positions of the candidates and the pros and cons of ballot propositions. The experiment which has been tried in Colorado of polling centers establish on Election Day at places of convenience where one could get, via the miracle of modern technology, the ballot for every individual's polling place. And perhaps The United States could adopt what Mexico has satisfactorily in place—a biometric identity card which would at one and the same time enfranchise every citizen, eliminate the forms of fraud the GOP biennially claims which lead to intimidation and suppression, and eliminate much of the cost and complexity of election administration.

But, in a larger sense the American voter participation problem is not procedural and won't be solved by procedural solutions.

### **The Durability of the 2004 and 2008 High General Election Turnout:**

There is nothing in either the 2004 or 2008 election that indicates a durable return to high levels of engagement on a sustaining basis. The 2004 election was an election polarized by President Bush and the war in Iraq and drew people to the polls on those issues. The depth of feeling in this general election was even deeper. But in type they are like the election of 1982 (a recession year) and 1992 (the three R election—recession, “Read My Lips,” and Ross Perot). Each produced a surge in turnout neither was durable.

In this year when the nation had the second highest voter turnout ever in the presidential primaries and the third highest turnout since 1920 in the general election, it also had the lowest turnout ever in the gubernatorial and U.S. Senate primaries held on days other than when the Presidential primary was being held. The Georgia run-off after the general election produced a turnout lower than any Georgia statewide presidential year general election level of voting.

The registration figures for this year were somewhat instructive. Registration increased by 3.2 percentage points (unadjusted for inactive voters). But that increase was comprised of a modest advance (2.2 percentage points) in Democratic registration, a one percentage point increase in Republican registration and a one percentage increase in the registration for parties other than the major ones and as unaffiliated. The other registration has increase in every election year since 1960 when non-major party registration was less than one percent of the electorate now reaching 22.7 percent of those eligible or slightly under the 28.9 who registered Republican. Increasingly—and especially without the short-term impetus of recession and polarization—citizens are eschewing the major parties and politics in general.

There are many likely causes of this, none of which are procedural, since government has made it progressively easier for citizens to register and vote. There has been an erosion of trust which began with Lyndon Johnson's promise not to send American ground troops to Vietnam; there have been shocks to the American political system—Vietnam, Watergate, Iran-Contra, impeachment and Iraq. There have been continuing questions about the responsiveness of government. There has been the atomization and fragmentation of American society—through the decline of integrating institutions, the interstate highway system and suburbanization, the identity and single issue politics, and through our increasingly isolating modes of communication like television, cable

and satellite, the Internet and the iPod. There has been a decline in the quality of education and the resources for it and a decline in the quantity and quality of civic education. There has been a general abdication of the broadcast visual media (as opposed to the less-watched cable and satellite channels) in the coverage of politics and public affair. The staple of campaigns are still the 30-second reciprocal, emotive, and unanswerable attack ads which denigrate every candidate and give citizens a choice between bad and awful. There has been a promotion of consumerist and libertarian values at the expense of civic engagement values and the gap between the rich and everybody has been growing due to the active policies of government.

With this as a background, it is unlikely that the long-term and progressive disengagement of the citizenry (except for seniors and the south) will be durably reversed by one or two elections, but rather by the address of some of those issues.

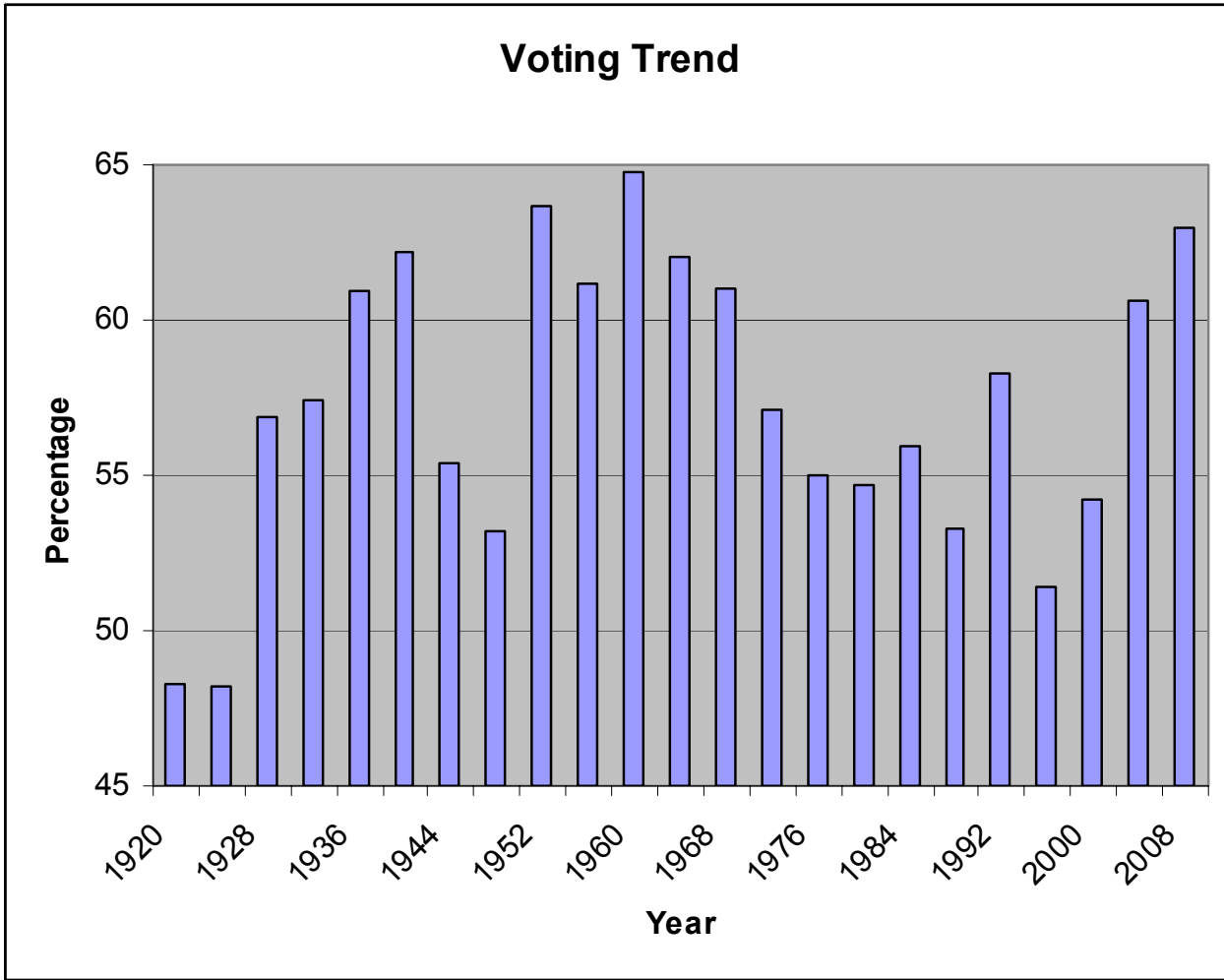
“I have been known as the ‘chicken little’ of the turnout forecasting business B in most elections (but not the last two predicting ever-greater disengagement,” Gans said. “But President-elect Obama has an opportunity to, in policy, approach and understanding, perhaps sustain some of the 2008 engagement. But it remains to be seen what percentage of those who were involved in the 2004 and 2008 general election will stay in the political arena. But at least with the abilities the president-elect has shown, there is reason for some guarded optimism.”

