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Moderate Registration Increase Propels New Record
Democrats and Unaffiliated Gain; Republicans Lose

EDITORS, NEWSPERSONS AND READERS: PLEASE READ NOTE 3. IT EXPLAINS WHY THE FIGURES IN THIS RELEASE ARE HEADED BY THE WORD "ESTIMATED," AND WHY INCREASES AND DECREASES IN REGISTRATION FOR INDIVIDUAL STATES ARE NOT QUANTIFIED BEYOND THE WORDS "LARGE" AND "SMALL" IT IS HOPED THAT AFTER THIRTY-TWO AND A HALF YEARS OF DOING THIS, THESE ESTIMATES MIGHT BE CONSIDERED RELIABLE. THIS REPORT IS AVAILABLE IN A DOWNLOADABLE COPY AT http://www.american.edu/media/electionexperts.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 2, 2008)—Registration for the 2008 general election increased by a moderate and estimated 2.5 percentage points but still reached its highest level at least since women were given the vote in 1920.

According to a report released today by American University's Center for the Study of the American Electorate (CSAE), when all the registration figures are final and official, an estimated 153,100,000 eligible citizens will have registered or 73.5 percent of the eligible population, more than the previous high of 72.1 established in 1964.

Based on final and official registration figures from 21 states and nearly final but unofficial figures from 11 more, registration, when all states are counted, will have increased by an estimated 5 million more American citizens than would have registered had registration rates stayed the same as they were in 2004. This marks the second straight presidential election in which there was a significant increase in registration. In 2004, registration increased by an even greater three percentage points.

"And this, in turn, could lead to a turnout of as many as 135 million or 64.8 percent of eligible citizens the highest since 1960 when 67 percent of eligibles voted – the high point since women were given the right to vote in 1920," said Curtis Gans, CSAE's director. (The 67 percent is an estimate, factoring in African-American citizens who were counted as eligible but denied the vote throughout the South.)

Based on the 19 states (of 28 states and the District of Columbia which have partisan registration) and when final figures are available from all states that report registration, Democratic registration will have increased by an estimated 1.4 percentage points or by 2,916,000; Republican registration will have declined by 1,458,000; and registration for citizens affiliated with neither major party will

have increased by 607,000. (Also when final figures are in, there may be some variance with these estimated numbers but the pattern will hold.)

This marked the third straight presidential election of Democratic registration increase (but the only significant one) after nearly four decades of decrease from a high of 49.4 percent of eligible citizens in 1964 to a nadir of 35.9 percent in 1996.

This year marked the 12th successive election where the percentage of those registering for something other than the major parties (for other parties or as independents) increased from a low of 1.6 percent of eligible citizens in 1960 to 22.0 percent now.

The decrease in GOP registration was small and its estimated level not very different from the last two elections when it hovered around 28 percent of eligibles. The fact that GOP registration declined in this year of intense citizen interest in the election is significant.

Democratic registration increased by the largest amount in the battleground states of Nevada, Pennsylvania, Colorado and the new battleground state of Arizona. It also increased significantly in the non-battleground states of New Jersey and Maryland.

Of concern for the GOP, Republican registration decreased in the battleground states of Colorado, Florida, and Pennsylvania. But they did record gains in Nevada.

Non-major party registration increased in 16 of the 19 states that reported their registration as of this release, losing ground only in New Jersey.

ANALYSIS

So what does this and other factors mean in terms of Tuesday turnout and result?

1. Registration and Turnout: Higher registration does not necessarily mean higher turnout. After the passage of the National Voter Registration Act (the so-called Motor Voter Act), registration rose in the two elections (1996 and 1998) after it went into operation but turnout went down in both of those elections. Registration went down in the next two elections (2000 and 2002) and turnout went up. There is reason to believe, however, that increased registration this year will be one, but only one, of the factors that propel turnout upwards. And the fact that Democratic registration increased while Republican registration declined provides a greater pool of registrants for the Democrats to mobilize. For this and other reasons, outlined below, turnout will be high, likely the highest since 1960, which, in turn, was the highest since women were given the right to vote in the 1920 election. And, also for reasons outlined below, the Democrats stand to be the beneficiary of that turnout increase.

