

BALLOT  
BOX

# Asian Americans at the Ballot Box

*The 2006 General Election in Los Angeles County*



ASIAN PACIFIC  
AMERICAN  
LEGAL CENTER  
OF  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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## Asian Pacific American Legal Center

The Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California was founded in 1983 and is the largest organization in the country focused on providing multilingual, culturally sensitive legal services, education, and civil rights support to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs). APALC's mission is to advocate for civil rights, provide legal services and education, and build coalitions to positively influence and impact AAPIs and to create a more equitable and harmonious society. APALC works on a range of issues affecting AAPIs and immigrants, including workers rights, consumer rights, immigration, citizenship, domestic violence, hate crimes, health care, language access, and voting rights.

APALC is affiliated with the Asian American Justice Center (formerly known as NAPALC) in Washington, D.C.

### *Demographic Research Project*

APALC's Demographic Research Project (DRP) was established to make research more accessible to the growing AAPI community and the organizations that serve it.

DRP seeks to (1) inform community programs and advocacy through data collection, analysis, and mapping using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and (2) empower community organizations to better utilize research in grant making, program planning, and advocacy through technical assistance and training.

[www.apalc.org](http://www.apalc.org)

[www.demographics.apalc.org](http://www.demographics.apalc.org)

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# Welcome

## **Asian American communities are misunderstood in many ways.**

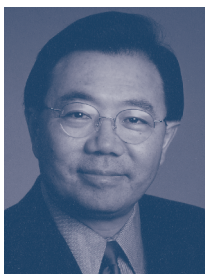
Many assume our communities are uniformly well off, with little need for social services or affirmative action programs. Yet census data paint a different picture, showing us that some Asian American communities are among the nation's most disadvantaged. Similarly, many assume that Asian Americans are politically apathetic, indifferent to public policy debates that take place in Sacramento or Washington, DC. Yet voter data show us that Asian Americans make up an increasingly large proportion of Southern California's electorate.

Just as access to accurate information on Asian American communities helps correct misperceptions such as these, inaccurate information can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and contribute to a systematic neglect of the problems our communities face.

*Asian Americans at the Ballot Box: The 2006 General Election in Los Angeles County* is intended to support elected officials, community organizations, and others in their efforts to better understand Asian American communities and their political participation. By drawing data on voter turnout directly from the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and data on how Asian Americans voted from exit polling that surveys large numbers of Asian American voters in Asian languages, the report provides the most accurate information available on the Asian American electorate in Los Angeles County.

Recognizing that resources to address disparities in political participation are scarce, *Asian Americans at the Ballot Box* provides important information that will be used to strategically target voter engagement efforts in our communities by city, age, native versus foreign-born, and gender.

Once again, APALC would like to extend a special thanks to the Chung Ying Tang Foundation for its ongoing support of this important research.



Stewart Kwoh, Esq.  
President and Executive Director  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# Key Findings

## ***Asian Americans continue to grow as a proportion of the electorate***

An analysis of the Los Angeles County Voter File showed that Asian Americans made up 11% of those registered to vote and 9% of those casting ballots in the 2006 General Election. Asian Americans have grown as a proportion of the electorate in each of the past three elections. Yet, because Asian American registered voters turnout at rates below those of all registered voters, voter mobilization efforts are critical if Asian American communities are to realize their full political participation.

## ***Language assistance remains critical to voter engagement***

Both federal and state law require certain jurisdictions to provide written and oral assistance to voters in Asian languages. Polling during the 2006 General Election demonstrated the ongoing need for and use of this assistance among Asian American voters. Approximately 69% of Korean, 33% of Chinese, 26% of Filipino, and 7% of Japanese American voters surveyed used some form of written or oral assistance in voting. In California, proposed legislation such as Assembly Bill 614 offer new opportunities to ensure such assistance is adequately provided to Asian American voters. AB 614 would require the California Secretary of State's Office to play a greater role in monitoring county readiness to serve limited-English proficient voters in advance of elections.

## ***Asian American voters support just and humane immigration reform***

Asian American voices have been marginalized in the debate surrounding comprehensive immigration reform. Polling during the 2006 General Election showed that 62% of Asian American voters supported the legalization of undocumented immigrants, 58% opposed further criminalization of the undocumented, and 84% supported mechanisms to reduce the backlog of immigrants waiting to enter the United States. Because millions of Asian Americans will be affected by immigration reform, legislators should consider the position of Asian American communities as they weigh proposals for reform.

# Introduction and Glossary of Terms

Understanding the political participation of Asian Americans in the United States means understanding their political participation in Los Angeles

Asian American communities are among the fastest growing in the United States. Between 1990 and 2000, the country's Asian American population grew as much as 72%. As of 2004, there were 14 million Asian Americans nationwide.<sup>1</sup>

Approximately one out of every 10 Asian Americans in the United States live in Los Angeles County. Indeed, more Asian Americans reside in Los Angeles County than in any other county nationwide. Thus, understanding the political participation of Asian Americans in the United States means understanding their political participation in Los Angeles.

*Asian Americans at the Ballot Box: The 2006 General Election in Los Angeles County* compiles information on Asian American political participation in Los Angeles County during the 2006 General Election. Drawing on analyses of data from the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters Office and the 2006 Southern California Voter Survey, the report documents Asian

American voter registration, turnout, voter preferences, and need for and use of bilingual voter assistance during the statewide gubernatorial election. The report also details Asian American attitudes toward comprehensive immigration reform. Because proposals to reform the nation's immigration system will impact millions in Asian American communities, it is important to gauge where they stand on the issue. Do Asian Americans support or oppose the legalization and criminalization of the undocumented and efforts to reduce the backlog of those waiting to enter the United States?

*Asian Americans at the Ballot Box* fills an important niche in the scholarship on Asian American political participation by providing user-friendly data which can be used to both track trends in voter registration and turnout countywide and facilitate the targeting of local voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts by city, ethnic group, age, nativity (native versus foreign-born), and gender.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Registered Voters:** Those who were registered to vote by October 23, 2006 and eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election.

**Voters:** Registered voters who cast ballots in the 2006 General Election.

**Voter Turnout:** Percent of registered voters who cast ballots in the 2006 General Election.

<sup>1</sup>Asian American Justice Center and Asian Pacific American Legal Center. 2006. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States*. Washington, DC: AAJC and APALC.

# Voter Registration and Turnout Overview

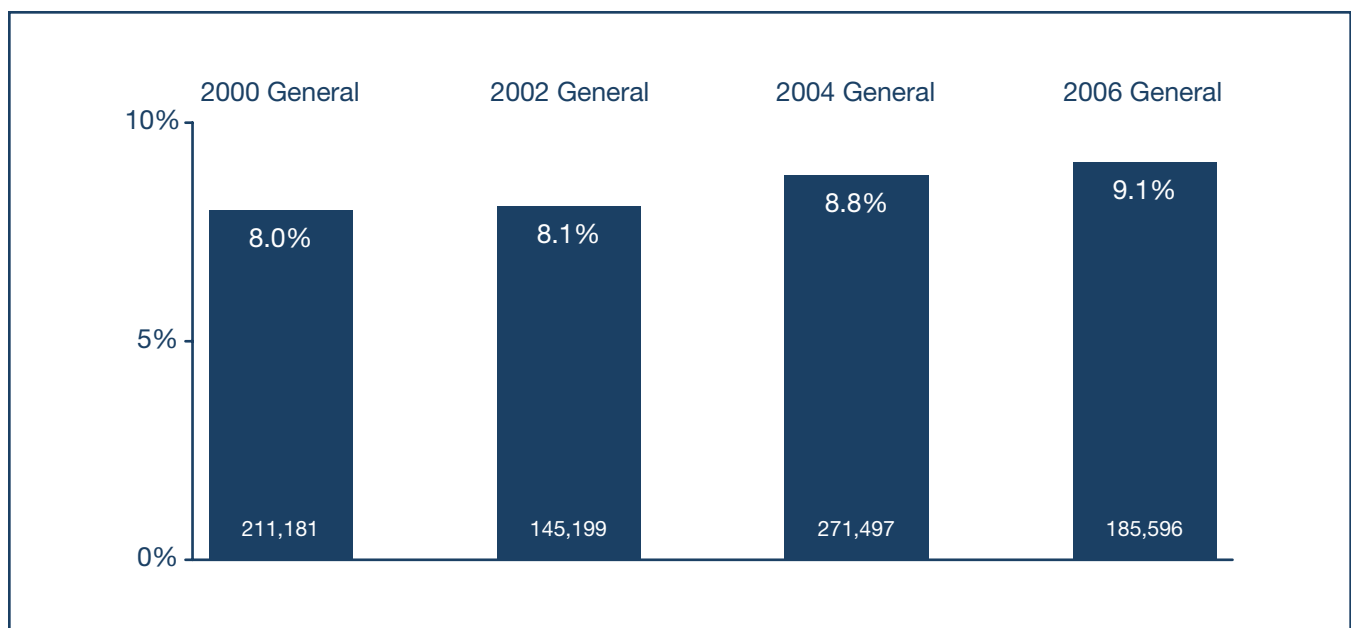
In Asian American and other immigrant communities, simple growth in population does not guarantee growth in political power. Legal permanent residents must become citizens, citizens must register to vote, and registered voters must go to the polls.

Analysis of the Los Angeles County Voter File showed that nearly 186,000 of the 427,000 Asian Americans registered to vote countywide voted in the 2006 General Election, an increase of 28% compared to the last Gubernatorial Election in 2002. In contrast, the county's total electorate grew 14% over the same period. Nearly 11% of those registered to

vote and over 9% of those casting ballots in Los Angeles County were Asian American, a proportion greater than in any of the past three major elections.

