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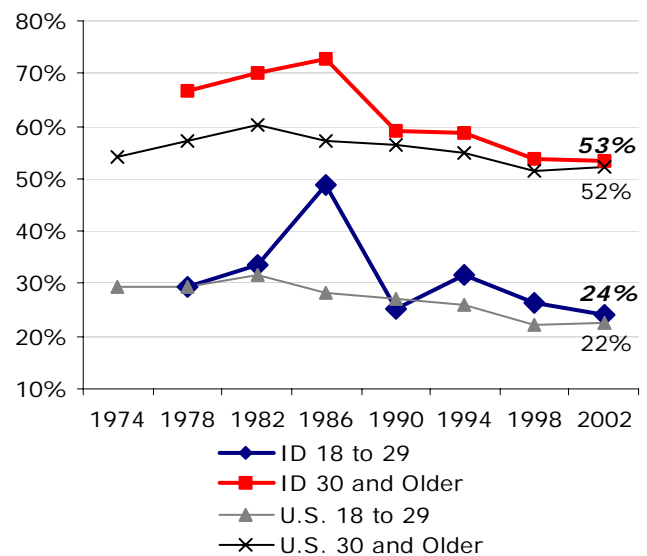
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Quick Facts about Young Voters in Idaho: The Midterm Election Year 2006

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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 49 percent in Idaho, up 2 percentage points over 2000. Compared to other states in 2004, the turnout rate among 18 to 29 year olds in Idaho ranked 34th overall. However, despite high youth voter participation in Idaho 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: Idaho 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 the state of Idaho, 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 general trend in youth voter turnout in Idaho has followed the declining national trend closely, with a large spike in participation in 1986. Idaho might not see a higher level of voter participation among all voters in 2006 relative to 2002, because of the lack of highly contested elections.

Estimates of Eligible Young Voters, 2006

In 2006, a midterm election year, there are an estimated 215,000 young people in Idaho 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 – Idaho Voter Turnout Statistics, 2006, 2002, and 1994

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
2006		
Number of Citizens	215 thousand	776 thousand
Eligible to Vote in 2006		
2002		
Number of Votes Cast	55 thousand	371 thousand
Citizen Voter Turnout Rate	24 percent	53 percent
Share of all Voters	13 percent	87 percent
1994		
Number of Votes Cast	65 thousand	340 thousand
Citizen Voter Turnout Rate	32 percent	59 percent
Share of all Voters	16 percent	84 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 Idaho. In 2002, voter turnout among many youth groups in Idaho was very low. Only among young people with a BA or more was the voter turnout rate at 40 percent or higher. Furthermore, relative to 1994, voter turnout rates were down for all groups except young people with a college degree and married young men. In contrast, the midterm election year 1994 was a year of high voter turnout for all youth groups in Idaho relative to 2002.

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

Voter Turnout Rate Among:	2002	1994
Gender		
Women	21 percent	34 percent
Men	27 percent	29 percent
Educational Attainment		
Less than High School	5 percent	16 percent
High School	16 percent	27 percent
Some College	30 percent	39 percent
BA or more	49 percent	46 percent
Marital Status		
Single Men	22 percent	28 percent
Single Women	18 percent	35 percent
Married Men	35 percent	32 percent
Married Women	30 percent	37 percent
Registered Voter	61 percent	70 percent
All Youth, Idaho	24 percent	32 percent
All Youth, National	22 percent	26 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the 2002 and 1994 November Supplements of the Current Population Survey.

Voter Registration and Election Day Laws in Idaho

Table 3 displays important Voter Registration and Election Day Laws for the state of Idaho. For more information on elections in Idaho, contact the Idaho Secretary of State at 208-334-2300 or www.idsos.state.id.us.

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

Registration Day Laws	
Registration Deadline for all Elections	25 days before an election
Unrestricted Absentee Voting	Yes
In Person Early Voting	No
Election Day Registration	No
Allows 17 Year Olds to Vote in Primaries	No
Election Day Laws	
Polls Open	8am to 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.