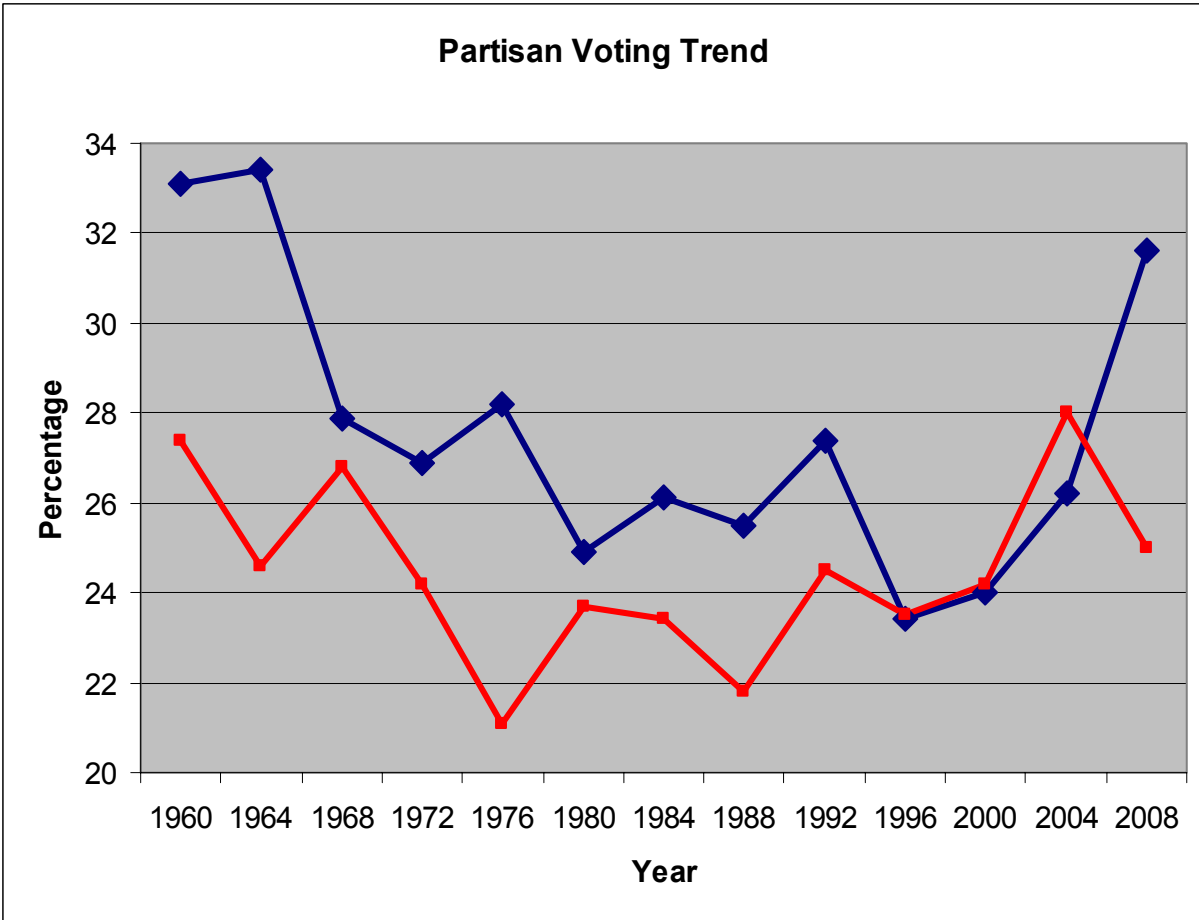
#### **Miscellany:**

Under normal circumstance, CSAE includes in its post-election release a run-down of which states had the highest and lowest overall and partisan turnouts and overall and partisan increases and decreases from the previous election. This year, those charts will be appended to this report and be the first set of charts on the AU website after this report.

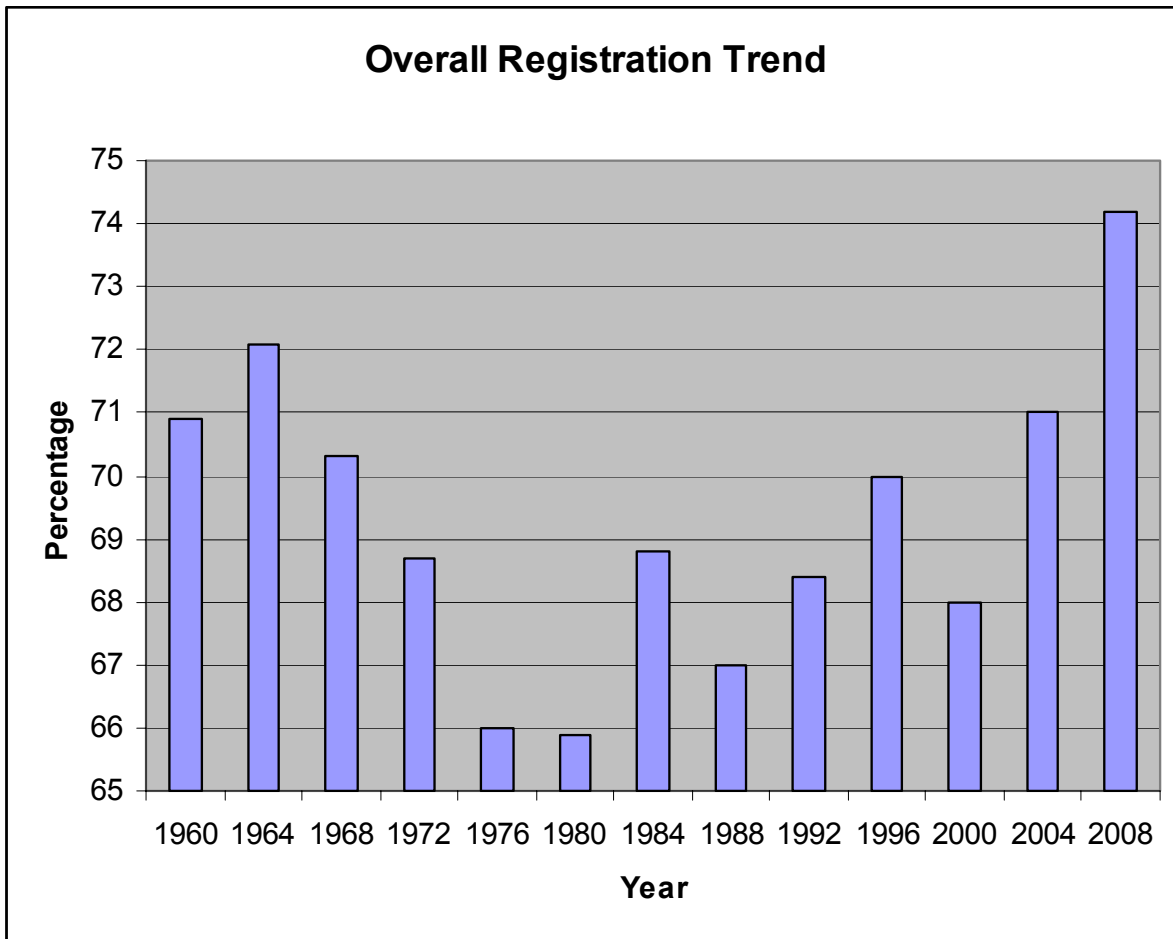
One last note: Ralph Nader received 0.33 percent of the eligible vote.

