Quick Facts about Young Voters in Massachusetts: The Midterm Election Year 2006

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The 2006 midterm election was the second major election in a row that saw an increase in the electoral participation of young people ages 18-29. Between 2002 and 2006, the percentage of eligible young people who voted increased by 3 percentage points to 25 percent, the single largest increase among all age groups nationally. Similarly, while youth electoral participation improved between 2002 and 2006 nationally, in Massachusetts, the youth voter turnout rate rose 11 percentage points from 23 percent in 2002 to 34 percent in 2006. Overall, Massachusetts ranked 7th among all states and the District of Columbia in 2006, down from 23rd in 2002, and was nine percentage points higher than the nation as a whole.

This fact sheet reports the characteristics of young voters for the state of Massachusetts, including estimates of the number of young voters, and voter turnout rates in 2006 and 2002 for various sub-groups of young people.
Youth Turnout Estimates, 2006

In 2006, a midterm election year, there were an estimated 842,000 young people in Massachusetts who were eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 1 shows voting statistics for the years 2006 and 2002.

Voter Turnout Rates in 2006 and 2002 Among Eligible Young Citizens, Ages 18-29

Table 2 displays voter turnout rates for various groups of young people ages 18 to 29 in 2006 and 2002 in Massachusetts. In 2006, voter turnout among many youth groups in Massachusetts was up from 2002.

Notes

1 Research Director, Research Associate, and Research Assistant, respectively. We also thank Peter Levine, Emily Kirby, Abby Kiesa, and Deborah Both for comments on previous drafts of this fact sheet.

2 See “Youth Voter Turnout Increases in 2006” by Mark Hugo Lopez, Karlo Barrios Marcelo, and Emily Hoban Kirby for a longer discussion of youth voter turnout trends in 2006.