11% of those registered to vote and 9% of those casting ballots in Los Angeles County were Asian American

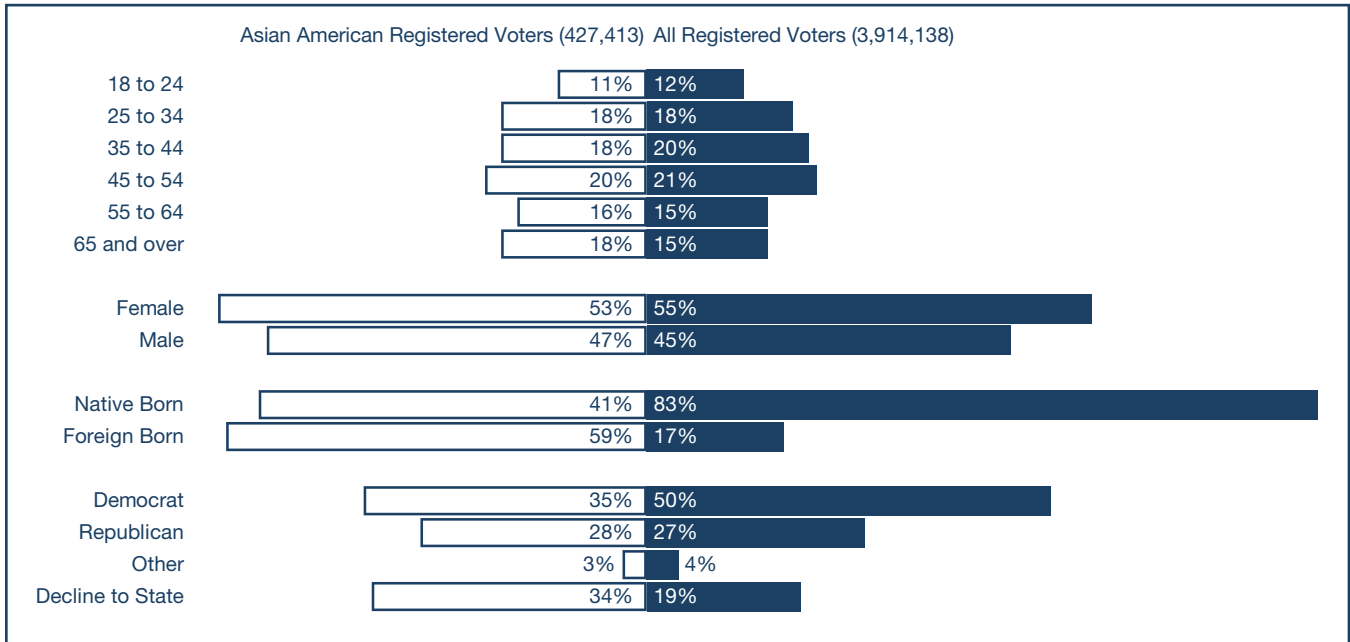
Figure 1: Asian American Voters as Proportion of All Voters in LA County, 2000 through 2006 General Elections



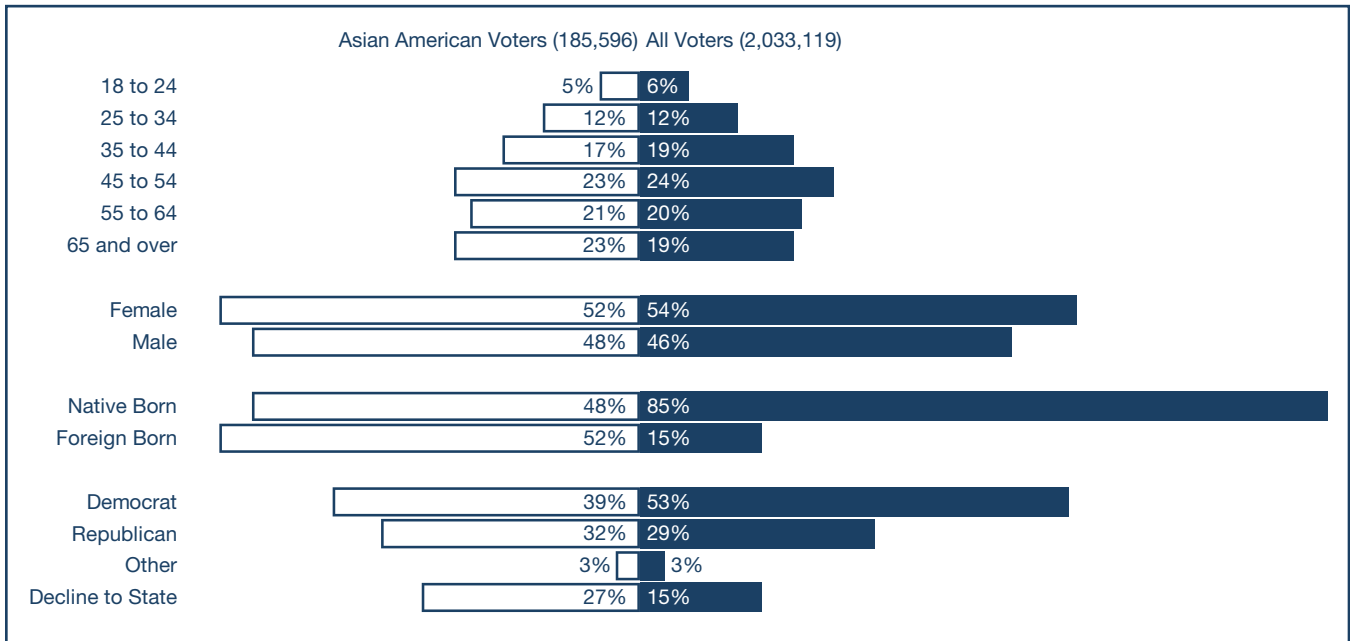
Source: Los Angeles County Voter Files (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# Voter Registration and Turnout Overview

**Figure 2: Demographics of Asian American Registered Voters in LA County, 2006 General Election**



**Figure 3: Demographics of Asian American Voters in LA County, 2006 General Election**



Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# Voter Registration and Turnout Overview

As in past elections, the demographic profiles of Asian American registered voters and voters (registered voters who cast ballots) were both similar to and different from those of all registered voters and voters countywide.

Among registered voters, Asian Americans were similar in age and gender to all registered voters, but more likely to be foreign-born and unaffiliated with a political party. Approximately 59% of Asian American registered voters were born abroad and 34% held no party affiliation. The ethnic composition of Asian American registered voters mirrored that of the broader Asian American population, with Chinese Americans making up the largest number registered to vote, followed by Filipino, Korean, and Japanese Americans.

Asian American voters were more likely than Asian American registered voters to be older, native-born, and affiliated with a political party, suggesting lower voter turnout among the young, foreign-born, and those unaffiliated with a political party. Ethnic groups with higher voter turnout, such as Japanese and Filipino Americans, were over-represented among voters, while ethnic groups with lower voter turnout, such as Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Korean Americans were under-represented.

**Table 1: Asian American Registered Voters by Ethnic Group in LA County, 2006 General Election**

GROUP	Registered Voters	% of Asian American Registered Voters
Asian Indian	20,695	5%
Cambodian	8,619	2%
Chinese	128,950	30%
Filipino	98,205	23%
Japanese	42,880	10%
Korean	60,458	14%
Vietnamese	40,585	9%
<b>TOTAL ASIAN AMERICAN</b>	<b>427,413</b>	<b>100%</b>

NOTE: Figures do not include all Asian American ethnic groups, will not sum to total.  
Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

**Table 2: Asian American Voters by Ethnic Group in LA County, 2006 General Election**

GROUP	Voters	% of Asian American Voters
Asian Indian	8,568	5%
Cambodian	2,220	1%
Chinese	53,217	29%
Filipino	45,356	24%
Japanese	25,827	14%
Korean	23,746	13%
Vietnamese	15,137	8%
<b>TOTAL ASIAN AMERICAN</b>	<b>185,596</b>	<b>100%</b>

NOTE: Figures do not include all Asian American ethnic groups, will not sum to total.  
Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

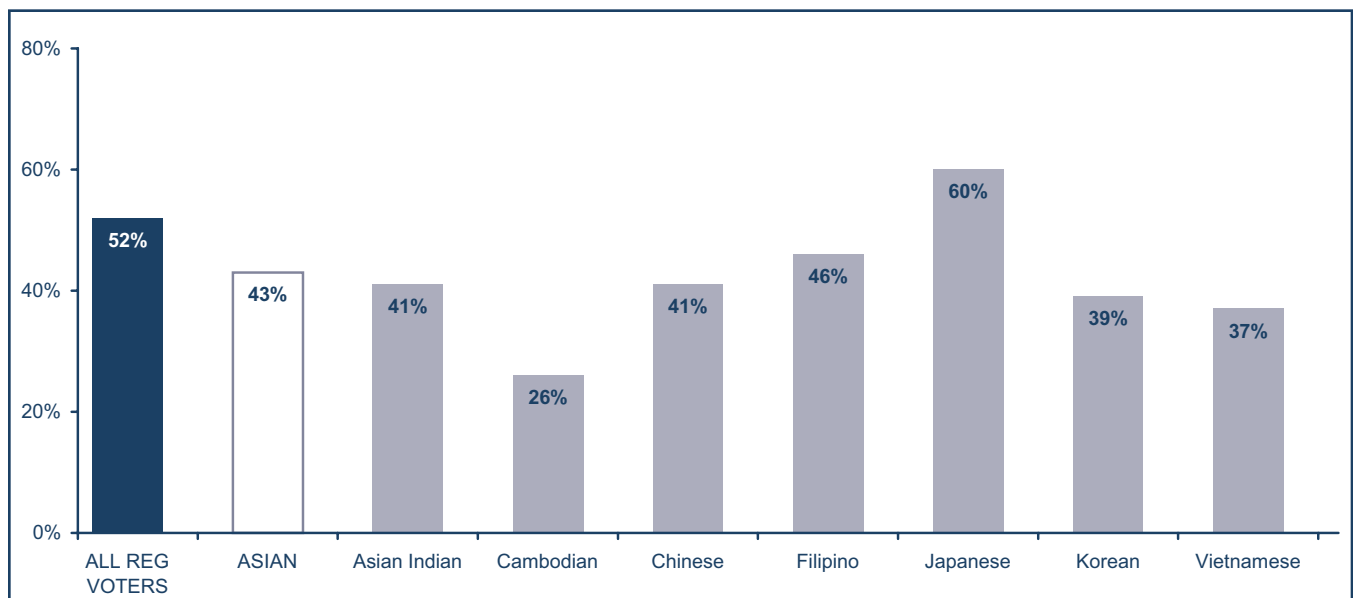
# Voter Registration and Turnout By Ethnic Group

While 52% of all registered voters voted on Election Day, only 43% of Asian American registered voters did so

The percent of Asian American registered voters who cast ballots in the 2006 General Election was lower than that of all registered voters. While 52% of all registered voters voted on Election Day, only 43% of Asian American registered voters did so.