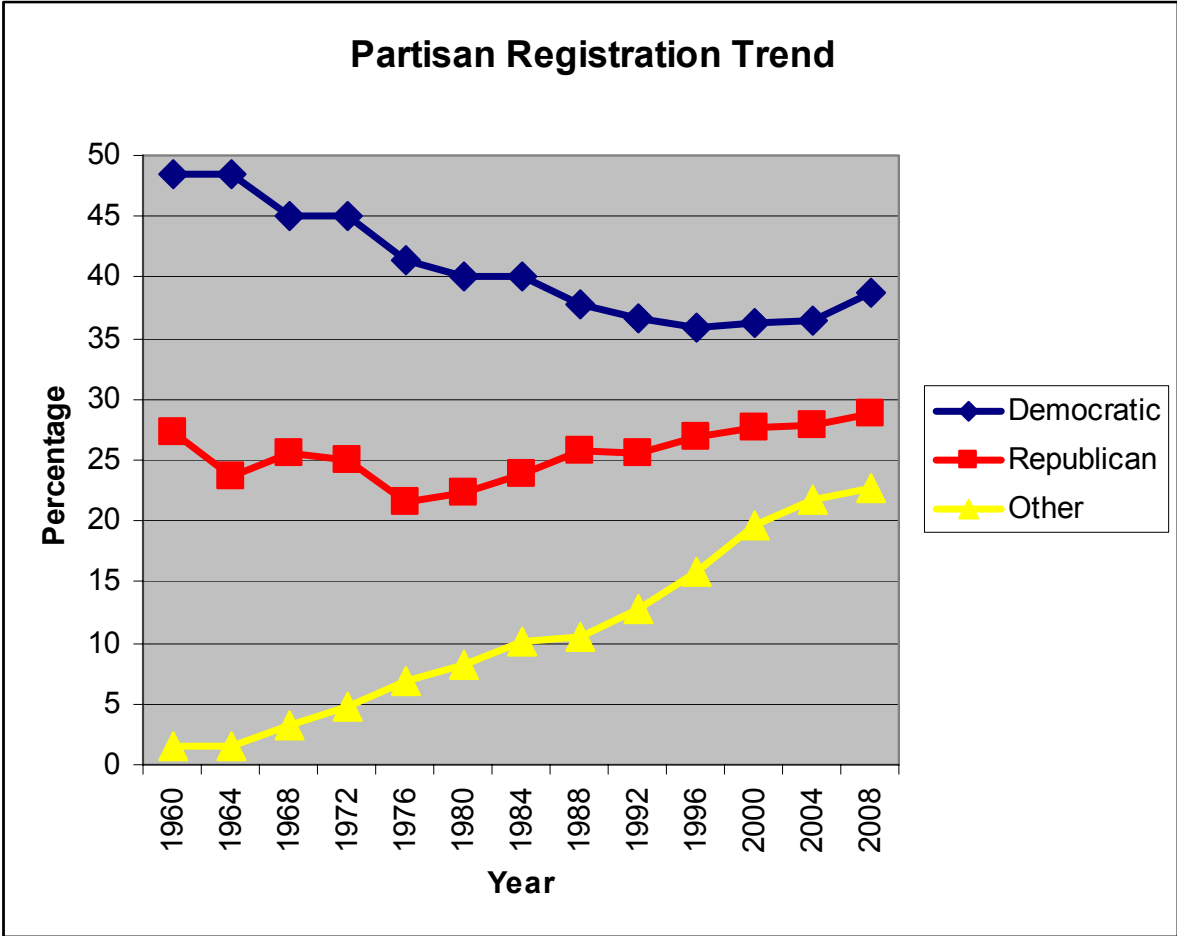
**A complete downloadable copy of the findings, charts and commentary is available at <http://www.american.edu/media/electionexperts>.**











## SUMMARY CHARTS

**1. Turnout Trend:** The number and percentage of eligible citizens who voted for President in elections since 1920.

YEAR	Citizens Eligible	Vote	Percent of Eligible Voted	Pct. Pt. Dif.	Adj Pct * Voted
2008	208,323,000	131,257,542	63.0	2.4	
2004	201,780,000	122,265,430	60.6	6.4	
2000	194,327,000	105,399,313	54.2	2.8	
1996	187,437,000	96,277,872	51.4	-6.9	
1992	179,048,000	104,428,377	58.3	5.0	
1988	171,855,000	91,594,805	53.3	-2.6	
1984	165,727,000	92,659,600	55.9	1.2	
1980	158,111,000	86,515,221	54.7	-0.3	
1976	148,419,000	81,555,889	55.0	-2.1	
1972	136,228,000	77,718,554	57.1	-3.9	
1968	119,955,000	73,211,875	61.0	-1.0	
1964	113,979,000	70,645,592	62.0	-2.8	64.9
1960	106,188,000	68,838,219	64.8	3.6	67.8
1956	101,295,000	62,026,908	61.2	-2.5	63.9
1952	96,607,000	61,550,918	63.7	10.5	66.8
1948	91,689,000	48,793,826	53.2	-2.2	56.2
1944	86,607,000	47,976,670	55.4	-6.8	58.8
1940	80,248,000	49,900,418	62.2	1.3	66.1
1936	75,013,000	45,654,763	60.9	3.5	63.5
1932	69,295,000	39,758,759	57.4	0.5	61.4
1928	64,715,000	36,805,951	56.9	8.6	61.2
1924	60,334,466	29,095,023	48.2	0.1	51.9
1920	55,441,000	26,762,613	48.3		52.2

\* Prior to 1964, African-Americans in the south were considered eligible voters but were almost universally unable to vote until the Voting Rights Act became law in 1965 because of Jim Crow laws. The percentages in this column are based on subtracting the Census Bureau's estimate of southern African-Americans from the overall citizen-eligible population for the nation and interpolating between Censuses and dividing the vote for President by these interpolated figures. This probably provides a more accurate turnout percentage of those who could actually vote but for the purposes of consistency, all percentage in the text are based on citizen-eligible vote as explained in the notes below without this adjustment.

**2. Partisan Turnout Trend:** Percentage of eligible citizens who voted for each major party based on the aggregate vote in each state for U.S. House of Representatives, a figure chosen to be used because it is less likely to be subjected to the more intense pulls in one direction or another by Presidential races. (Note: Thirty House races were uncontested and uncounted.):

<b>Year</b>	<b>Democratic</b>	<b>Republican</b>
2008	31.6	25.0
2004	26.2	28.0
2000	24.0	24.2
1996	23.4	23.5
1992	27.4	24.5
1988	25.5	21.8
1984	26.1	23.4
1980	24.9	23.7
1976	28.2	21.1
1972	26.9	24.2
1968	27.9	26.8
1964	33.4	24.6
1960	33.1	27.4

