Voter Registration and Participation

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The 2014 Election

Participation in the 2014 Elections was below all expectations

- 2014 Primary
  - :: 25% Total Turnout – Gov Primary usually ~ 35%

- 2014 General
  - :: 42% Total Turnout – Gov General usually ~ 52%
Historic Turnout :: 2002 – 2014 Primaries and Generals

- 2002 PRIMARY: 46%
- 2006 PRIMARY: 35%
- 2010 PRIMARY: 35%
- 2014 PRIMARY: 26%
- 2004 PRIMARY: 62%
- 2008 PRES PRI: 30%
- 2008 PRIMARY: 32%
- 2012 PRIMARY: 51%
- 2002 GENERAL: 56%
- 2006 GENERAL: 59%
- 2010 GENERAL: 43%
- 2014 GENERAL: 75%
- 2004 GENERAL: 77%
- 2008 GENERAL: 77%
- 2012 GENERAL: 71%
Age as a key factor in voting

Who votes is very strongly associated with age

- Looking at Registered Voters there is a strong historic pattern
- High and low turnout elections generally follow same patterns
- 2014 showed strong drop for everyone under 60.
Turnout 2002 – 2014 By Age :: Gubernatorial Primary vs General
Partisanship

The Independent voter has been fastest growing, but...

◦ These are not “middle of the road” voters – the ones that voter are ideological and likely 2/3 left-leaning

◦ Independent Voters and younger, more Latino, and much lower turnout

◦ Lack of turnout means they are not driving elections.
2004-2012 Presidential Years Partisan Registration and Turnout

DEM REGISTRATION

REPUBLICAN REGISTRATION

NONPARTISAN REG

48%
43%
38%
33%
28%
23%
18%
13%
8%
3%

2002 PRIMARY
2002 GENERAL
2004 PRIMARY
2004 GENERAL
2006 PRIMARY
2006 GENERAL
2008 PRES
2008 GENERAL
2008 PRI
2008 GENERAL
2010 PRIMARY
2010 GENERAL
2012 PRIMARY
2012 GENERAL
2014 PRIMARY
2014 GENERAL

43% 45% 43% 43% 43% 43% 43% 44% 44% 45% 44% 44% 44% 43% 43%
36% 35% 36% 35% 34% 34% 34% 33% 31% 31% 31% 31% 30% 29% 28%
21% 20% 21% 22% 23% 23% 23% 23% 24% 25% 25% 25% 26% 27% 28% 28%
Partisanship

The Independent voter has been fastest growing, but...

- The More things change, the more they stay the same?

  - 2002 P    46% DEM  40% REP   15% Ind
  - 2014 P    45% DEM  36% REP   19% Ind
  - 2002 G    46% DEM  40% REP   15% Ind
  - 2014 G    44% DEM  34% REP   22% Ind
Ethnicity and voting

Hard to overstate the power of ethnicity in voting behavior

- Dramatic differences between the population as a whole and those who vote – making for an Electorate that does not look like California.

- Latinos have only twice, in thousands of elections studied, significantly outpaced their rate of registration.
Absentee Voting Trends

Rates of Permanent Absentee Status have been increasing.

- 2002
  - 9% of Voters are PAV
  - 15% of Votes cast are By Mail

- 2014
  - 50% of Voters are PAV
  - 62% of Votes cast are By Mail
Absentee Voting Trends

Rates of Permanent Absentee Growth has been uneven.

- LA County
  - 31% of Voters are PAV // 44% of Votes cast are By Mail

- SF Bay
  - 60% of Voters are PAV // 69% of Votes cast are By Mail
Absentee Voting Trends

Rates of Permanent Absentee Growth has been uneven.

- Divergence in PAV use by Ethnicity
  - African American 30%
  - Latino 40%
  - Asian 55%
  - White 52%
Absentee Voting Trends

Rates of Permanent Absentee Growth has been uneven.

- New Registrants are becoming more PAV
  - 49% of Traditional paper registration forms
  - 60% of Motor Voter paper forms
  - 66% of Online Voter Registrations
Absenteec Voting Trends

Rates of Permanent Absentee Growth has been uneven.

• Age a significant factor, but Closing

  :: 2002: 25% of Age 60+ Ballots / 8% of Age 18-28

  :: 2014: 68% of Age 60+ Ballots / 60% of Age 18-28
2002 – 2014 :: PAV Rate and Share Absentee Vote AGE 60+

TURNOUT Share PAV

REG Share PAV
2002 – 2014 :: PAV Rate and Share Absentee Vote AGE 45-59

TURNOUT Share PAV | REG Share PAV
Absentee Voting Trends

Rates of Permanent Absentee Growth has been uneven.

:: Age 60 + reached 50% PAV in 2008 General
:: 45-50 reached 50% + PAV in 2010 General
:: 29-44 reached 50% + PAV in 2014 Primary
:: Will 18-29 reach 50% PAV by 2016 General?
Absentee Voting Trends

Does PAV Matter?

:: Challenges the concept of “Election Day”
:: Requires new campaign/outreach strategies
:: Delays calling an election result
:: But does it impact turnout?
Absentee Voting Trends

Does PAV Matter?

:: Is the impact just “selection bias”

:: Are the only people benefiting from PAV the stable homeowners, who know where they key their stamps?

:: What about Low Income or Immigrant communities?