As in past elections, Japanese American registered voters were the only Asian American ethnic group whose voter turnout exceeded that of all registered voters. An impressive 60% of Japanese American registered voters cast ballots in the 2006 General Election. In contrast, fewer Cambodians, Vietnamese, and Koreans registered to vote actually voted. These differences make sense, as Japanese Americans are a disproportionately native-born population facing fewer barriers to voting.

Figure 4: Asian American Voter Turnout\* by Ethnic Group in LA County, 2006 General Election



\* Voter turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election. Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# Voter Registration and Turnout By Geography

The geographic distribution of Asian American registered voters was similar to that of the Asian American population. Outside the city of Los Angeles, the largest number of Asian American registered voters in Los Angeles County were found in cities with large Asian American populations, including Torrance, Long Beach, Monterey Park, Cerritos, and Alhambra.

Asian Americans wield significant political power in most of the areas in which they reside in large numbers, yet that power is underdeveloped.

In Monterey Park, where Asian Americans comprise a majority of its five-seat City Council, approximately 60% of registered voters and 53% of voters (registered voters who cast ballots) were Asian American. While Asian Americans made up 45% or more of registered voters in six cities (Monterey Park, Rosemead, Cerritos, unincorporated Rowland Heights, Walnut, and Arcadia), they made up 45% or more of voters in only one (Monterey Park). While a slim majority of registered voters in Rosemead were Asian American, only 37% of voters citywide were.

Voter registration in 16 cities were one-quarter or more Asian American (including the smaller areas of East San Gabriel, Gardena, San Gabriel, San Marino, South San Gabriel, and Temple City), while voters in 14 cities were one-quarter or more Asian American (including the smaller areas of East San Gabriel, San Gabriel, San Marino, South San Gabriel, and Temple City).

**Table 3: Asian American Registered Voters, Voters by City in LA County, 2006 General Election**

CITY	# Asian American Registered Voters	% Registered Voters Asian American	# Asian American Voters	% Voters Asian American	Asian American Voter Turnout*
Los Angeles	125,783	9%	55,430	8%	44%
Torrance	16,747	23%	8,165	20%	49%
Long Beach	16,671	8%	6,129	6%	37%
Monterey Park	14,494	60%	6,007	53%	41%
Cerritos	13,684	49%	6,031	42%	44%
Alhambra	13,070	41%	5,405	34%	41%
Arcadia	12,259	45%	5,262	34%	43%
Glendale	10,651	13%	4,565	11%	43%
Diamond Bar	10,279	37%	3,933	28%	38%
Rowland Heights	9,509	48%	3,311	39%	35%
Hacienda Heights	9,281	34%	3,557	26%	38%
Rosemead	8,407	50%	2,503	37%	30%
El Monte	7,350	27%	2,450	21%	33%
Walnut	7,306	48%	2,696	38%	37%
West Covina	7,260	16%	2,740	13%	38%
<b>LA County</b>	<b>427,413</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>185,596</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>43%</b>

\* Voter turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.  
Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# Voter Registration and Turnout By Age

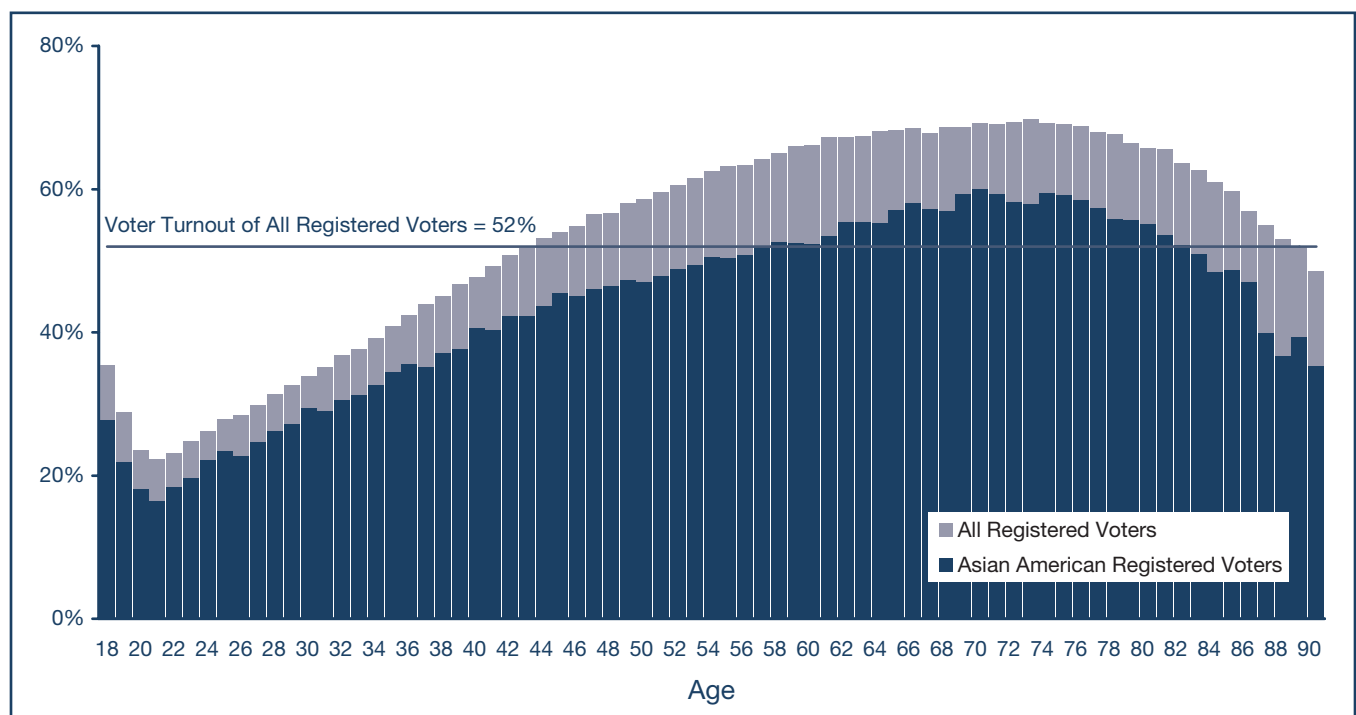
Voter turnout differed dramatically between young and old, both among all registered voters and Asian American registered voters specifically.

Nearly 65% of all registered voters 65 years of age or older voted in the 2006 General Election, compared to only 25% of all registered voters 18 to 24 years old. Similarly, while over 55% of Asian American registered voters 65 years of age or older cast ballots, only 20% of Asian American registered voters 18 to 24 years old did so.

Among Asian American registered voters, the disparities in voter turnout between young and old remained consistent between the 2002 and 2006 General Elections, with roughly 35 percentage points separating the turnout of registered voters 18 to 24 and those 65 or older in both elections.

Voter turnout differed dramatically between young and old

**Figure 5: Voter Turnout\* by Age and Race in LA County, 2006 General Election**



\* Voter turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.  
 Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

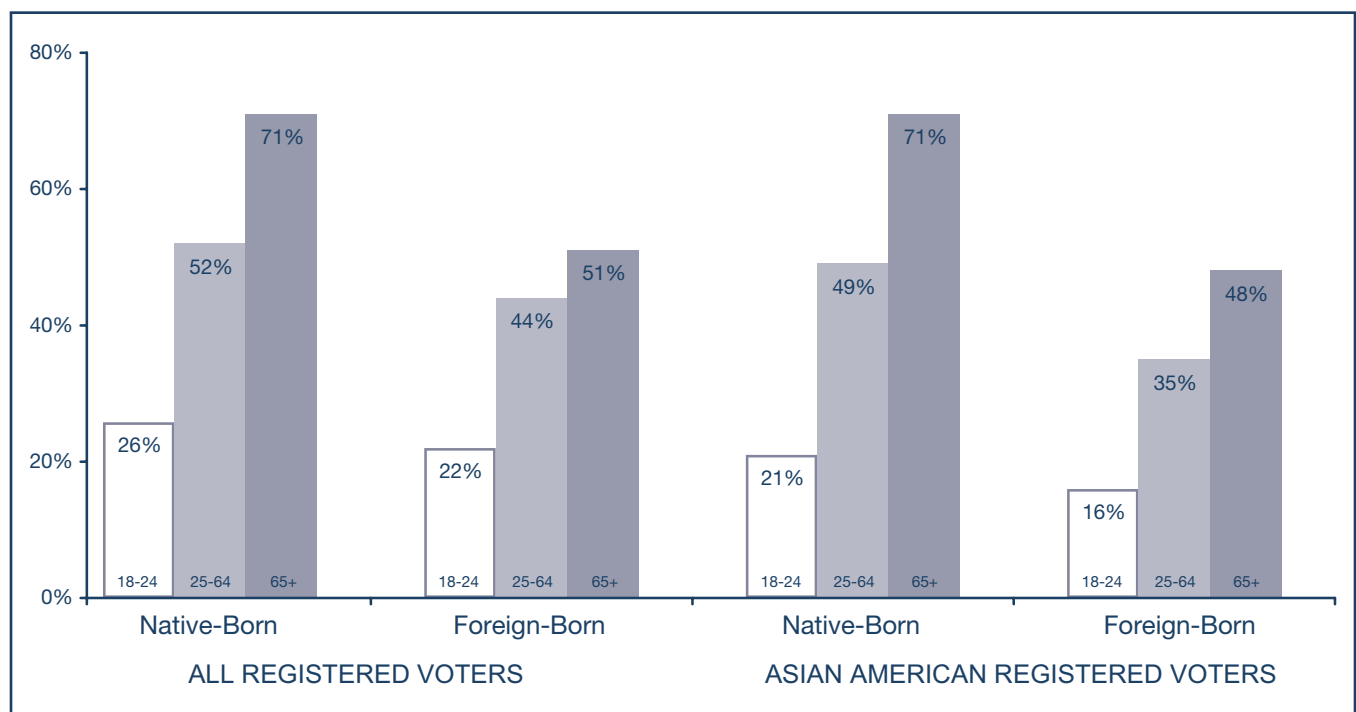
# Voter Registration and Turnout By Nativity