2. Why will turnout be very high? The biggest single reason is the condition of the nation and the deep discontent, fear, and, at least in some cases, anger of the citizenry. Since 1960, when American turnout reached its apex, there have been three elections where turnout substantially increased—1982, 1992 and 2004. In 1982 the nation was just emerging from a sever recession coupled with high inflation. There was higher turnout in the 1992 election because of three factors—President George H.W. Bush reneging on his promise "Read my lips, no new taxes," the perception that the nation was in recession even though it was coming out of one, and the unusual third candidacy of Ross Perot. In 2004, the nation was deeply polarized by the George W. Bush presidency and the decision to wage war in Iraq, which massively added to the division in the nation. This year, the nation is substantially more emotionally concerned than any of these elections—nearly 90 percent see the nation on the wrong track (a figure probably only previously achieved in 1932), more than 70 percent disapprove of the president and his performance, there is a shared feeling that the nation is in a recession and that economic conditions will get worse, almost everyone has taken a major hit to their savings and their assets, and many are fearful for their jobs and livelihood. These are some of the reasons that an extraordinarily high percentage of citizens are paying attention to the election, that there has been record viewership for two of the debates, high viewership for the others, and extraordinarily high viewership for Barack Obama's half-hour infomercial. Beyond conditions, there are other things at play: the Obama organization at the grassroots level is devastatingly organized and effective; the African-American community will certainly vote in record numbers, the rate of voting of the educated and being educated 18 to 24-year-olds may or may not increase substantially from the 55-60 percent of their number who voted in 2004, but they are deeply motivated by the Obama candidacy and are being organized in more states which is likely to produce larger numbers, if not percentages, and there is a lurking iceberg of indeterminate size of people who will vote against Obama because of his race.

3. What did early voting tell us? It did not tell us that early voting and no excuse absentee balloting will enhance turnout. It is likely that turnout increases in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, none of which have either early voting or no excuse absentee balloting, will be equal or exceed most of the convenience voting states. The most important thing that was learned is that citizens standing in long early voting lines were willing to wait up to ten hours to be sure that they voted and that their ballot would be counted. It says a lot about the

intensity of feeling about this election. And because where there was partisan registration, early voting and election officials who tallied the party affiliation of early voters, the nation found out that by at least a 60-40 margin the early and line-suffering voters were Democrats. This, in turn, says something about where the intensity is located.

4. Mobilization efforts: There have been many studies, most notably a recent report by Yale professor Don Green and some colleagues, which have shown that in-person mobilization can enhance turnout. But the effectiveness of, and partisan benefit from, mobilization resides in the emotional playing field for that mobilization. In 2004, in the battleground states and elsewhere, both parties had very strong mobilization efforts, but by the time the election rolled around, supporters of John Kerry were lukewarm about their candidate and engage in mobilization more to defeat President Bush rather than elect Kerry. On the other side, supporters of Bush were much more affirmatively enthusiastic about his re-election and guess who won the ground game? The same thing occurred in both 1988 and 1992 for George the First and for Clinton-Gore-Perot, at the time. This time the strong affirmative feelings are in the Obama camp and, if history is any guide, his mobilization efforts will produce substantially more voters.

5. Back to the original question—what does this mean for turnout and result? It means that turnout will be in the range of 132-135 million and be the highest since 1960. It will not exceed 1960 because that would take 140 million voters, which would be an 18 million increase over the number who cast ballots in 2004. That isn't likely to happen. Why? Because there will be some from the rightward end of the Republican Party who have never seen McCain as one of their own and will sit out. There will be some from the middle-left of the GOP who think the decision to nominate Gov. Palin was irresponsible and who feel that McCain's bellicosity with respect to foreign affairs in particular but also in his political dealing are dangerous but can't vote for a Democrat. There will be some in what has been the group du jour, the white working class males who once were Reagan Democrats because of cultural issues but who are now much more deeply concerned about the type of economic issues which made them Democrats in the first place, who can't vote for continuity but aren't sold on Obama as a potential national leader for a variety of reasons not all having to do with race. These potential political drop-offs and the long-term condition of demobilized electorate will limit the increase in turnout to a probably cap of only 13 million (13 million!!!) over 2004. There has never been an election, except for 1932, in this type of climate, but in that election and every subsequent election of deep discontent, the party in the White House has suffered major losses. With deeper discontent than at any time since 1932, with strong affirmative feelings about Obama from his supporters, with the nomination of Gov. Palin, and with the perceived ugliness of the McCain campaign—Obama should win by a landslide and carry with him major Democratic gains on every level of government.