## 3. Convenience Voting and Turnout

State	2008			2004			2008 - 2004		Early Voting	No Excuse Absentee	EDR
	2008 VAP	2008 Turnout	% VAP Voted	2004 VAP	2004 Turnout	% VAP Voted	Pt Diff	% Diff			
DC	371,000	265,853	71.66	388,000	227,586	58.66	13.00	22.17			
NC	6,423,000	4,310,789	67.11	6,161,000	3,501,007	56.83	10.29	18.11	X	X	
SC	3,224,000	1,920,969	59.58	3,102,000	1,617,730	52.15	7.43	14.25			
GA	6,302,000	3,924,440	62.27	6,028,000	3,298,790	54.72	7.55	13.79		X	
VA	5,560,000	3,723,260	66.97	5,339,000	3,198,360	59.91	7.06	11.78			
MS	2,151,000	1,289,865	59.97	2,107,000	1,139,826	54.10	5.87	10.85			
AL	3,394,000	2,099,819	61.87	3,343,000	1,883,415	56.34	5.53	9.81			
IN	4,586,000	2,751,054	59.99	4,509,000	2,468,002	54.74	5.25	9.60			
CO	3,219,000	2,401,349	74.60	3,118,000	2,129,630	68.30	6.30	9.22	X	X	
NV	1,642,000	967,848	58.94	1,500,000	829,587	55.31	3.64	6.58	X	X	
MD	4,064,000	2,630,947	64.74	3,906,000	2,384,214	61.04	3.70	6.06		X	
NM	1,346,000	830,158	61.68	1,296,000	756,204	58.35	3.33	5.70	X	X	
DE	630,000	412,398	65.46	603,000	375,190	62.22	3.24	5.21			
AZ	4,117,000	2,293,475	55.71	3,800,000	2,012,585	52.96	2.74	5.18	X	X	
NJ	5,904,000	3,868,237	65.52	5,787,000	3,611,691	62.41	3.11	4.98		X	
RI	790,000	469,767	59.46	771,000	437,134	56.70	2.77	4.88			
MT	731,000	490,109	67.05	703,000	450,434	64.07	2.97	4.64		X	
MO	4,328,000	2,925,205	67.59	4,227,000	2,731,364	64.62	2.97	4.60			
MA	4,625,000	3,080,985	66.62	4,556,000	2,905,360	63.77	2.85	4.46		X	
CA	22,319,000	13,561,900	60.76	21,306,000	12,419,857	58.29	2.47	4.24		X	
TX	14,886,000	8,077,795	54.26	14,189,000	7,410,749	52.23	2.04	3.90	X		
IL	8,540,000	5,523,051	64.67	8,466,000	5,275,415	62.31	2.36	3.79			
TN	4,512,000	2,599,749	57.62	4,378,000	2,437,319	55.67	1.95	3.50	X		
FL	12,923,000	8,390,744	64.93	12,124,000	7,609,810	62.77	2.16	3.44	X	X	
ID	1,024,000	655,032	63.97	967,000	598,376	61.88	2.09	3.37		X	X
PA	9,450,000	5,995,107	63.44	9,318,000	5,765,764	61.88	1.56	2.53			
KS	1,968,000	1,235,872	62.80	1,939,000	1,187,756	61.26	1.54	2.52		X	
CT	2,518,000	1,649,399	65.50	2,466,000	1,578,769	64.02	1.48	2.32			
NE	1,243,000	801,281	64.46	1,233,000	778,186	63.11	1.35	2.14		X	
WA	4,489,000	3,036,878	67.65	4,313,000	2,859,084	66.29	1.36	2.05		X	
NY	12,653,000	7,594,813	60.02	12,563,000	7,391,036	58.83	1.19	2.03			
HI	918,000	453,158	49.36	885,000	429,013	48.48	0.89	1.83		X	
WY	388,000	254,658	65.63	376,000	243,428	64.74	0.89	1.38		X	X
MI	7,490,000	5,001,766	66.78	7,323,000	4,839,252	66.08	0.70	1.05			
IA	2,201,000	1,537,123	69.84	2,175,000	1,506,908	69.28	0.55	0.80	X	X	X
AR	2,065,000	1,086,617	52.62	2,015,000	1,054,945	52.35	0.27	0.51			
ND	485,000	316,621	65.28	481,000	312,833	65.04	0.24	0.38	X	X	
VT	495,000	325,046	65.67	477,000	312,309	65.47	0.19	0.29		X	
OH	8,562,000	5,698,260	66.55	8,458,000	5,627,903	66.54	0.01	0.02		X	
NH	1,016,000	710,970	69.98	968,000	677,662	70.01	-0.03	-0.04			X
KY	3,147,000	1,826,508	58.04	3,085,000	1,795,860	58.21	-0.17	-0.30			
AK	476,000	326,197	68.53	453,000	312,598	69.01	-0.48	-0.69	X	X	X
MN	3,824,000	2,910,369	76.11	3,685,000	2,828,370	76.75	-0.65	-0.84			X
LA	3,338,000	1,960,761	58.74	3,278,000	1,943,106	59.28	-0.54	-0.91			
OK	2,561,000	1,462,661	57.11	2,528,000	1,463,758	57.90	-0.79	-1.36		X	
UT	1,578,000	952,370	60.35	1,511,000	927,844	61.41	-1.05	-1.71		X	
WI	4,183,000	2,983,417	71.32	4,061,000	2,998,007	73.82	-2.50	-3.39		X	X
SD	573,000	381,975	66.66	562,000	388,215	69.08	-2.42	-3.50		X	
OR	2,615,000	1,827,864	69.90	2,528,000	1,836,782	72.66	-2.76	-3.80	X		
ME	1,048,000	731,163	69.77	1,010,000	740,748	73.34	-3.57	-4.87		X	X
WV	1,428,000	713,362	49.96	1,415,000	755,659	53.40	-3.45	-6.46	X		

Total Turnout as a Percentage of VAP - Citizen 2008 vs 2004 - 1988  
 President - General Races