A majority of Asian Americans are immigrants. During the 2006 General Election, 59% of Asian American registered voters and 52% of Asian American voters (registered voters who cast ballots) were born outside the United States. Were there differences in voter turnout between native versus foreign-born registered voters?

According to Los Angeles County voter data, the foreign-born voted at lower rates than the native-born among both all registered voters and Asian American registered voters. While 52% of all native-born registered voters cast ballots on Election Day, only 43% of all foreign-born registered voters did so. Among Asian American registered voters, 46% of native-born voted on Election Day, while only 36% of foreign-born did so.

**59% of Asian American registered voters and 52% of Asian American voters were born outside the United States**

**Figure 6: Voter Turnout\* by Age, Nativity, and Race in LA County, 2006 General Election**



\* Voter turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.  
 Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

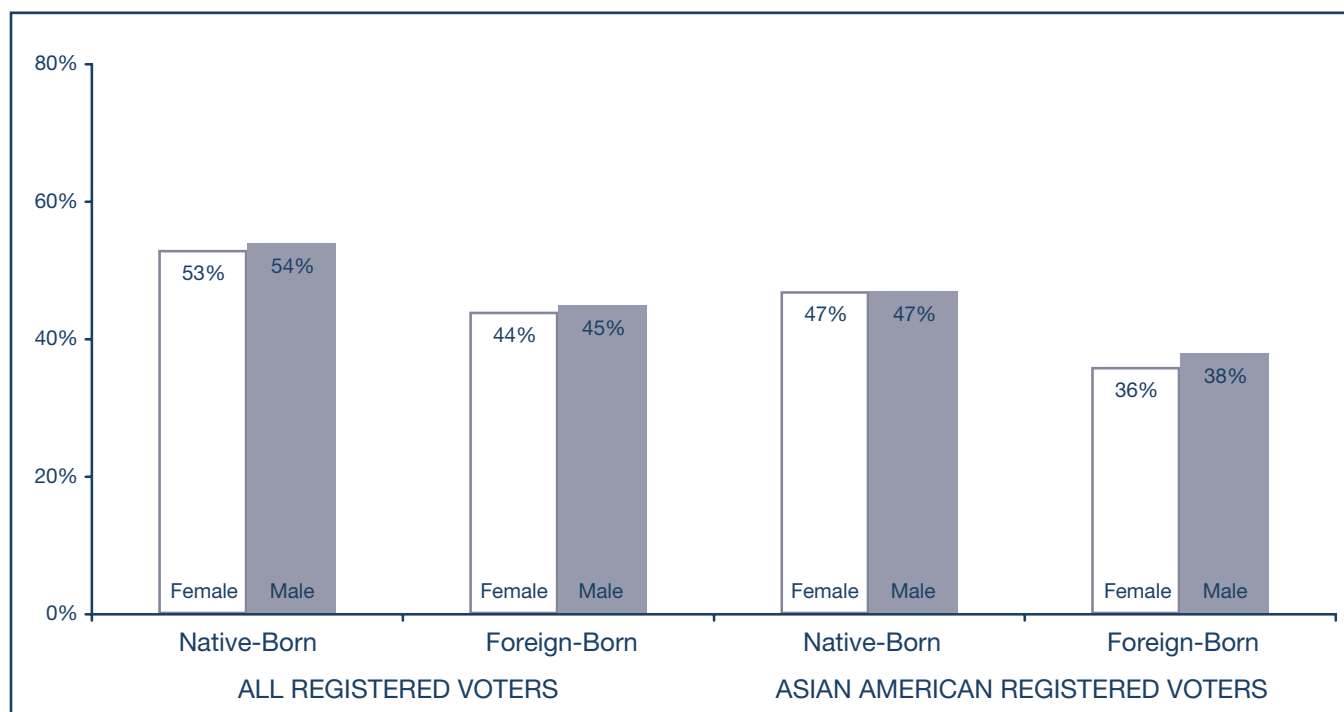
# Voter Registration and Turnout By Gender

Like most of America, Los Angeles County's population is disproportionately female. Women also outnumber men in the county's Asian American population, with over 52% of Asian Americans and 53% of Asian Americans of voting age being female. Similarly, 53% of Asian American registered voters and 52% of Asian American voters during the 2006 General Election were women.

Rates of voter turnout differed little between Asian American women and Asian American men. Among Asian American registered voters, 42% of women and 44% of men cast ballots on Election Day. These similarities persisted among both native and foreign-born Asian American registered voters.

**53% of Asian American registered voters and 52% of Asian American voters were women**

**Figure 7: Voter Turnout\* by Gender, Nativity, and Race in LA County, 2006 General Election**



\* Voter turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.  
 Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# Voter Registration and Turnout

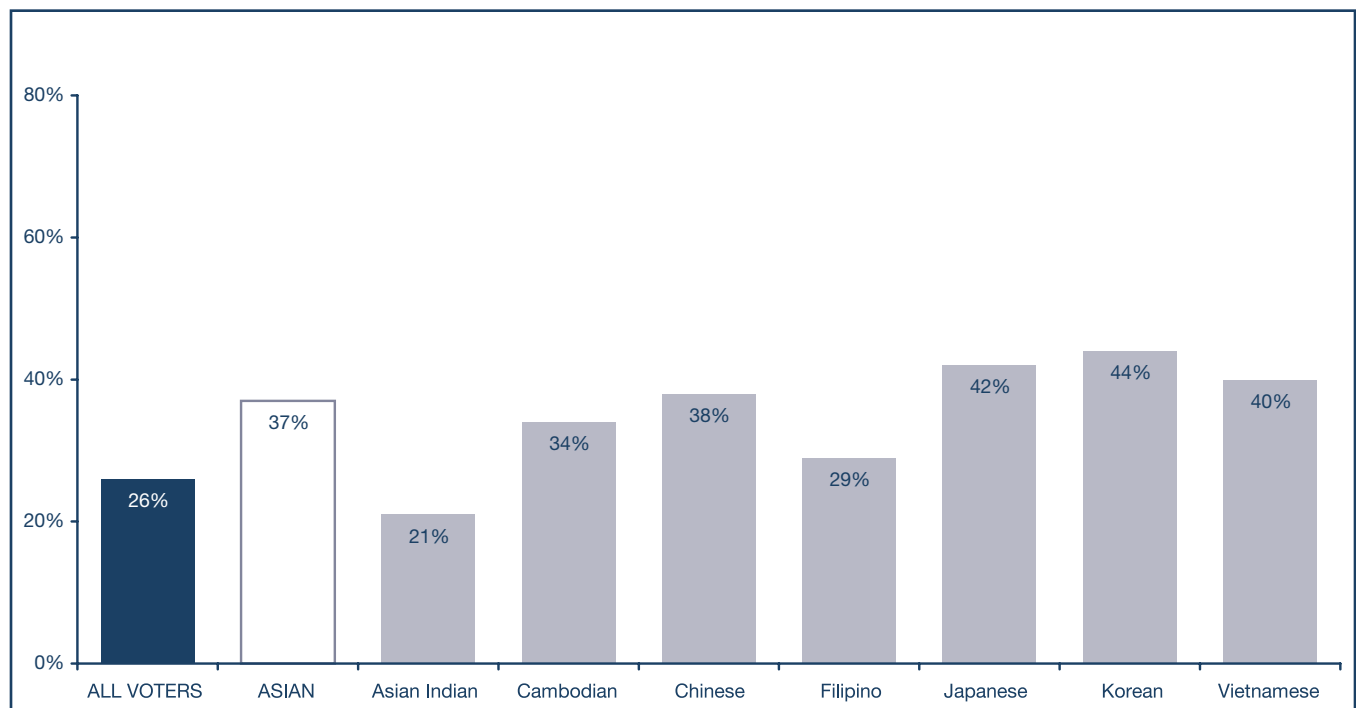
## Use of Absentee Ballot

Many see the absentee ballot as a way of making voting more accessible to those less likely to participate in the electoral process. During the 2006 General Election, roughly one in four voters in Los Angeles County voted by absentee ballot.

Asian Americans were significantly more likely to utilize the absentee ballot to vote. Approximately 37% of Asian Americans voting in the 2006 General Election voted by absentee. These rates varied by ethnic group, with Korean (44%), Japanese (42%), and Vietnamese (40%) American voters most likely to cast absentee ballots. In contrast, fewer Asian Indian (21%) voters voted by absentee.