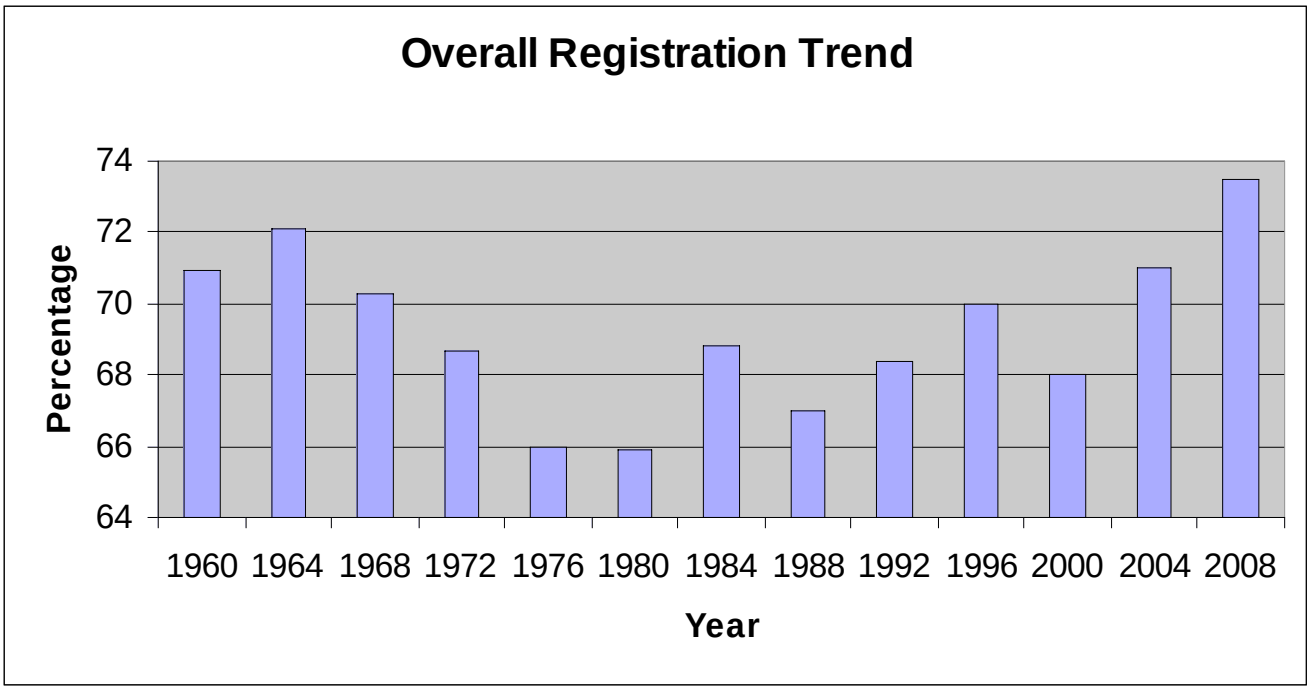
Two final notes: one trivial, one deadly serious.

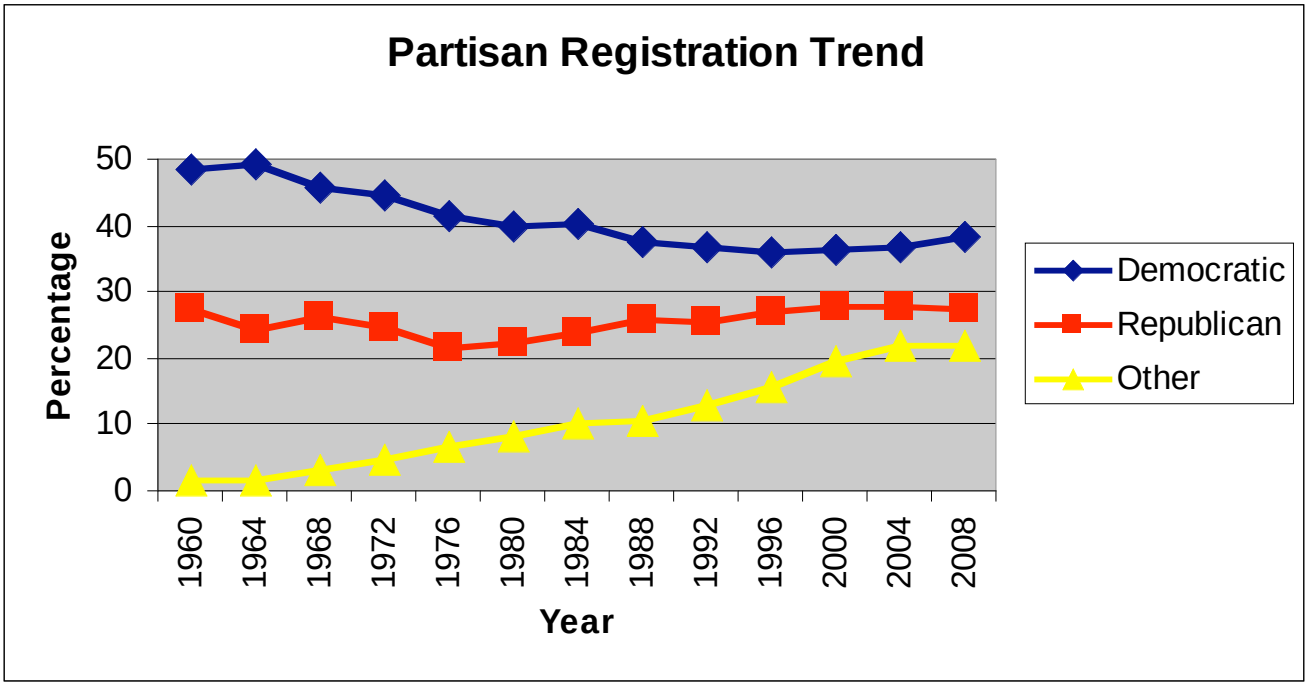
The first is a note about weather. In the two most recent high motivation/turnout elections (1992 and 2004), citizens braved long lines and inclement weather to vote, in a few cases with waits of eight hours or more. The motivation is even higher this year. It would take a hurricane, tornado, blizzard or earthquake to deter any sizable number from voting, and none of those things are predicted.