ST	2008 VAP	2008		2004		2000		1996		1992		1988	
		2008 Turnout	% VAP Voted	% VAP Voted	+/-08-04 Points	% VAP Voted	+/-08-00 Points	% VAP Voted	+/-08-96 Points	% VAP Voted	+/-08-92 Points	% VAP Voted	+/-08-88 Points
AL	3,394,000	2,099,819	61.87	56.34	5.53	50.74	11.13	48.34	13.53	55.73	6.14	47.26	14.61
AK	476,000	326,197	68.53	69.01	-0.48	67.19	1.34	59.66	8.87	68.03	0.50	57.18	11.35
AZ	4,117,000	2,293,475	55.71	52.96	2.75	44.57	11.14	45.10	10.61	54.49	1.22	48.42	7.29
AR	2,065,000	1,086,617	52.62	52.35	0.27	47.05	5.57	47.14	5.48	53.74	-1.12	48.75	3.87
CA	22,319,000	13,561,900	60.76	58.29	2.47	54.41	6.35	51.49	9.27	59.59	1.17	55.58	5.18
CO	3,219,000	2,401,349	74.60	68.30	6.30	57.91	16.69	54.13	20.47	62.64	11.96	57.69	16.91
CT	2,518,000	1,649,399	65.50	64.02	1.48	60.61	4.89	57.83	7.67	66.90	-1.40	60.44	5.06
DE	630,000	412,398	65.46	62.22	3.24	57.38	8.08	49.83	15.63	56.81	8.65	51.95	13.51
DC	371,000	265,853	71.66	58.66	13.00	49.48	22.18	43.70	27.96	51.49	20.17	42.39	29.27
FL	12,923,000	8,390,744	64.93	62.77	2.16	53.22	11.71	50.57	14.36	55.09	9.84	48.71	16.22
GA	6,302,000	3,924,454	62.27	54.72	7.55	45.41	16.86	43.01	19.26	47.58	14.69	40.24	22.03
HI	918,000	453,165	49.36	48.48	0.88	43.44	5.92	44.08	5.28	47.74	1.62	47.96	1.40
ID	1,024,000	655,032	63.97	61.88	2.09	55.74	8.23	59.67	4.30	66.14	-2.17	60.68	3.29
IL	8,540,000	5,523,051	64.67	62.31	2.36	56.50	8.17	52.14	12.53	62.32	2.35	57.06	7.61
IN	4,586,000	2,751,054	59.99	54.74	5.25	49.75	10.24	49.76	10.23	55.89	4.10	54.09	5.90
IA	2,201,000	1,537,123	69.84	69.28	0.56	61.27	8.57	58.51	11.33	65.73	4.11	59.96	9.88
KS	1,968,000	1,235,872	62.80	61.26	1.54	56.25	6.55	57.60	5.20	63.87	-1.07	56.14	6.66
KY	3,147,000	1,826,508	58.04	58.21	-0.17	51.25	6.79	47.74	10.30	53.76	4.28	49.22	8.82
LA	3,338,000	1,960,761	58.74	59.28	-0.54	55.06	3.68	57.23	1.51	59.61	-0.87	55.59	3.15
ME	1,048,000	731,163	69.77	73.34	-3.57	67.55	2.22	64.32	5.45	74.10	-4.33	62.86	6.91
MD	4,064,000	2,630,994	64.74	61.04	3.70	54.27	10.47	49.18	15.56	56.55	8.19	50.89	13.85
MA	4,625,000	3,080,985	66.62	63.77	2.85	60.35	6.27	57.51	9.11	62.87	3.75	60.72	5.90
MI	7,490,000	5,001,766	66.78	66.08	0.70	59.36	7.42	55.20	11.58	63.02	3.76	55.29	11.49
MN	3,824,000	2,910,369	76.11	76.75	-0.64	69.18	6.93	64.68	11.43	72.65	3.46	67.53	8.58
MS	2,151,000	1,289,872	59.97	54.10	5.87	48.36	11.61	45.28	14.69	52.59	7.38	51.90	8.07
MO	4,328,000	2,925,205	67.59	64.62	2.97	57.42	10.17	54.10	13.49	62.30	5.29	56.22	11.37
MT	731,000	490,109	67.05	64.07	2.98	61.25	5.80	64.14	2.91	69.36	-2.31	64.38	2.67
NE	1,243,000	801,281	64.46	63.11	1.35	57.09	7.37	56.78	7.68	63.80	0.66	58.38	6.08
NV	1,642,000	967,848	58.94	55.31	3.63	45.48	13.46	39.75	19.19	53.02	5.92	43.70	15.24
NH	1,016,000	710,970	69.98	70.01	-0.03	62.54	7.44	57.18	12.80	64.58	5.40	57.61	12.37
NJ	5,904,000	3,868,237	65.52	62.41	3.11	56.32	9.20	54.93	10.59	60.42	5.10	57.06	8.46
NM	1,346,000	830,158	61.68	58.35	3.33	48.35	13.33	47.73	13.95	53.17	8.51	52.23	9.45
NY	12,653,000	7,594,813	60.02	58.83	1.19	54.69	5.33	50.74	9.28	55.84	4.18	52.66	7.36
NC	6,423,000	4,310,789	67.11	56.83	10.28	49.66	17.45	45.40	21.71	50.73	16.38	44.26	22.85
ND	485,000	316,621	65.28	65.04	0.24	60.56	4.72	56.68	8.60	66.55	-1.27	64.76	0.52
OH	8,562,000	5,698,260	66.55	66.54	0.01	56.40	10.15	55.29	11.26	61.51	5.04	55.69	10.86
OK	2,561,000	1,462,661	57.11	57.90	-0.79	49.55	7.56	49.86	7.25	59.88	-2.77	52.00	5.11
OR	2,615,000	1,827,864	69.90	72.66	-2.76	63.18	6.72	59.98	9.92	68.73	1.17	59.58	10.32
PA	9,450,000	6,013,560	63.64	61.88	1.76	53.60	10.04	49.60	14.04	55.13	8.51	51.00	12.64
RI	790,000	469,767	59.46	56.70	2.76	54.61	4.85	52.60	6.86	61.61	-2.15	56.04	3.42
SC	3,224,000	1,920,969	59.58	52.15	7.43	46.71	12.87	40.99	18.59	45.74	13.84	39.85	19.73
SD	573,000	381,975	66.66	69.08	-2.42	57.82	8.84	61.21	5.45	66.58	0.08	63.62	3.04
TN	4,512,000	2,599,749	57.62	55.67	1.95	49.15	8.47	47.14	10.48	52.77	4.85	45.86	11.76
TX	14,886,000	8,077,795	54.26	52.23	2.03	47.80	6.46	44.36	9.90	52.44	1.82	49.47	4.79
UT	1,578,000	952,370	60.35	61.41	-1.06	53.71	6.64	50.85	9.50	65.03	-4.68	62.45	-2.10
VT	495,000	325,046	65.67	65.47	0.20	64.54	1.13	58.74	6.93	68.81	-3.14	60.38	5.29
VA	5,560,000	3,723,260	66.97	59.91	7.06	53.86	13.11	49.52	17.45	55.16	11.81	49.91	17.06
WA	4,489,000	3,036,878	67.65	66.29	1.36	60.46	7.19	58.01	9.64	63.61	4.04	55.51	12.14
WV	1,428,000	713,362	49.96	53.40	-3.44	46.29	3.67	46.09	3.87	50.42	-0.46	48.36	1.60
WI	4,183,000	2,983,417	71.32	73.82	-2.50	66.31	5.01	57.98	13.34	69.75	1.57	62.46	8.86
WY	388,000	254,658	65.63	64.74	0.89	60.32	5.31	61.32	4.31	61.72	3.91	55.87	9.76
Overall:	208,323,000	131,257,542	63.01	60.59	2.41	54.24	8.77	51.37	11.64	58.32	4.68	53.30	9.71

Democratic Turnout as a Percentage of VAP - Citizen 2008 vs 2004  
Ranked By Percent Point Difference