Approximately  
37% of  
Asian Americans  
voting in the 2006  
General Election  
voted by  
absentee ballot

**Figure 8: Percent of Asian American Voters Voting by Absentee Ballot by Ethnic Group in LA County, 2006 General Election**



Source: Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007), Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# How Did Asian Americans Vote? Gubernatorial Race

## In Los Angeles County, a slim majority of Asian American voters supported the incumbent Governor

Data drawn from the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters show that Asian Americans voting in the 2006 General Election were disproportionately older, native-born, and party affiliated compared to Asian American registered voters countywide. How did these voters vote on Election Day?

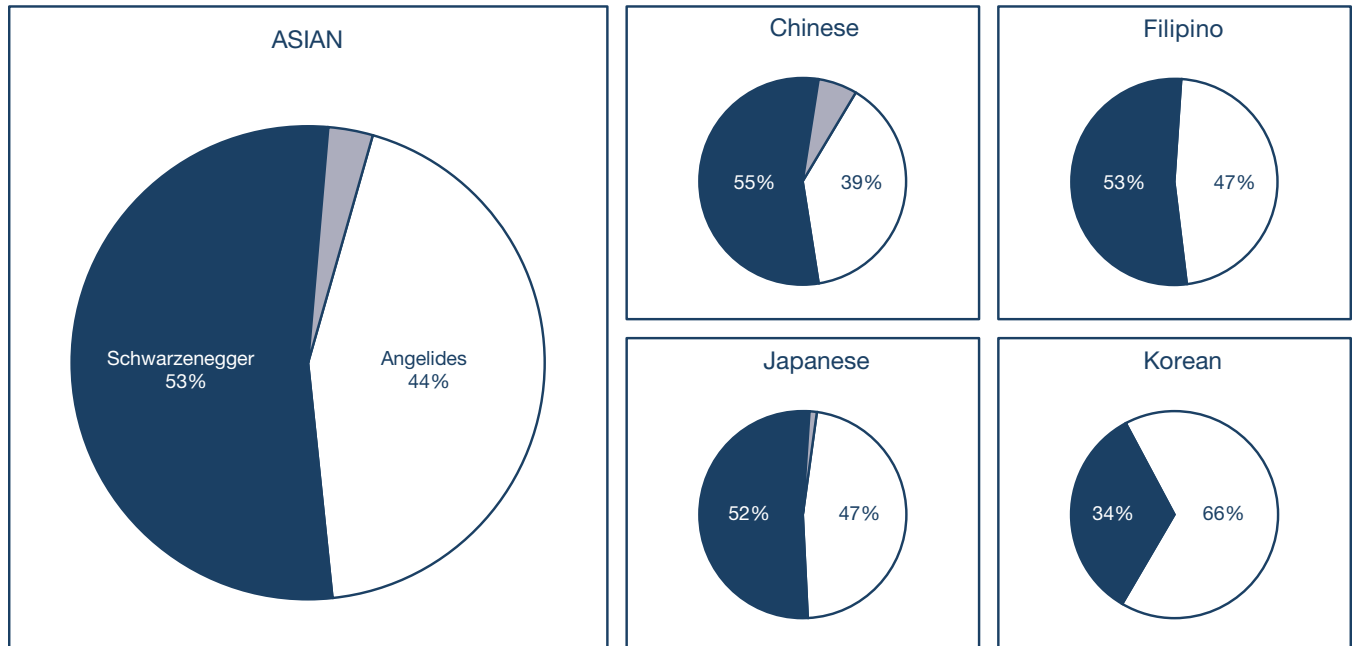
The highest profile contest in the 2006 General Election was the race for Governor between incumbent Arnold Schwarzenegger and challenger Phil Angelides.

Exit polling throughout Los Angeles County found that 53% of Asian American voters supported the incumbent Governor, while 44% supported the challenger. Support for Schwarzenegger was strongest among Chinese American voters polled, 55%

of whom voted for the incumbent Governor. A slim majority of Filipino and Japanese American voters also supported Schwarzenegger, while a clear majority of Korean American voters supported Angelides.

In contrast to prior presidential and gubernatorial elections, exit poll data show that Asian American Democrats were more likely to cross party lines to vote for Schwarzenegger than Asian American Republicans were to cross party lines to vote for Angelides. Approximately 32% of Asian American Democrats supported the incumbent Governor, while only 15% of Asian American Republicans supported the challenger. There was no clear preference among Asian American voters unaffiliated with a political party, with 48% supporting Angelides and 45% supporting Schwarzenegger.

**Figure 9: Asian American Gubernatorial Vote by Ethnic Group in LA County, 2006 General Election**



Source: 2006 Southern California Voter Survey, Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# How Did Asian Americans Vote? Ballot Measures

In addition to the Governor's race, the 2006 General Election featured several statewide ballot measures of particular interest to Asian American communities.

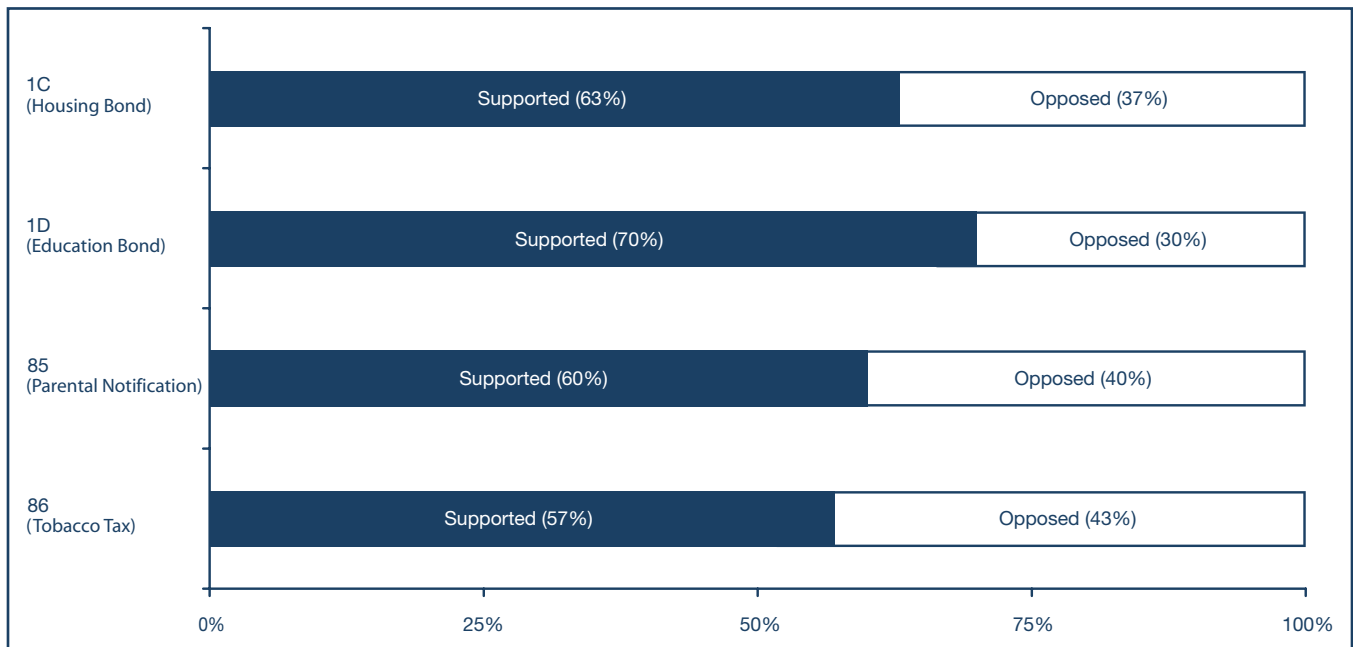
Proposition 1C authorized a state bond supporting housing for battered women and their children, low-income seniors, and other needy persons. Proposition 1D authorized a state bond to reduce overcrowding in public schools. Proposition 85 would have instituted a waiting period and parental notification in cases where a minor seeks an abortion. Finally, Proposition 86 would have

instituted a new tax on tobacco to generate funds supporting health care. Statewide, Propositions 1C and 1D passed, while Propositions 85 and 86 were defeated. In Los Angeles County, Propositions 1C, 1D, and 86 received support from a majority of voters, while Proposition 85 did not.

Asian American voters in Los Angeles County supported all four ballot measures. Among Asian Americans surveyed, 63% supported Proposition 1C, 70% supported Proposition 1D, 60% supported Proposition 85, and 57% supported Proposition 86.

Exit polling found support for each across Asian American ethnic groups surveyed, with three exceptions. Chinese American voters were divided on Proposition 1C (Housing Bond), with equal numbers supporting and opposing the measure. Chinese American voters were also divided on Proposition 85 (Parental Notification), while 58% of Japanese American voters were opposed to the measure that would have required doctors in the state of California to notify parents of minors receiving an abortion.