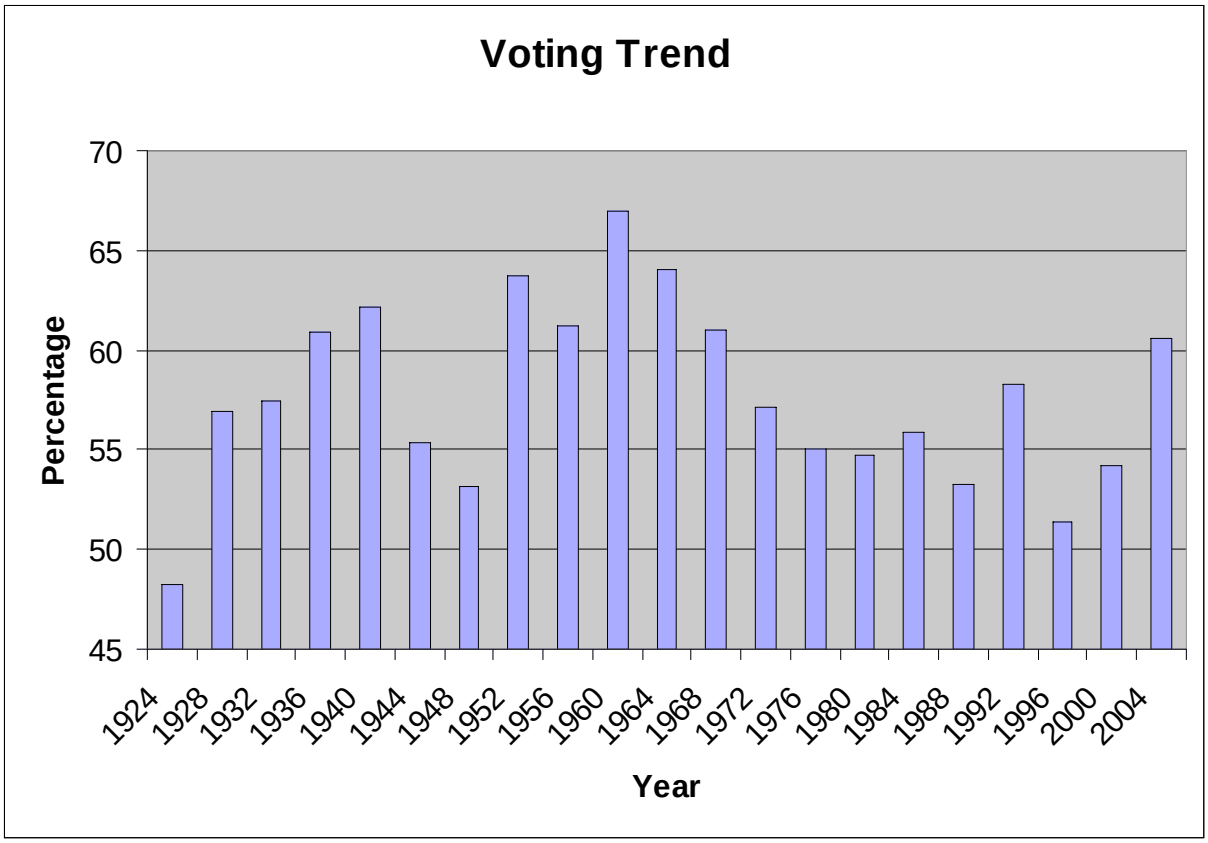
The second is that this election is a major episode of engagement in what has been largely a climate of disillusionment with and disengagement from politics (by most demographic sub-groups). Two

facts from this year are striking. The continuing upward level of non-major party registration and the fact, highlighted by an earlier CSAE report which showed that even in this year in which near record turnout occurred in the presidential primaries and very high turnout for the general election expected, the turnout for statewide primaries for governor and U.S. Senator which were not held at the same time as presidential primaries hit a record low. The high level of engagement this year is driven by conditions and one candidacy and not by a sustained return to an actively engaged electorate. If Obama wins, he will face a truly gigantic agenda of problems, the most massive of which is an economy which will not give him much leeway for domestic action. He will be living in the bubble of the 24-hour news cycle, short attention spans, and citizen impatience. If he can't do at least some of what he has promised—bring more of the nation together, engage citizens actively in national betterment, provide at least a sense of moving forward on our domestic and foreign problems, and offer a sense of hope and uplift to a fearful nation—this moment of engagement will pass and political cynicism will again claim center stage. Given current conditions, I don't envy his task.