U.S. House (aggregate) - General Races

ST	2008 VAP	2008 Turnout	2008 — 2004 —		Point Diff /	% Diff
			% VAP Voted	% VAP Voted		
* VT	495,000	248,203	50.14	4.55	45.59 /	1,001.98
MA	4,625,000	2,245,778	48.56	26.95	21.61 /	80.19
DC	371,000	228,376	61.56	40.01	21.55 /	53.86
MS	2,151,000	731,805	34.02	15.88	18.14 /	114.23
AK	476,000	142,560	29.95	14.81	15.14 /	102.23
VA	5,560,000	1,852,690	33.32	19.16	14.16 /	73.90
SC	3,224,000	919,529	28.52	15.68	12.84 /	81.89
NH	1,016,000	364,767	35.90	25.05	10.85 /	43.31
GA	6,302,000	1,858,123	29.48	18.93	10.55 /	55.73
AZ	4,117,000	1,055,305	25.63	15.72	9.91 /	63.04
NC	6,423,000	2,293,971	35.71	27.10	8.61 /	31.77
IA	2,201,000	819,289	37.22	28.72	8.50 /	29.60
FL	12,923,000	3,434,831	26.58	18.25	8.33 /	45.64
IN	4,586,000	1,388,963	30.29	22.16	8.13 /	36.69
SD	573,000	256,041	44.68	36.98	7.70 /	20.82
ID	1,024,000	259,776	25.37	17.69	7.68 /	43.41
PA	9,450,000	3,209,168	33.96	26.60	7.36 /	27.67
CO	3,219,000	1,259,714	39.13	31.92	7.21 /	22.59
DE	630,000	146,433	23.24	17.53	5.71 /	32.57
MD	4,064,000	1,593,735	39.22	33.56	5.66 /	16.87
IL	8,540,000	3,171,615	37.14	31.59	5.55 /	17.57
NV	1,642,000	455,963	27.77	22.26	5.51 /	24.75
HI	918,000	319,660	34.82	29.59	5.23 /	17.67
KY	3,147,000	761,209	24.19	19.52	4.67 /	23.92
CA	22,319,000	7,556,391	33.86	29.21	4.65 /	15.92
NY	12,653,000	4,296,277	33.95	29.31	4.64 /	15.83
MO	4,328,000	1,413,016	32.65	28.22	4.43 /	15.70
CT	2,518,000	911,009	36.18	31.86	4.32 /	13.56
OK	2,561,000	503,614	19.66	15.39	4.27 /	27.75
NM	1,346,000	457,135	33.96	29.70	4.26 /	14.34
MN	3,824,000	1,612,480	42.17	37.98	4.19 /	11.03
KS	1,968,000	470,031	23.88	19.96	3.92 /	19.64
MI	7,490,000	2,516,640	33.60	30.62	2.98 /	9.73
TN	4,512,000	1,193,758	26.46	23.57	2.89 /	12.26
NJ	5,904,000	1,911,827	32.38	29.75	2.63 /	8.84
NE	1,243,000	264,885	21.31	18.71	2.60 /	13.90
RI	790,000	303,670	38.44	36.23	2.21 /	6.10
OR	2,615,000	1,036,171	39.62	37.64	1.98 /	5.26
OH	8,562,000	2,746,283	32.08	30.23	1.85 /	6.12
ND	485,000	194,577	40.12	38.49	1.63 /	4.23
WA	4,489,000	1,725,316	38.43	37.30	1.13 /	3.03
TX	14,886,000	2,972,888	19.97	18.92	1.05 /	5.55
UT	1,578,000	393,761	24.95	23.93	1.02 /	4.26
WY	388,000	106,758	27.51	26.59	0.92 /	3.46
WV	1,428,000	432,722	30.30	29.64	0.66 /	2.23
MT	731,000	155,930	21.33	20.71	0.62 /	2.99
LA	3,338,000	636,802	19.08	18.58	0.50 /	2.69
AL	3,394,000	718,367	21.17	21.19	-0.02 /	-0.09
ME	1,048,000	431,903	41.21	41.42	-0.21 /	-0.51
WI	4,183,000	1,383,536	33.08	33.70	-0.62 /	-1.84
AR	2,065,000	415,481	20.12	24.00	-3.88 /	-16.17

\* In 2004, incumbent Congressman Bernard Sanders ran as an independent and won re-election handily. Most Democrats voted for him on that line.

Republican Turnout as a Percentage of VAP - Citizen 2008 vs 2004  
 Ranked By Percent Point Difference  
 U.S. House (aggregate) - General Races

ST	2008 VAP	2008		2004		— -2008 - 2004 —	
		Turnout	% VAP Voted	% VAP Voted	Point Diff /	% Diff	
FL	12,923,000	3,792,167	29.34	27.38	1.96 /	7.16	
MT	731,000	308,470	42.20	40.69	1.51 /	3.71	
NC	6,423,000	1,901,517	29.60	28.29	1.31 /	4.63	
WA	4,489,000	1,189,147	26.49	25.40	1.09 /	4.29	
AL	3,394,000	1,120,903	33.03	32.30	0.73 /	2.26	
RI	790,000	118,773	15.03	14.65	0.38 /	2.59	
TX	14,886,000	4,208,586	28.27	28.28	-0.01 /	-0.04	
SC	3,224,000	939,703	29.15	29.44	-0.29 /	-0.99	
NE	1,243,000	510,513	41.07	41.78	-0.71 /	-1.70	
PA	9,450,000	2,520,805	26.68	27.53	-0.85 /	-3.09	
CO	3,219,000	990,831	30.78	31.81	-1.03 /	-3.24	
WY	388,000	131,244	33.83	35.13	-1.30 /	-3.70	
NJ	5,904,000	1,461,818	24.76	26.18	-1.42 /	-5.42	
ME	1,048,000	278,198	26.55	28.04	-1.49 /	-5.31	
ND	485,000	119,388	24.62	26.13	-1.51 /	-5.78	
GA	6,302,000	1,796,566	28.51	30.19	-1.68 /	-5.56	
KS	1,968,000	690,005	35.06	37.33	-2.27 /	-6.08	
UT	1,578,000	503,917	31.93	34.44	-2.51 /	-7.29	
MA	4,625,000	318,561	6.89	9.46	-2.57 /	-27.17	
KY	3,147,000	955,182	30.35	32.98	-2.63 /	-7.97	
OK	2,561,000	802,530	31.34	34.61	-3.27 /	-9.45	
DE	630,000	235,435	37.37	40.79	-3.42 /	-8.38	
NY	12,653,000	2,031,564	16.06	19.48	-3.42 /	-17.56	
MO	4,328,000	1,313,018	30.34	33.82	-3.48 /	-10.29	
WI	4,183,000	1,274,987	30.48	34.00	-3.52 /	-10.35	
OH	8,562,000	2,488,784	29.07	32.75	-3.68 /	-11.24	
NM	1,346,000	321,083	23.85	27.64	-3.79 /	-13.71	
IL	8,540,000	1,961,425	22.97	26.82	-3.85 /	-14.35	
CA	22,319,000	4,381,391	19.63	23.61	-3.98 /	-16.86	
MI	7,490,000	2,036,470	27.19	31.25	-4.06 /	-12.99	
MD	4,064,000	762,428	18.76	22.95	-4.19 /	-18.26	
ID	1,024,000	377,464	36.86	41.51	-4.65 /	-11.20	
NV	1,642,000	382,802	23.31	28.05	-4.74 /	-16.90	
AZ	4,117,000	1,021,798	24.82	29.67	-4.85 /	-16.35	
TN	4,512,000	976,682	21.65	26.51	-4.86 /	-18.33	
IN	4,586,000	1,169,351	25.50	30.64	-5.14 /	-16.78	
VA	5,560,000	1,590,571	28.61	34.04	-5.43 /	-15.95	
CT	2,518,000	504,804	20.05	25.54	-5.49 /	-21.50	
MN	3,824,000	1,069,015	27.96	33.54	-5.58 /	-16.64	
WV	1,428,000	213,339	14.94	21.42	-6.48 /	-30.25	
MS	2,151,000	527,330	24.52	31.26	-6.74 /	-21.56	
AR	2,065,000	215,196	10.42	17.77	-7.35 /	-41.36	
HI	918,000	82,465	8.98	16.77	-7.79 /	-46.45	
IA	2,201,000	638,412	29.01	37.82	-8.81 /	-23.29	
SD	573,000	122,966	21.46	31.82	-10.36 /	-32.56	
LA	3,338,000	594,090	17.80	28.58	-10.78 /	-37.72	
NH	1,016,000	294,560	28.99	40.91	-11.92 /	-29.14	
OR	2,615,000	435,920	16.67	30.12	-13.45 /	-44.65	
AK	476,000	158,939	33.39	47.07	-13.68 /	-29.06	