**Figure 10: Asian American Vote on Statewide Ballot Measures in LA County, 2006 General Election**



Source: 2006 Southern California Voter Survey, Asian Pacific American Legal Center

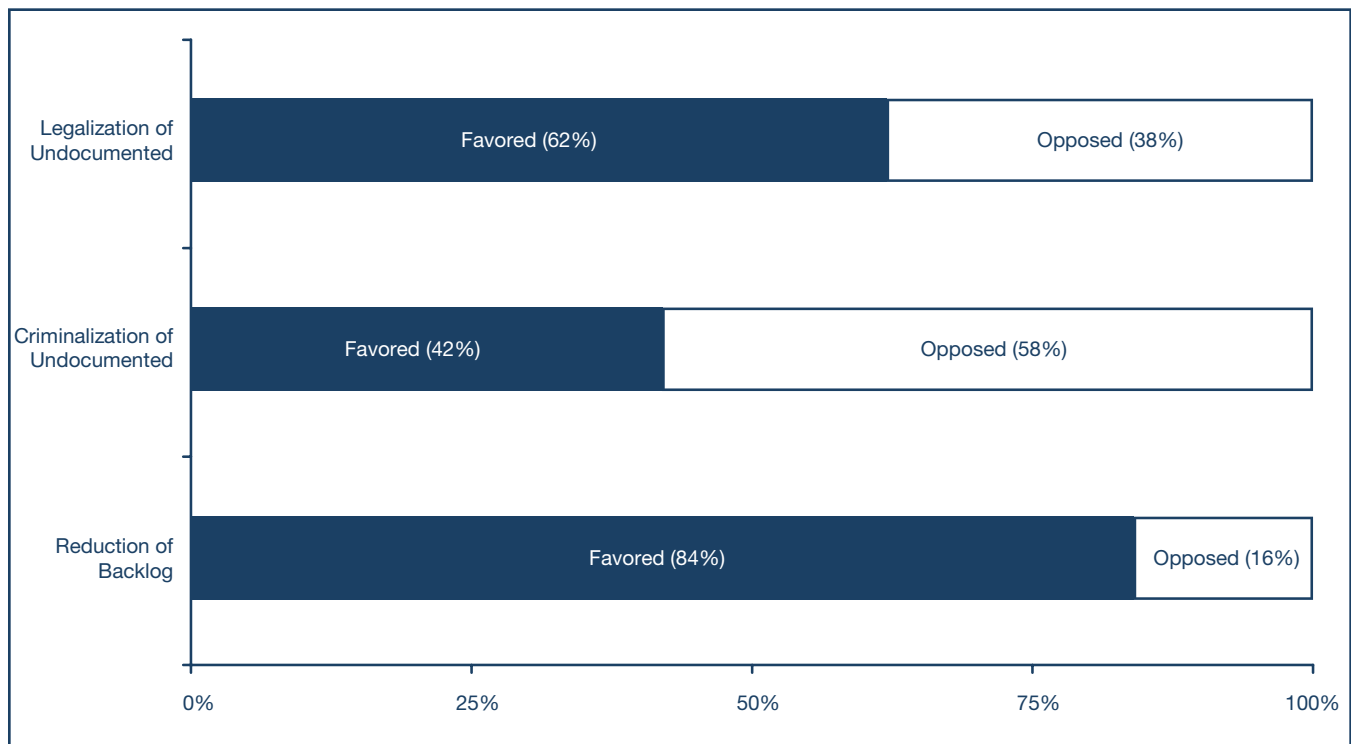
# How Did Asian Americans Vote? Attitudes Toward Immigration Reform

Asian American voters voiced strong support for just and humane approaches to immigration reform

Immigration has always been among this country's most controversial issues. The 2006 Southern California Voter Survey asked voters about their support for or opposition to key components of comprehensive immigration reform, including proposals to provide the undocumented with a pathway to citizenship, further criminalize the undocumented, and reduce the backlog of cases of those waiting to enter the United States.

Asian American voters in Los Angeles County voiced strong support for just and humane approaches to immigration reform. While a clear majority of Asian American voters supported legalization and opposed further criminalization of the undocumented, an astounding 84% supported efforts to reduce the backlog.

**Figure 11: Percent of Asian American Voters Favoring, Opposing Components of Comprehensive Immigration Reform in LA County, 2006 General Election**



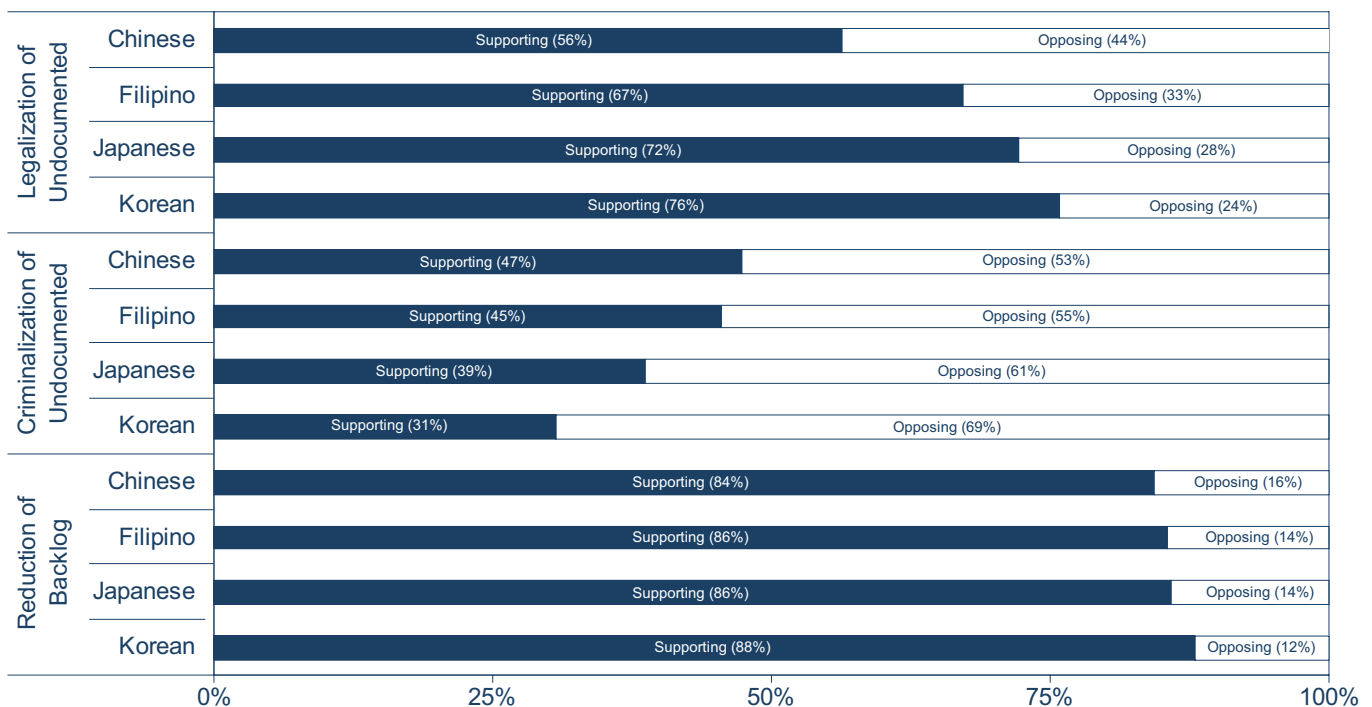
Source: 2006 Southern California Voter Survey, Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# How Did Asian Americans Vote? Attitudes Toward Immigration Reform

Support for just and humane approaches to comprehensive immigration reform was consistent across all Asian American ethnic groups surveyed. Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and Korean American voters surveyed during the 2006 General Election supported legalization of the undocumented, opposed criminalization of the undocumented, and supported mechanisms to reduce the backlog. Support for just and humane approaches to immigration reform was particularly strong among Korean American voters surveyed.

Support for just and humane immigration reform was consistent across all Asian American ethnic groups surveyed

**Figure 12: Percent of Asian American Voters Supporting, Opposing Components of Comprehensive Immigration Reform by Ethnic Group in LA County, 2006 General Election**



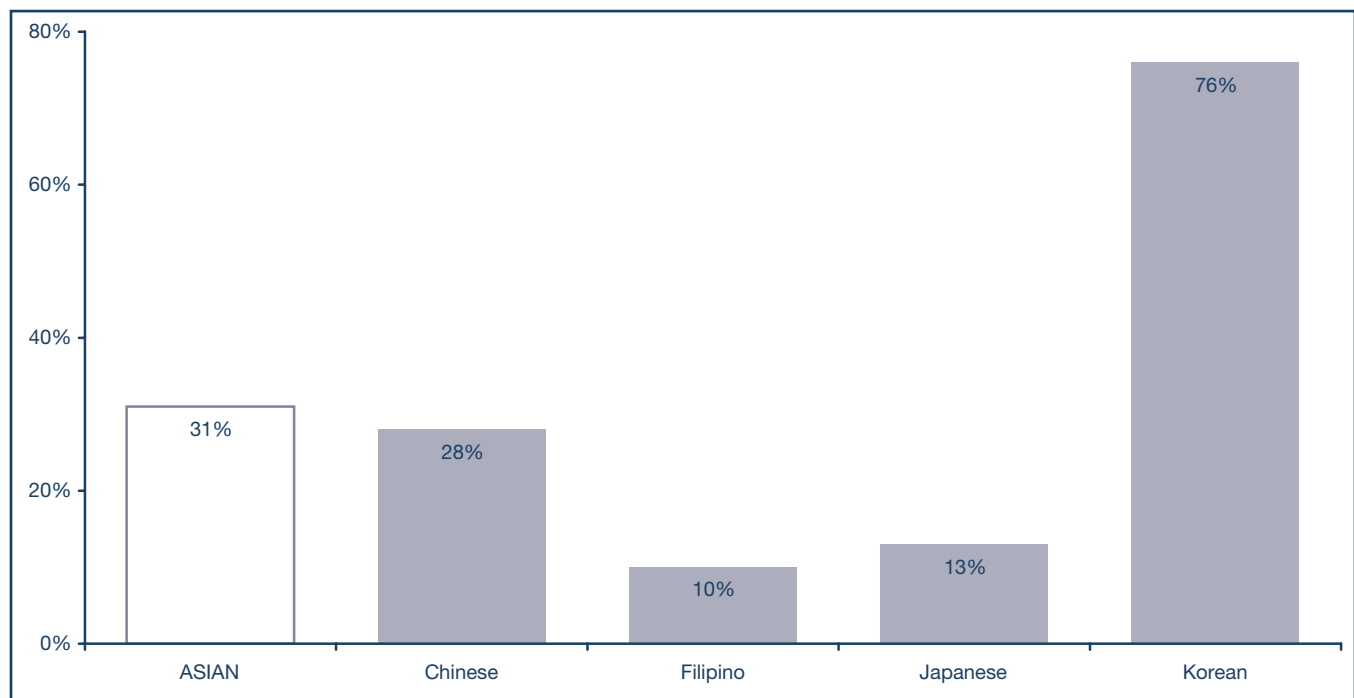
Source: 2006 Southern California Voter Survey, Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# How Did Asian Americans Vote? Language Assistance

31% of Asian American voters were limited-English proficient

As a disproportionately immigrant population, Asian American voters face language barriers. Approximately 31% of Asian American voters surveyed during the 2006 General Election were limited-English proficient (LEP), or experienced some difficulty communicating in English. Rates of limited-English proficiency were dramatically high among Korean American voters, with 76% of those surveyed being LEP. Approximately 28% of Chinese, 13% of Japanese, and 10% of Filipino American voters were also limited-English proficient.