SUMMARY CHARTS






Voting Trend
70
65
60
55
50
45
Percentage
1924
1928
1932
1936
1940
1944
1948
1952
1956
1960
1964
1968
1972
1976
1980
1984
1988
1992
1996
2000
2004
Year

1. Overall Registration: The chart below represents CSAE's best estimate of the percentage of the citizen eligible vote which will be registered in 2008 and were registered in previous years, adjusting for all the problems in registration lists outlined in Note 3 below:

Year	Estimated Number and Percent Registered	
2008	153,100,000	73.5
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

2. Adjusted Registration: Officials in bold; unofficial otherwise.

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
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	1,683,964	81.55%	84.36%	-2.82	324,129	1,359,835	65.85%	72.43%	-6.58
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**
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**
WA	4,489,000	4,032,224	89.82%	92.19%	-2.37	408775	3,623,449	80.72%	81.34%	-0.62
Total	**50,281,000**	**46,654,250**	**92.79%**	**92.01%**	**0.78**	**6,109,844**	**40,542,774**	**80.63%**	**78.15%**	**2.48**

*States in bold have released their final figures. States that are not in bold are counts as of October 31 and nearly final figures.

3. 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.

Year	Democratic	Republican	Other
2008	38.2	27.2	22.0
2004	36.8	27.9	21.7
2000	36.3	27.8	19.6
1996	35.9	26.9	15.8
1992	36.6	25.4	12.7
1988	37.6	25.6	10.5
1984	40.2	24.0	10.2
1980	40.0	22.4	8.2
1976	41.5	21.6	6.8
1972	44.4	24.7	4.7
1968	45.8	26.1	3.2
1964	49.4	24.2	1.7
1960	48.3	27.2	1.6

4. Turnout Trend: The number and percentage of eligible citizens who voted for President in elections since 1924:

YEAR	Citizens Eligible	Vote	Percent of Eligible Voted	Pct. Pt. Dif.
2008	208,323,000			
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	64.0*	-3.0
1960	106,188,000	68,838,219	67.0*	5.8
1956	101,295,000	62,026,908	61.2	-2.5
1952	96,607,000	61,550,918	63.7	10.5
1948	91,689,000	48,793,826	53.2	-2.2
1944	86,607,000	47,976,670	55.4	-6.8
1940	80,248,000	49,900,418	62.2	1.3
1936	75,013,000	45,654,763	60.9	3.5
1932	69,295,000	39,758,759	57.4	0.5
1928	64,715,000	36,805,951	56.9	8.6
1924	60,334,466	29,095,023	48.2	

* Figure adjusted upwards to compensate for the African-Americans considered as part of those eligible but denied the vote throughout the south. Similar adjustments in lesser amounts should be made for all the years preceding the Voting Rights Act of 1965, but will await CSAE's final election report in January. Actual figures, without adjustment are 62 percent for 1964 and 64.9 for 1960.