**8. Overall Registration:** The chart below represents CSAE’s best estimate of the number and percentage of eligible citizens who were registered this year and in past years. (See note 3.)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Estimated Number and Percent Registered</b>	
2008	154,576,000	74.2
2004	143,000,000	71.0
2000	133,780,000	68.0
1996	132,000,000	70.0
1992	123,649,000	68.4
1988	116,820,000	67.0
1984	114,750,000	68.8
1980	103,500,000	65.9
1976	95,850,000	66.0
1972	92,700,000	68.7
1968	81,000,000	70.3
1964	78,300,000	72.1
1960	74,250,000	70.9

**9. Adjusted Registration:**

ADJUSTED REGISTRATION  
(Gross Registration Minus Inactive Lists Comparison 2008 -- 2004)

State	2008 Nov Citizen VAP	2008 Gross Reg.	2008 Gross Reg. % VAP	2004 Gross Reg. % VAP	% Pt Diff Gross Reg. 2008- 2004	2008 Inactive Registration	2008 Adjusted Registration	2008 Adjusted % VAP	2004 Adjusted % VAP	% Pt Diff Adj Registration 2008-2004
AL	3,394,000	3,010,638	88.70%	85.38%	3.33	169443	2,841,195	83.71%	78.30%	5.42
AZ	4,117,000	3,441,141	83.58%	76.21%	7.37	453,690	2,987,451	72.56%	69.53%	3.03
AR	2,065,000	1,684,240	81.56%	84.36%	-2.80	319,499	1,364,741	66.09%	74.23%	-8.14
CO	3,219,000	3,203,583	99.52%	99.49%	0.04	621,394	2,582,189	80.22%	77.14%	3.07
GA	6,302,000	5,755,750	91.33%	85.14%	6.20	570,838	5,184,912	82.27%	73.47%	8.80
IL	8,540,000	8,825,639	103.34%	103.76%	-0.42	1,125,384	7,700,255	90.17%	85.00%	5.17
NY	12,653,000	12,031,312	95.09%	94.22%	0.86	1,214,812	10,816,500	85.49%	84.66%	0.83
SD	573,000	574,632	100.28%	98.30%	1.99	45,170	527,830	92.12%	89.37%	2.75
TN	4,512,000	3,977,586	88.16%	85.62%	2.54	395,845	3,581,741	79.38%	76.57%	2.81
TX	14,886,000	13,575,062	91.19%	92.31%	-1.12	1,898,044	11,677,018	78.44%	77.53%	0.91
UT*	1,578,000	1,584,669	100.42%	100.78%	-0.36	266,575	1,318,094	83.53%	84.64%	-1.11

VA	5,560,000	5,034,660	90.55%	84.58%	5.97	121,689	4,912,971	88.36%	78.28%	10.08
WA	4,489,000	3,629,898	80.86%	78.15%	2.71	401,651	3,228,247	71.91%	67.72%	4.19
Total	58,445,000	54,653,614	93.51%	92.48%	1.03	6,911,251	47,740,731	81.68%	79.35%	2.33

\*Unofficial

**10. Partisan Registration Trend:** Estimated partisan registration based on registration figures available at the time of this release. Previous years are based on final and official registration statistics from all states except those that don't report registration, Mississippi, North Dakota and Wisconsin. The other category includes those registered for parties other than the Democratic and Republican parties and those who register without affiliation or as independents. These percentages are not adjusted for the excesses in registration lists, but are reliable for ascertaining partisan trends.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Democratic</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Other</b>
2008	38.7	28.9	22.7
2004	36.5	27.9	21.7
2000	36.3	27.7	19.6
1996	35.8	26.9	15.8
1992	36.7	25.5	12.8
1988	37.7	25.7	10.5
1984	40.0	23.9	10.1
1980	40.0	22.4	8.2
1976	41.4	21.6	6.8
1972	45.0	25.0	4.8
1968	45.0	25.6	3.2
1964	48.5	223.7	1.6
1960	48.4	27.3	1.6

## NOTES

**1. What is Turnout:** Turnout should be a simple calculation in which the numerator is the number of votes cast and the denominator is the number of citizens eligible to vote. But because of various anomalies in election statistics, some of which are outlined in detail below, this calculation is more complicated. By common usage, the numerator in every Presidential election year is the vote for President (even though that tally is usually about one percentage point lower than the actual number of citizens who go to the polls. It is lower because many states, although an ever-diminishing number, do not keep records of all those who go to the polls, the total ballots cast). In mid-term elections, the numerator is the total of votes for the statewide race in each state which draws the highest number of votes and the aggregate total of votes for U.S. House of Representatives in those states which do not have statewide races. (This total tends to be between 1 and 1.5 percentage points lower than the actual total ballots cast but is used for the same reasons – that many states do not compile total ballots cast figures.)

Turnout is **NOT** the percentage of those registered who voted. There are three basic reasons for this: a. Using registration as a denominator does not account for the whole of the electorate, including those who are not registered. Thus, it gives a false picture of true citizen engagement. b. Changes in registration law can dramatically affect the figures. If the nation adopts, as it did, a registration law that provides for national mail registration, registration at motor vehicle bureaus and at social service agencies, registration will go up but turnout of those registered will decline artificially by a greater amount than it does when using the entire eligible electorate as a denominator. c. Registration figures are subject to the fluctuations of election administration. If a state conducts a thorough purge of its registration lists close to election, its registration figures will be lower and thus its percentage of registered voting will be higher. But if registration lists are not so purged, as they are not in many states, the figures for registration will be higher and the turnout based on these inflated registration figures will be lower. Consider how distorted a turnout percentage using registration as a base would be in a state such as Alaska, which because of lack of regular list cleaning and potential flaws with the Census Bureau's estimates of the state's eligible population, registration figures are regularly in excess of 100 percent of the eligible vote.

**2. The Eligible Vote – The Denominator for Determining Turnout:** The eligible vote in this report is the number of people residing in the United States who are 18 years of age or over minus the number of non-citizens residing in the United States who are 18 years of age and over as of November 1. It is an interpolated figure from the 2000 Census, based on the methodology outlined below.

For years, CSAE and every other reputable organization working in this field had used the Census Bureau's estimates of November age-eligible population (VAP) to determine turnout. That figure came under legitimate criticism because it included non-citizens; convicted felons (in most states) and, in some states, ex-felons; and people deemed mentally incompetent in institutions who could not vote and did not include citizens residing in other countries, citizens naturalized during the election year and the citizen portion of the Census' undercount, all of whom could vote but were not part of the VAP estimate. The Census Bureau has ceased providing its VAP estimates.

For years also, Dr. Walter Dean Burnham, professor emeritus at the University of Texas at Austin, has been producing a denominator of age-eligible citizens (age-eligible population minus age-eligible non-citizens, interpolated by state and nation from and between decennial Censuses). After some study of this matter, CSAE has come to believe that this denominator is the best for determining turnout, subject to the caveat below. It has come to this belief because of two factors:

1. Available data. One does not determine turnout simply for any given year but also as an historical comparison with previous years. Data for several of the issues involving the inadequacy of the age-eligible population (VAP) figures are either simply not available, not available in a timely manner, not available over a given period of history or not allocatable to the states. Data on convicted and incarcerated felons is only available for a fairly recent time period. State laws on whether convicted felons and ex-felons can vote are changing and have changed over time. There is no accurate set of figures on those deemed mentally incompetent. The number of American citizens residing abroad is ascertainable but the number of age-eligible has to be estimated and there are no figures that allow the allocation of these citizens by state. Naturalization figures come in too late, often a year or two after the election year, to be usable in any current population accounting. And while any given Census undercount can be allocated by state, one can only estimate how much of that undercount is of citizens as opposed to non-citizens.