**Figure 13: Limited-English Proficiency Among Asian American Voters by Ethnic Group in LA County, 2006 General Election**



Source: 2006 Southern California Voter Survey, Asian Pacific American Legal Center

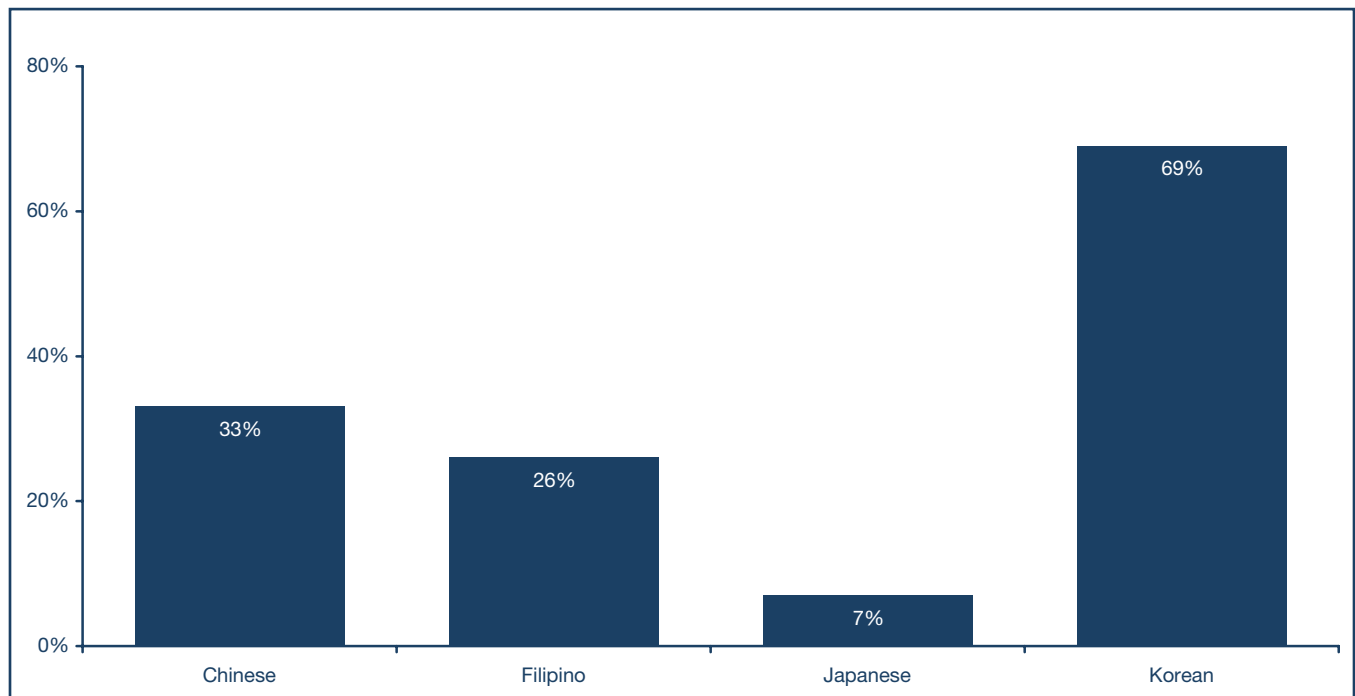
# How Did Asian Americans Vote? Language Assistance

Recognizing that elections conducted in English only serve to disenfranchise thousands of limited-English proficient voters, Section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act requires certain counties throughout the country to provide assistance to voters in Asian languages. Under Section 203, Los Angeles County is required to provide written and oral assistance to voters in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Exit polling during the 2006 General Election showed that Asian American voters used the assistance provided under Section 203. Approximately 69% of Korean, 33% of Chinese, 26% of Filipino, and 7% of Japanese American voters used written or oral language assistance in voting.

Asian American voters used the language assistance provided under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act

**Figure 14: Use of Language Assistance by Asian American Voters by Ethnic Group in LA County, 2006 General Election**



Source: 2006 Southern California Voter Survey, Asian Pacific American Legal Center

# Policy Recommendations

## ***Engage in Voter Mobilization Efforts Targeting Asian Americans***

Asian American communities are growing dramatically throughout the Southland. Data from Los Angeles County's Voter File show that Asian Americans are also growing as a proportion of the county's electorate. Yet these data also show that voter turnout among Asian American registered Voters Remains lower than that of all registered voters.

With California's Primary Election now held in February, Asian Americans in Los Angeles County and throughout the state have a unique opportunity to impact the 2008 Presidential Elections. Doing so will require the implementation of large-scale voter engagement and mobilization efforts targeting Asian Americans. In addition to citizenship and voter registration programs, get-out-the-vote campaigns must be developed and targeted to those for whom they are most likely to be effective. More effective strategies to engage those least likely to vote, including immigrants and youth, should also be developed.

## ***Improve Language Assistance to Asian American Voters***

Both federal and state law require certain jurisdictions to provide written and oral assistance to voters in Asian languages. Exit poll data consistently demonstrates the need for and use of this assistance among Asian American voters.

Yet failure to comply with federal and state law has limited the assistance available to Asian American voters. Community organizations should work collaboratively with county election officials to ensure the availability of both translated written materials at the polls and bilingual poll workers. In California, Assembly Bill 614 would further address these concerns, requiring the California Secretary of State's Office to play a greater role in monitoring county readiness to serve limited-English proficient voters in advance of elections.

## ***Address Asian American Concerns Regarding Immigration Reform***

As Congress considers proposals for comprehensive immigration reform, all immigrant communities must have a voice in the debate. Yet Asian American voices on immigration reform have been marginalized, with many assuming our communities are not affected by or have no interest in the debate.

Contrary to public perception, exit poll data show that Asian American voters in Los Angeles County strongly support just and humane approaches to comprehensive immigration reform. Asian American voters surveyed supported the legalization of undocumented immigrants, opposed further criminalization of the undocumented, and supported mechanisms to reduce the backlog of immigrants waiting to enter the United States. Members of both the United States Senate and House of Representatives should consider these positions as they weigh proposals for reform.

# Methodology

*Asian Americans at the Ballot Box* draws from two sources of data: (1) the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters' Los Angeles County Voter File and (2) the 2006 Southern California Voter Survey.

## ***Los Angeles County Voter File***

Information on Asian American voter registration and turnout was drawn from the Los Angeles County Voter File, purchased from Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters Office on February 7, 2007 under strict disclosure limitations. These data include information on every voter in Los Angeles County, including their location, age, place of birth, and party affiliation. APALC estimated the racial and ethnic background of Asian American voters by matching voter names to ethnic name lists developed through an analysis of over 15 million birth and death records obtained from the California Department of Health Services.

## ***2006 Southern California Voter Survey***

Information on how Asian Americans voted was drawn from the 2006 Southern California Voter Survey. The Voter Survey is an exit poll, or survey of voters as they emerge from a polling place after having cast their vote on Election Day. APALC surveyed 2,181 voters, including 1,287 Asian Americans, on November 7, 2006 with regard to (1) their positions on candidates, ballot measures, and public policy issues, (2) their language ability and use of bilingual voter assistance mandated under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act, and (3) general demographic characteristics. More specifically, voters were asked how they voted in the Gubernatorial race, how they voted on four statewide ballot measures (Propositions 1C, 1D, 85, and 86), and their positions on key components of comprehensive immigration reform.

The questionnaire instrument was translated from English into eight languages: Chinese, Hindi, Khmer, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Languages were chosen based on an analysis of language need in Los Angeles County. To draw a representative sample of AAPIs, APALC employed a research design that augmented a random sample of precincts throughout Los Angeles County with an oversample of precincts with high AAPI registration. Precincts were randomly selected for inclusion from a list of all precincts in Los Angeles County. Because a simple random sample of precincts was likely to yield an inadequate number of AAPI voters, an oversample of precincts with high AAPI registration was conducted. Overall, voters were surveyed in 35 precincts countywide by student and other volunteers trained to administer questionnaire instruments. Data were weighted prior to analysis to most closely approximate the racial and ethnic background and party affiliation of voters on Election Day.

# Fact Sheet

## Cambodian American Voters, Los Angeles County 2006

### ***Cambodian Americans voting in the 2006 General Election were...***

**61% Foreign-Born**

**12% 18 to 24**

**47% Female, 53% Male**

**34% Democrat, 38% Republican**

**24% Decline to State**

Sources:  
Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007),  
Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

2006 Southern California Voter Survey,  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

### **BY CITY**

**Table CA1: Largest Number of Cambodian American Registered Voters by City in LA County, 2006 General Election**

CITY	Registered Voters		Voters		Cambodian Am Voter Turnout*
	# Cambodian Am	% Cambodian Am	# Cambodian Am	% Cambodian Am	
Long Beach	4,162	2%	769	1%	18%
Los Angeles	1,282	0%	453	0%	35%
Signal Hill	221	4%	36	1%	16%
Lakewood	185	0%	34	0%	18%
Rosemead	165	1%	48	1%	29%
<b>LA County</b>	<b>8,619</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2,220</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>26%</b>

### **BY AGE**

**Table CA2: Turnout\* of Cambodian American Registered Voters by Age in LA County, 2006 General Election**

	Age			
	18 to 24	25 to 64	65 & Over	All Cambodian Am
% of Cambodian American Registered Voters Who Voted in 2006 General Election	11%	29%	39%	26%

\* Turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.