Democratic Registration as a Percentage of VAP - Citizen 2008 vs 2004 - 1988

ST	2008 VAP	2008 Registration	2008 % VAP Reg'd	2004 % VAP Reg'd	2004 +/-08-04 Points	2000 % VAP Reg'd	2000 +/-08-00 Points	1996 % VAP Reg'd	1996 +/-08-96 Points	1992 % VAP Reg'd	1992 +/-08-92 Points	1988 % VAP Reg'd	1988 +/-08-88 Points
AZ	4,117,000	1,161,982	28.22	26.44	1.78	29.40	-1.18	29.26	-1.04	30.56	-2.34	31.70	-3.48
CA	22,319,000	7,683,495	34.43	33.42	1.01	35.40	-0.97	37.96	-3.53	39.67	-5.24	39.64	-5.21
CO	3,219,000	1,051,643	32.67	30.04	2.63	28.41	4.26	25.77	6.90	27.24	5.43	26.05	6.62
FL	12,923,000	4,722,076	36.54	35.15	1.39	33.94	2.60	35.55	0.99	34.40	2.14	36.96	-0.42
KS	1,968,000	484,707	24.63	23.36	1.27	23.58	1.05	22.71	1.92	23.43	1.20	20.41	4.22
KY	3,147,000	1,662,093	52.82	52.36	0.46	51.10	1.72	50.73	2.09	49.49	3.33	50.67	2.15
LA	3,338,000	1,545,113	46.29	48.93	-2.64	52.04	-5.75	53.08	-6.79	54.41	-8.12	57.19	-10.90
MD	4,064,000	1,946,351	47.89	43.96	3.93	41.56	6.33	41.93	5.96	42.91	4.98	44.01	3.88
MA	4,625,000	1,559,464	33.72	33.51	0.21	32.61	1.11	29.68	4.04	30.56	3.16	—	—
NE	1,243,000	392,943	31.61	32.18	-0.57	32.13	-0.52	32.24	-0.63	33.66	-2.05	33.39	-1.78
NV	1,642,000	624,995	38.06	28.65	9.41	27.30	10.76	27.87	10.19	30.90	7.16	26.10	11.96
NJ	5,904,000	1,794,202	30.39	20.10	10.29	20.84	9.55	19.64	10.75	20.25	10.14	21.51	8.88
NY	12,653,000	5,831,079	46.08	44.05	2.03	42.04	4.04	—	—	—	—	—	—
OK	2,561,000	1,079,386	42.15	43.56	-1.41	32.04	10.11	48.33	-6.18	62.57	-20.42	63.77	-21.62
OR	2,615,000	936,740	35.82	—	—	—	—	35.06	0.76	37.22	-1.40	36.48	-0.66
PA	9,450,000	4,480,477	47.41	42.57	4.84	40.76	6.65	36.71	10.70	33.83	13.58	34.51	12.90
SD	573,000	204,413	35.67	34.08	1.59	33.11	2.56	34.83	0.84	37.61	-1.94	38.32	-2.65
UT	1,578,000	147,947	9.38	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
WV	1,428,000	675,305	47.29	48.09	-0.80	47.13	0.16	44.61	2.68	46.30	0.99	47.39	-0.10
Overall:	99,367,000	37,984,411	38.23	36.63	1.60	36.22	2.01	35.85	2.38	36.71	1.51	37.82	0.41

Other Registration as a Percentage of VAP - Citizen 2008 vs 2004 - 1988

ST	2008 VAP	2008 Registration	2008 % VAP Reg'd	2004 % VAP Reg'd	2004 +/-08-04 Points	2000 % VAP Reg'd	2000 +/-08-00 Points	1996 % VAP Reg'd	1996 +/-08-96 Points	1992 % VAP Reg'd	1992 +/-08-92 Points	1988 % VAP Reg'd	1988 +/-08-88 Points
AZ	4,117,000	1,016,288	24.69	19.82	4.87	14.73	9.96	10.10	14.59	8.79	15.90	8.65	16.04
CA	22,319,000	4,192,544	18.78	17.33	1.45	15.32	3.46	13.21	5.57	11.23	7.55	8.69	10.09
CO	3,219,000	1,088,593	33.82	32.53	1.29	32.89	0.93	26.59	7.23	25.94	7.88	31.16	2.66
FL	12,923,000	2,461,257	19.05	17.71	1.34	13.56	5.49	9.92	9.13	5.70	13.35	4.79	14.26
KS	1,968,000	494,030	25.10	23.47	1.63	23.02	2.08	19.42	5.68	19.54	5.56	21.62	3.48
KY	3,147,000	190,845	6.06	5.91	0.15	5.66	0.40	5.99	0.07	3.10	2.96	2.54	3.52
LA	3,338,000	648,253	19.42	18.14	1.28	15.62	3.80	11.19	8.23	7.30	12.12	6.40	13.02
MD	4,064,000	557,466	13.72	12.30	1.42	9.73	3.99	8.11	5.61	6.81	6.91	5.61	8.11
MA	4,625,000	2,170,765	46.94	44.63	2.31	44.50	2.44	37.40	9.54	35.19	11.75	—	—
NE	1,243,000	205,626	16.54	15.22	1.32	12.72	3.82	10.75	5.79	8.42	8.12	5.75	10.79
NV	1,642,000	307,654	18.74	13.80	4.94	10.97	7.77	10.54	8.20	10.35	8.39	5.91	12.83
NJ	5,904,000	2,546,675	43.13	51.11	-7.98	46.91	-3.78	42.05	1.08	32.49	10.64	32.93	10.20
NY	12,653,000	3,145,140	24.86	24.62	0.24	23.07	1.79	—	—	—	—	—	—
OK	2,561,000	244,841	9.56	8.94	0.62	8.08	1.48	4.91	4.65	3.17	6.39	2.57	6.99
OR	2,615,000	532,611	20.37	—	—	—	—	19.26	1.11	16.00	4.37	9.87	10.50
PA	9,450,000	1,033,745	10.94	10.34	0.60	8.67	2.27	6.12	4.82	4.24	6.70	3.24	7.70
SD	573,000	83,521	14.58	12.84	1.74	11.54	3.04	9.79	4.79	8.53	6.05	7.16	7.42
UT	1,578,000	785,624	49.79	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
WV	1,428,000	183,375	12.84	9.83	3.01	7.00	5.84	4.80	8.04	2.73	10.11	1.87	10.97
Overall:	99,367,000	21,888,853	22.03	20.86	1.16	18.73	3.30	15.04	6.99	12.30	9.73	9.69	12.34