2. The balance of the figures: In studying this statistical problem, CSAE has found that the most important issue is that of non-citizens. If one wants to have a relatively accurate picture of turnout, one must eliminate the non-citizens from the age-eligible population. On the other hand, the other adjustments to the denominator would not substantially differ from the denominator of citizen age-eligible population. In pursuing its inquiry into this topic, CSAE found that the factors which would lower the denominator – felons, ex-felons and people deemed mentally incompetent who can't vote – are roughly equal to two of the factors which would increase the denominator – citizens living in other countries and naturalization who could vote. If one added a ballpark figure for the number of citizens in the undercount who could vote, the factors in those years of an undercount, other than non-citizens, which would increase the denominator exceeds those which would reduce it.

The one caveat in adopting the Burnham methodology lock, stock and barrel is that Burnham interpolates from Census to Census. These Censuses are accurate as of April 1 of each decennial year for all of the past 50 years. (In prior years, Census results captured the population as of varying months.) In order to have more accurate figures for November, CSAE has, using the same methodology, projected citizen population to November. Thus, CSAE used for reports on primaries the April figure for age-eligible citizen population, but is using the November figure for this report and any others relating to the general election.

## Methodology

Since the decennial census population figures are accurate as of April 1 in each census year, the VAP Burnham dataset calculates the difference in the required census figures between a base census year and the same figures as reported in the following census. To estimate the voting age population for the years between the censuses, the difference between them is simply multiplied by the number of months that have passed beyond April 1 of the base year and then added to the base year figure. For example, to arrive at the April 1, 1992 voting age population, the difference between the April 1, 1990 census population and the April 1, 2000 census population is multiplied by 24/120ths (for the 24 out of 120 months between the census counts) and added to the April 1, 1990 figure.

The process for arriving at the CSAE November Eligible figures is the same, except that the data is projected forward to November instead of April. To accomplish this, the multiplier is simply changed to the number of months that have passed since April of the base census year. For instance, to calculate the November 1996 voting age population, the difference between April 1, 1990 and April 1, 2000 is multiplied by 79/120ths and added to the April 1, 1990 count. The same interpolation process is applied to the decennial census counts of non-citizens of voting age in each state. Once estimates of the total voting age population and the non-citizen voting age population for each state have been calculated, the non-citizen figure is simply subtracted from the total to arrive at the appropriate figure.

Since the last decennial census occurred in 2000, it is necessary to project the figures forward to arrive at the voting age population for 2002 and 2004. To accomplish this, the difference between the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses is used to establish a rate of growth. This rate of growth is then used to project forward based on the number of months passed since April 1990 out of the 120 months between the censuses. For instance, to obtain the voting age population for April 2004, the difference between April 1, 1990 and April 1, 2000 is multiplied by 168/120 and added to the April 1, 1990 total.

**3. Registration:** The registration figures for the individual states in the back of this report are final, official, certified by the chief election officer of each state and totally unreliable. At least four states have reported registration levels in excess of their eligible population. Several more are close. (Note there are no figures for North Dakota which has no registration and Mississippi and Wisconsin whose statewide figures always come late and the figures for Iowa and Maine, both election day registration states, are almost final and unofficial).

In any given election the official registration figures provided by the states are inaccurate because they contain the names of people who have either died or moved but have not been removed from the registration rolls. The degree of inaccuracy in any given state would pend both on when they conducted a list cleaning and how thorough such a list cleaning was. A state which conducted a thorough list cleaning close to an election would likely have fewer names that were not eligible. Prior to the enactment of the National Voter Registration Act (the so-called motor-voter law), it was at least possible to make a national estimate of

registration which would be, on the average, ten percent lower than the official figures provided by the states.

But the NVRA mandated that states must keep even those who have moved or died on their registration rolls for at least two federal elections, even if the people whose names have remained on the rolls have been determined to have moved or died. And, this, in turn, accounts for the substantially higher official figures than prior to the NVRA's implementation.

While states cannot remove names, they can transfer those for whom they have evidence have died or moved to an inactive list, which they are required by the NVRA to report each biennium by March of the year following a national election. A truer picture can be gleaned from the chart above which compares registration rates based on official figures and rates based on official figures minus those kept on inactive lists. The charts on registration and partisan registration in the summary charts below represent the Committee's best estimate of what actual registration is likely to be, based on the states which have provided final and official registration figures at the time of this report. (Three additional considerations when looking at these statistics: 1. Only 28 states and the District of Columbia have partisan registration and the partisan registration percentages estimated below are based on the raw registration figures. There are no similar corrective inactive lists for partisan registrants and it is likely that were there, the estimates for partisan registration percentages below would be smaller in each category. 2. The percentages of Democratic, Republican and Other registrations do not add up to 100 percent. The balance is unregistered. 3. The partisan percentages are taken from raw official data and thus do not yield the same totals as do the overall percentages).

**4. The Votes:** The vote totals for 2004 in this report are final and official and certified by the chief election officer in each state and the District of Columbia. All figures for previous years are final, official, certified by the chief election officer in each state and checked against other historical records. The national turnout figure is an aggregate of the state presidential vote totals. (Note: There may be a slight revision of the Minnesota Senate race turnout based on the ongoing recount.)

The Presidential vote upon which all historic turnout records are based somewhat understates actual turnout. In all years, there are citizens who cast ballots and do not vote for President or cast invalid ballots. Many states keep track of total ballots cast. Some do not. CSAE keeps a tally of the states that do and there is a chart in the back of this report which shows the difference between total ballots cast and vote for president. Because going back in time there is a diminishing number of states which keep such records, CSAE and everyone else seriously studying turnout uses the presidential vote for comparison purposes.

There were 30 uncontested races for U.S. House of Representative and some others in which the only competition was from minor parties. If history is any guide, some states will not count the votes in these races, and thus the figures in this report for votes for House of Representatives are likely to be somewhat understated. Five states – Idaho, Maine, Nebraska, South Dakota and Washington – only counted votes for major party candidates.



**5. Analysis:** CSAE's analysis of partisan turnout trends is based on votes for U.S. House of Representatives, believing that it is less subject to the fluctuations in intensity of motivation reflected in the presidential vote

Where states have two races for a particular office (e.g. Mississippi's two U.S. Senate races), CSAE uses the race with the highest number of total ballots cast. In its analysis of the total highest vote for each state, CSAE also uses the race with the highest number of ballots cast.

In CSAE's regional analysis, Texas is included as both a Southern and Southwestern state.

**6. Acknowledgments:** Primary research for this report was done by Matthew Mulling, CSAE research associate, who, along with former research associate Mark P. Harvey, is responsible for helping to create the denominator database for the analysis of November turnout. Organizing the analysis for this report was made profoundly easier by a custom database program developed by Samuel Schreiber, CSAE research associate emeritus. CSAE would also like to express its profound gratitude to Dr. Walter Dean Burnham, professor emeritus at the University of Texas at Austin, for sharing his database, helping to devise CSAE's new November denominator for the analysis of registration and turnout and for his continuing help to CSAE's work. The Committee is also grateful to all the state election officials for graciously yielding their registration and voting figures after an unconscionable amount of hounding by CSAE's staff. CSAE would also like to acknowledge the contributions of David Bositis of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies and Peter Levine of C.I.R.C.L.E at Tufts for their insights on African-American and youth turnout respectively. Their reports are on their websites.

**7. Culpability:** The analysis contained in this report has been done by Curtis Gans, CSAE's director, who is solely responsible for any and all errors contained within.