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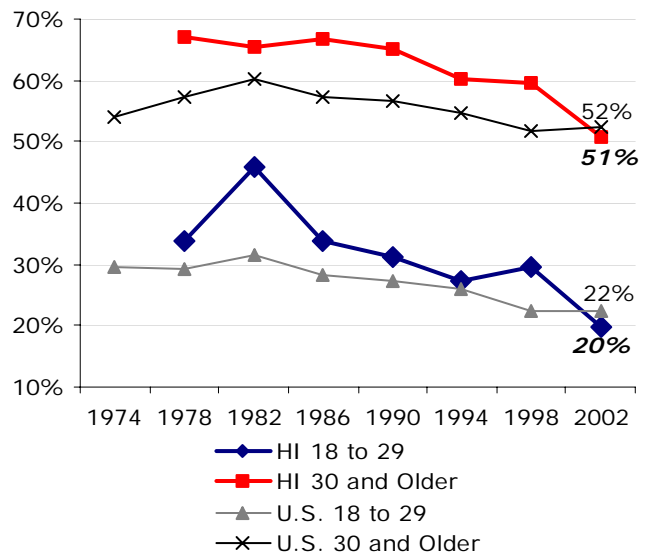
Quick Facts about Young Voters in Hawaii: The Midterm Election Year 2006

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This year's elections follow a presidential election that nationally witnessed the highest level of youth voter participation in over a decade, and a youth voter turnout rate of 34 percent in Hawaii. Despite an impressive 11 percentage point increase in youth voter turnout between 2000 and 2004, turnout among 18 to 29 year olds in Hawaii ranked last among all states and the District of Columbia in 2004. However, 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).

This fact sheet reports the characteristics of young voters for the state of Hawaii, 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. The trend in voter turnout among young voters in Hawaii has mirrored the national trend in midterm elections since 1982, though the decline in Hawaii has been more pronounced. Hawaii might not see a higher level of voter participation among all voters in 2006 relative to 2002, because of the lack of high contested gubernatorial and Senate races. The incumbent Senator holds his seat safely, and the gubernatorial race is strongly leaning in favor of the incumbent too.

Graph 1: Hawaii Voter Turnout in Midterm Years Among Citizens, by Age



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

Estimates of Eligible Young Voters, 2006

In 2006, a midterm election year, there are an estimated 146,000 young people in Hawaii who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 1A 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 1B shows the racial/ethnic characteristics of the adult Hawaiian population. Among all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Hawaii has the greatest proportion of Asian non-Hispanics.

Table 1A – Hawaii Voter Turnout Statistics, 2006, 2002, and 1994

| | Young People 18 to 29 | Adults 30 and Older |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 2006 | | |
| Number of Citizens | 146 thousand | 727 thousand |
| Eligible to Vote in 2006 | | |
| 2002 | | |
| Number of Votes Cast | 26 thousand | 334 thousand |
| Citizen Voter Turnout Rate | 20 percent | 51 percent |
| Share of all Voters | 7 percent | 93 percent |
| 1994 | | |
| Number of Votes Cast | 47 thousand | 344 thousand |
| Citizen Voter Turnout Rate | 27 percent | 60 percent |
| Share of all Voters | 12 percent | 88 percent |

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

Table 1B – 2006 Population Proportion of Young People and Adults by Citizenship and Race/Ethnicity

| | White, non-Hispanics | Asian non-Hispanics |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Young people, 18 to 29 | | |
| Residents | 15.3% | 48.0% |
| Citizens | 16.2% | 44.2% |
| Adults, 30 and older | | |
| Residents | 21.0% | 58.3% |
| Citizens | 21.7% | 56.1% |

Source: Authors' Tabulations, Current Population Survey, March Supplement 2006.

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 Hawaii. In 2002, voter turnout among many youth groups in Hawaii was very low. Only among young people with a BA or more was the voter turnout rate at 40 percent or higher. In contrast, the midterm election year 1994 was a year of high voter turnout for all youth groups in Hawaii relative to 2002. Since 1994, voter turnout rates have declined substantially for Asian non-Hispanics (down 13 points), young men (down 13 points), and young people with some college education (down 11 points). Even among registered young voters, the voter turnout rate was down 12 points, suggesting that among those who were registered to vote, electoral participation had fallen between 1994 and 2002.

Table 2 – Hawaii Voter Turnout Rates Among Young Citizens ages 18 to 29, 2002 and 1994

| Voter Turnout Rate Among: | 2002 | 1994 |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| <i>Race/Ethnicity</i>³ | | |
| White non-Hispanics | 27 percent | 24 percent |
| Black non-Hispanics | *** | *** |
| Latinos | *** | *** |
| Asian non-Hispanics | 18 percent | 31 percent |
| Native American non-Hispanics | *** | *** |
| <i>Gender</i> | | |
| Women | 17 percent | 22 percent |
| Men | 23 percent | 36 percent |
| <i>Educational Attainment</i> | | |
| Less than High School | *** | *** |
| High School | 11 percent | 17 percent |
| Some College | 21 percent | 32 percent |
| BA or more | 48 percent | 55 percent |
| <i>Marital Status</i> | | |
| Single Men | 26 percent | 37 percent |
| Single Women | 11 percent | 23 percent |
| Married Men | *** | *** |
| Married Women | 29 percent | 22 percent |
| Registered Voter | 69 percent | 81 percent |
| All Youth, Hawaii | 20 percent | 27 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 Hawaii

Table 3 displays important Voter Registration and Election Day Laws for the state of Hawaii. For more information on elections in Hawaii, contact the Hawaii Office of Elections at 808-453-8683 or www.hawaii.gov/elections.

Table 3 – Hawaii Voter Registration and Election Day Laws, 2006

| Registration Day Laws | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Registration Deadline for all Elections | 30 days before an election |
| Unrestricted Absentee Voting | Yes |
| In Person Early Voting | Yes |
| Election Day Registration | No |
| Allows 17 Year Olds to Vote in Primaries | No |
| Election Day Laws | |
| Polls Open | 7am to 6pm |
| Time off to Vote (Private Sector) | Yes |
| Mail Information on Poll Location | Yes |
| 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.