Republican Registration as a Percentage of VAP - Citizen 2008 vs 2004 - 1988

			2008	2004		2000		1996		1992		1988	
ST	2008 VAP	2008 Registration	% VAP Reg'd	% VAP Reg'd	+/-08-04 Points	% VAP Reg'd	+/-08-00 Points	% VAP Reg'd	+/-08-96 Points	% VAP Reg'd	+/-08-92 Points	% VAP Reg'd	+/-08-88 Points
AZ	4,117,000	1,262,871	30.67	29.97	0.70	33.10	-2.43	32.51	-1.84	32.60	-1.93	33.94	-3.27
CA	22,319,000	5,428,052	24.32	26.97	-2.65	27.22	-2.90	29.31	-4.99	29.94	-5.62	30.39	-6.07
CO	3,219,000	1,063,347	33.03	35.75	-2.72	33.75	-0.72	29.53	3.50	26.76	6.27	28.09	4.94
FL	12,923,000	4,064,301	31.45	32.11	-0.66	30.61	0.84	31.55	-0.10	27.71	3.74	26.73	4.72
KS	1,968,000	771,019	39.18	40.21	-1.03	38.59	0.59	34.88	4.30	32.41	6.77	29.54	9.64
KY	3,147,000	1,053,871	33.49	32.31	1.18	28.10	5.39	25.65	7.84	25.05	8.44	22.20	11.29
LA	3,338,000	743,640	22.28	21.09	1.19	19.12	3.16	17.20	5.08	14.55	7.73	12.49	9.79
MD	4,064,000	926,347	22.79	23.23	-0.44	21.65	1.14	21.43	1.36	20.45	2.34	18.95	3.84
MA	4,625,000	490,259	10.60	11.68	-1.08	12.19	-1.59	10.72	-0.12	10.15	0.45	—	—
NE	1,243,000	558,465	44.93	46.70	-1.77	44.03	0.90	42.08	2.85	40.22	4.71	40.20	4.73
NV	1,642,000	513,378	31.27	28.95	2.32	27.37	3.90	28.23	3.04	26.80	4.47	23.54	7.73
NJ	5,904,000	1,057,285	17.91	15.29	2.62	15.49	2.42	15.48	2.43	13.84	4.07	13.66	4.25
NY	12,653,000	3,054,464	24.14	25.54	-1.40	25.42	-1.28	—	—	—	—	—	—
OK	2,561,000	859,857	33.58	32.32	1.26	49.55	-15.97	28.54	5.04	33.41	0.17	31.30	2.28
OR	2,615,000	697,249	26.66	—	—	—	—	31.11	-4.45	30.17	-3.51	29.22	-2.56
PA	9,450,000	3,243,323	34.32	36.34	-2.02	35.47	-1.15	32.02	2.30	28.54	5.78	28.31	6.01
SD	573,000	241,528	42.15	42.45	-0.30	41.48	0.67	42.33	-0.18	42.63	-0.48	44.01	-1.86
UT	1,578,000	651,098	41.26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
WV	1,428,000	353,437	24.75	24.68	0.07	22.14	2.61	20.86	3.89	21.48	3.27	22.43	2.32
Overall:													
	99,367,000	27,033,791	27.21	27.92	-0.72	27.81	-0.60	27.24	-0.03	25.95	1.26	26.49	0.72

