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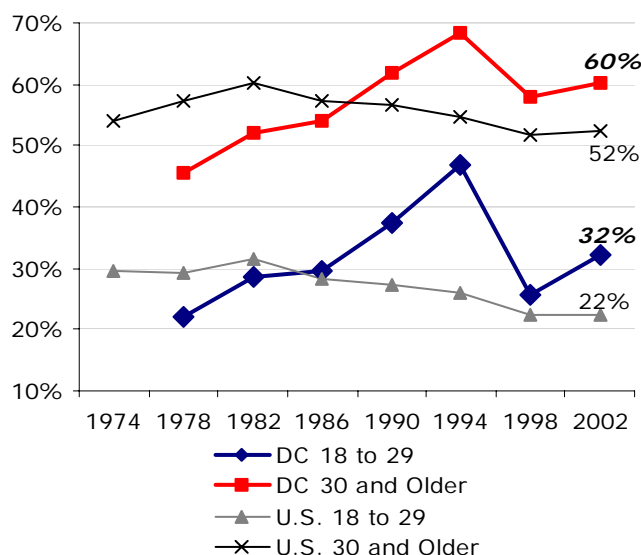
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Quick Facts about Young Voters in the District of Columbia: The Midterm Election Year 2006

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This year's elections follow a presidential election that witnessed the highest level of national youth voter participation in over a decade, and a youth voter turnout rate of 59 percent in Washington, D.C., up 4 percentage points over 2000. Compared to other states in 2004, the turnout rate among 18 to 29 year olds in D.C. ranked sixth overall. However, despite high youth voter participation in D.C. in 2004, whether this voter mobilization momentum continues into 2006 remains unpredictable. Furthermore, it would be a mistake to compare either state-level or national youth voter turnout in 2006 to 2004 since presidential elections generally draw more voters to the polls, and hence have higher voter turnout rates. Instead, the two appropriate comparisons are 2002, the last time midterm elections occurred, and 1994, the last time midterm elections followed a surge in youth voting in a presidential election (1992).

Graph 1: D.C. Voter Turnout in Midterm Years Among Citizens, by Age



Source: Current Population Survey, November Supplements, 1974-2002.

This fact sheet reports the characteristics of young voters for Washington, D.C., including estimates of the number of young voters, voter turnout in 2002 and 1994 for various sub-groups of young people, and a listing of voter registration and election day laws that may affect young voters. While the general trend in national voter turnout among young people during midterm elections was down between 1982 and 2002, youth voter turnout rates in Washington, D.C. have, since 1986, been higher than youth turnout rates nationally, and on an upward trajectory recently. This year, Washington, D.C. could witness a higher level of voter participation among all voters in 2006 relative to 2002 because of a high profile mayoral race.

Estimates of Eligible Young Voters, 2006

In 2006, a midterm election year, there are an estimated 99,000 young people in Washington, D.C. who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 1 shows voting statistics for the years 2002, the last midterm election year, and 1994, the last midterm election year that followed a surge in youth voting in a presidential election year (1992).²

Table 1 – Washington, D.C. Voter Turnout Statistics, 2006, 2002, and 1994

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
2006		
Number of Citizens	99 thousand	278 thousand
Eligible to Vote in 2006		
2002		
Number of Votes Cast	28 thousand	164 thousand
Citizen Voter Turnout Rate	32 percent	60 percent
Share of all Voters	15 percent	85 percent
1994		
Number of Votes Cast	45 thousand	202 thousand
Citizen Voter Turnout Rate	47 percent	68 percent
Share of all Voters	18 percent	82 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations, Current Population Survey, March Supplement 2006 and November Supplement 2002 and 1994

Voter Turnout Rates in 2002 and 1994 Among Eligible Young Citizens

Table 2 displays voter turnout rates for various groups of young people in 2002 and 1994 in Washington, D.C. In 2002, voter turnout among many youth groups in Washington, D.C. was significantly lower than in 1994, but generally high compared to young people nationally.

Table 2 – Washington, D.C. Voter Turnout Rates Among Young Citizens ages 18 to 29, 2002 and 1994

Voter Turnout Rate Among:	2002	1994
Race/Ethnicity³		
White non-Hispanics	34 percent	52 percent
Black non-Hispanics	33 percent	46 percent
Latinos	***	***
Asian non-Hispanics	***	***
Native American non-Hispanics	***	***
Gender		
Women	31 percent	54 percent
Men	34 percent	38 percent
Educational Attainment		
Less than High School	***	***
High School	35 percent	43 percent
Some College	39 percent	52 percent
BA or more	34 percent	52 percent
Registered Voter	49 percent	73 percent
All Youth, DC	32 percent	47 percent
All Youth, National	22 percent	26 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the 2002 and 1994 November Supplements of the Current Population Survey. '***' indicates a sample size is too small to produce a reliable estimate.

Voter Registration and Election Day Laws in Washington, D.C.

Table 3 displays important Voter Registration and Election Day Laws for the state of Washington, D.C. For more information on elections in Washington, D.C., contact the Elections Division of Washington, D.C. at 202-727-2525 or <http://www.dcboee.org/>.

Table 3 – Washington, D.C. Voter Registration and Election Day Laws, 2006

Registration Day Laws	
Registration Deadline for all Elections	10 days before an election
Unrestricted Absentee Voting	No
In Person Early Voting	No
Election Day Registration	No
Allows 17 Year Olds to Vote in Primaries	No
Election Day Laws	
Polls Open	No later than 8 am to 6/8pm
Time off to Vote (Private Sector)	No
Mail Information on Poll Location	No
Mail Sample Ballots	No

Source: CIRCLE Fact Sheet "State Voter Registration and Election Day Laws", June 2004 and NAACP Voter Empowerment Guide "Value Our Vote" July 2006

Notes

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² For a full discussion of the different ways voter turnout can be calculated please see "CIRCLE Working Paper 35: The Youth Voter 2004: With a Historical Look at Youth Voting Patterns 1972-2004." All voter turnout estimates presented in this fact sheet are calculated for U.S. citizens only, and according to the "Census Citizen Method" described in CIRCLE Working Paper 35.

³ We have defined racial/ethnic groups in the Current Population Survey November Supplements by defining anyone with Hispanic background as Latino; individuals who cite a single non-Hispanic race or ethnicity are identified as non-Hispanic white, African American, Asian American or Native American.