Total Registration as a Percentage of VAP - Citizen 2008 vs 2004 - 1988

ST	2008 VAP	2008 Registration	2008 % VAP Reg'd	2004 % VAP Reg'd	2004 +/-08-04 Points	2000 % VAP Reg'd	2000 +/-08-00 Points	1996 % VAP Reg'd	1996 +/-08-96 Points	1992 % VAP Reg'd	1992 +/-08-92 Points	1988 % VAP Reg'd	1988 +/-08-88 Points
AZ	4,117,000	3,441,141	83.58	76.23	7.35	77.24	6.34	80.27	3.31	71.95	11.63	74.29	9.29
AR	2,065,000	1,683,964	81.55	83.65	-2.10	79.42	2.13	74.44	7.11	74.50	7.05	70.85	10.70
CA	22,319,000	17,304,091	77.53	77.71	-0.18	77.94	-0.41	85.76	-8.23	80.84	-3.31	78.72	-1.19
CO	3,219,000	3,205,583	99.58	98.31	1.27	95.05	4.53	81.89	17.69	79.94	19.64	85.31	14.27
FL	12,923,000	11,247,634	87.04	84.97	2.07	78.11	8.93	77.03	10.01	67.81	19.23	68.47	18.57
GA	6,302,000	5,755,750	91.33	85.14	6.19	81.29	10.04	71.31	20.02	65.13	26.20	65.41	25.92
HI	918,000	691,356	75.31	73.13	2.18	75.25	0.06	68.79	6.52	59.47	15.84	60.05	15.26
IL	8,540,000	8,849,117	103.62	88.58	15.04	106.52	-2.90	90.23	13.39	81.46	22.16	79.56	24.06
IN	4,586,000	4,513,601	98.42	95.07	3.35	90.50	7.92	81.18	17.24	77.08	21.34	71.49	26.93
KS	1,968,000	1,749,756	88.91	87.05	1.86	85.18	3.73	77.02	11.89	75.38	13.53	71.56	17.35
KY	3,147,000	2,906,809	92.37	90.58	1.79	90.36	2.01	82.37	10.00	74.77	17.60	75.41	16.96
LA	3,338,000	2,942,900	88.16	88.16	0.00	86.78	1.38	81.46	6.70	76.25	11.91	76.08	12.08
MD	4,064,000	3,430,364	84.41	79.50	4.91	80.07	4.34	74.51	9.90	70.17	14.24	68.57	15.84
MA	4,625,000	4,220,488	91.25	89.96	1.29	89.31	1.94	85.22	6.03	75.84	15.41	75.53	15.72
MI	7,490,000	7,470,764	99.74	97.83	1.91	96.22	3.52	95.94	3.80	90.78	8.96	89.70	10.04
MS	2,151,000	1,893,786	88.04	—	—	97.68	-9.64	92.50	-4.46	87.85	0.19	88.90	-0.86
MO	4,328,000	4,205,774	97.18	99.51	-2.33	89.46	7.72	83.73	13.45	79.64	17.54	79.01	18.17
NE	1,243,000	1,157,034	93.08	94.10	-1.02	88.88	4.20	85.08	8.00	82.30	10.78	79.34	13.74
NV	1,642,000	1,446,027	88.06	71.41	16.65	65.64	22.42	66.64	21.42	68.05	20.01	55.55	32.51
NJ	5,904,000	5,398,162	91.43	86.50	4.93	83.24	8.19	77.17	14.26	73.37	18.06	73.84	17.59
NY	12,653,000	12,030,683	95.08	94.22	0.86	90.29	4.79	81.64	13.44	74.11	20.97	69.93	25.15
OH	8,562,000	8,302,900	96.97	94.34	2.63	90.41	6.56	83.89	13.08	81.47	15.50	80.14	16.83
OK	2,561,000	2,184,084	85.28	84.81	0.47	89.67	-4.39	81.78	3.50	99.15	-13.87	97.65	-12.37
OR	2,615,000	2,166,600	82.85	84.70	-1.85	88.00	-5.15	91.53	-8.68	83.39	-0.54	75.58	7.27
PA	9,450,000	8,757,545	92.67	89.25	3.42	84.90	7.77	74.84	17.83	66.62	26.05	66.06	26.61
SD	573,000	574,632	100.28	98.30	1.98	95.23	5.05	90.06	10.22	88.77	11.51	89.49	10.79
TN	4,512,000	3,977,586	88.16	85.20	2.96	80.50	7.66	77.09	11.07	72.57	15.59	67.74	20.42
TX	14,886,000	13,575,062	91.19	92.31	-1.12	92.25	-1.06	83.17	8.02	71.76	19.43	74.75	16.44
UT	1,578,000	1,584,669	100.42	84.60	15.82	90.84	9.58	80.25	20.17	84.37	16.05	77.89	22.53
VA	5,560,000	5,021,993	90.32	84.62	5.70	80.05	10.27	68.09	22.23	65.84	24.48	65.52	24.80
WV	1,428,000	1,212,117	84.88	82.59	2.29	76.27	8.61	70.29	14.59	70.51	14.37	71.70	13.18
Overall:	169,267,000	152,901,972	90.33	87.73	2.60	86.58	3.76	81.60	8.73	75.94	14.39	74.84	15.49

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 that draws the highest number of votes and the aggregate total of votes for U.S. House of Representatives in those states that do not have statewide races. (This total tends to be between 1 and 1.5 percent 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 is the case 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 that 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 in the back of this report are, for 21 states, final, official and certified by the chief election officer in each state and totally misleading. Equally misleading, for reasons, explained in detail below, are nearly final figures (as of October 31) for 11 other states. Because of the problems with registration tallies, all numerical conclusions in this report are estimates. The 21 states whose figures are official are: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia. Those whose nearly final but unofficial results contained in this report are: Arkansas, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont and Virginia.

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 depend 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. But because of non-thorough and early list cleaning, some states, notably Alaska, Maine, and Mississippi—and this year Illinois—have registration rolls which exceed 100 percent of the Voting Age Population. Prior to the enactment of the NVRA, 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. (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 above 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 registration data and thus do not yield the same totals as do the overall percentages.

5. 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 creating 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.

6. 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.