# Fact Sheet

## Chinese American Voters, Los Angeles County 2006

### *Chinese Americans voting in the 2006 General Election were...*

**60% Foreign-Born**

**5% 18 to 24**

**51% Female, 49% Male**

**30% Democrat, 30% Republican**

**37% Decline to State**

Sources:  
Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007),  
Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

2006 Southern California Voter Survey,  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

### BY CITY

**Table CH1: Largest Number of Chinese American Registered Voters by City in LA County, 2006 General Election**

CITY	Registered Voters		Voters		Chinese Am Voter Turnout*
	# Chinese Am	% Chinese Am	# Chinese Am	% Chinese Am	
Los Angeles	25,100	2%	10,956	2%	44%
Arcadia	7,991	29%	3,379	22%	42%
Monterey Park	7,933	33%	3,080	27%	39%
Alhambra	7,392	23%	3,013	19%	41%
Hacienda Heights	5,375	20%	1,927	14%	36%
<b>LA County</b>	<b>128,950</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>53,217</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>41%</b>

### BY AGE

**Table CH2: Turnout\* of Chinese American Registered Voters by Age in LA County, 2006 General Election**

	Age			
	18 to 24	25 to 64	65 & Over	All Chinese Am
% of Chinese American Registered Voters Who Voted in 2006 General Election	20%	41%	49%	41%

### ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION REFORM

**Tables CH3-5: Chinese American Voter Attitudes Toward Immigration Reform in LA County, 2006 General Election**

#### Legalization

Creating a Way for Undocumented Immigrants to Legalize Their Status?	% of Chinese Am Voters
Favor	56%
Oppose	44%

#### Criminalization

Making Being Undocumented a Crime?	% of Chinese Am Voters
Favor	47%
Oppose	53%

#### Backlog

Reducing the Amount of Time the Government Takes to Process Paperwork for Immigrants Waiting to Enter the United States?	% of Chinese Am Voters
Favor	84%
Oppose	16%

\* Turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.

# Fact Sheet

## Filipino American Voters, Los Angeles County 2006

### *Filipino Americans voting in the 2006 General Election were...*

**63% Foreign-Born**

**5% 18 to 24**

**56% Female, 44% Male**

**43% Democrat, 34% Republican**

**21% Decline to State**

Sources:  
Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007),  
Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

2006 Southern California Voter Survey,  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

### BY CITY

**Table FI1: Largest Number of Filipino American Registered Voters by City in LA County, 2006 General Election**

CITY	Registered Voters		Voters		Filipino Am Voter Turnout*
	# Filipino Am	% Filipino Am	# Filipino Am	% Filipino Am	
Los Angeles	35,887	3%	16,358	2%	46%
Carson	6,188	14%	2,524	12%	41%
Long Beach	6,082	3%	2,556	3%	42%
Glendale	3,698	4%	1,673	4%	45%
West Covina	2,760	6%	1,116	5%	40%
<b>LA County</b>	<b>98,205</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>45,356</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>46%</b>

### BY AGE

**Table FI2: Turnout\* of Filipino American Registered Voters by Age in LA County, 2006 General Election**

	Age			
	18 to 24	25 to 64	65 & Over	All Filipino Am
% of Filipino American Registered Voters Who Voted in 2006 General Election	22%	45%	57%	46%

### ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION REFORM

**Tables FI3-5: Filipino American Voter Attitudes Toward Immigration Reform in LA County, 2006 General Election**

#### Legalization

Creating a Way for Undocumented Immigrants to Legalize Their Status?	% of Filipino Am Voters
Favor	67%
Oppose	33%

#### Criminalization

Making Being Undocumented a Crime?	% of Filipino Am Voters
Favor	45%
Oppose	55%

#### Backlog

Reducing the Amount of Time the Government Takes to Process Paperwork for Immigrants Waiting to Enter the United States?	% of Filipino Am Voters
Favor	86%
Oppose	14%

\* Turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.

# Fact Sheet

## Indian American Voters, Los Angeles County 2006

***Indian Americans voting in  
the 2006 General Election were...***

**57% Foreign-Born**

**7% 18 to 24**

**46% Female, 54% Male**

**52% Democrat, 20% Republican**

**25% Decline to State**

Sources:  
Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007),  
Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

2006 Southern California Voter Survey,  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

### BY CITY

**Table IN1: Largest Number of Indian American Voters by City in LA County, 2006 General Election**

CITY	Registered Voters		Voters		Indian Am Voter Turnout*
	# Indian Am	% Indian Am	# Indian Am	% Indian Am	
Los Angeles	7,997	1%	3,106	0%	39%
Cerritos	1,180	4%	476	3%	40%
Diamond Bar	818	3%	325	2%	40%
Torrance	534	1%	234	1%	44%
Long Beach	496	0%	229	0%	46%
<b>LA County</b>	<b>20,695</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>8,568</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>41%</b>

### BY AGE

**Table IN2: Turnout\* of Indian American Registered Voters by Age in LA County, 2006 General Election**

	Age			
	18 to 24	25 to 64	65 & Over	All Indian Am
% of Indian American Registered Voters Who Voted in 2006 General Election	23%	42%	52%	41%

\* Turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.

# Fact Sheet

## Japanese American Voters, Los Angeles County 2006

### Japanese Americans voting in the 2006 General Election were...

7% Foreign-Born

4% 18 to 24

56% Female, 44% Male

49% Democrat, 33% Republican

16% Decline to State

Sources:  
Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007),  
Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

2006 Southern California Voter Survey,  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

### BY CITY

Table JA1: Largest Number of Japanese American Registered Voters by City in LA County, 2006 General Election

CITY	Registered Voters		Voters		Japanese Am Voter Turnout*
	# Japanese Am	% Japanese Am	# Japanese Am	% Japanese Am	
Los Angeles	13,406	1%	7,776	1%	58%
Torrance	5,072	7%	3,040	7%	60%
Gardena	2,228	10%	1,278	11%	57%
Monterey Park	1,782	7%	1,066	9%	60%
Long Beach	1,378	1%	761	1%	55%
<b>LA County</b>	<b>42,880</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>25,827</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>60%</b>

### BY AGE

Table JA2: Turnout\* of Japanese American Registered Voters by Nativity and Age in LA County, 2006 General Election

	Age			
	18 to 24	25 to 64	65 & Over	All Japanese Am
% of Japanese American Registered Voters Who Voted in 2006 General Election	26%	57%	69%	60%

### ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION REFORM

Tables JA3-5: Japanese American Voter Attitudes Toward Immigration Reform in LA County, 2006 General Election

#### Legalization

Creating a Way for Undocumented Immigrants to Legalize Their Status?	% of Japanese Am Voters
Favor	72%
Oppose	28%

#### Criminalization

Making Being Undocumented a Crime?	% of Japanese Am Voters
Favor	39%
Oppose	61%

#### Backlog

Reducing the Amount of Time the Government Takes to Process Paperwork for Immigrants Waiting to Enter the United States?	% of Japanese Am Voters
Favor	86%
Oppose	14%

\* Turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.

# Fact Sheet

## Korean American Voters, Los Angeles County 2006

### *Korean Americans voting in the 2006 General Election were...*

**79% Foreign-Born**

**4% 18 to 24**

**52% Female, 48% Male**

**41% Democrat, 32% Republican**

**26% Decline to State**

Sources:  
Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007),  
Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

2006 Southern California Voter Survey,  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

### BY CITY

**Table KO1: Largest Number of Korean American Registered Voters by City in LA County, 2006 General Election**

CITY	Registered Voters		Voters		Korean Am Voter Turnout*
	# Korean Am	% Korean Am	# Korean Am	% Korean Am	
Los Angeles	26,802	2%	10,870	2%	41%
Glendale	3,400	4%	1,156	3%	34%
Cerritos	3,045	11%	1,134	8%	37%
Torrance	2,911	4%	1,064	3%	37%
Diamond Bar	1,512	6%	488	4%	32%
<b>LA County</b>	<b>60,458</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>23,746</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>39%</b>

### BY AGE

**Table KO2: Turnout\* of Korean American Registered Voters by Age in LA County, 2006 General Election**

	Age			
	18 to 24	25 to 64	65 & Over	All Korean Am
% of Korean American Registered Voters Who Voted in 2006 General Election	15%	35%	57%	39%

### ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION REFORM

**Tables KO3-5: Korean American Voter Attitudes Toward Immigration Reform in LA County, 2006 General Election**

<i>Legalization</i>		<i>Criminalization</i>		<i>Backlog</i>	
Creating a Way for Undocumented Immigrants to Legalize Their Status?	% of Korean Am Voters	Making Being Undocumented a Crime?	% of Korean Am Voters	Reducing the Amount of Time the Government Takes to Process Paperwork for Immigrants Waiting to Enter Enter the United States?	% of Korean Am Voters
Favor	76%	Favor	31%	Favor	88%
Oppose	24%	Oppose	69%	Oppose	12%

\* Turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.

# Fact Sheet

## Vietnamese American Voters, Los Angeles County 2006

### ***Vietnamese Americans voting in the 2006 General Election were...***

**81% Foreign-Born**

**7% 18 to 24**

**47% Female, 53% Male**

**32% Democrat, 38% Republican**

**26% Decline to State**

Sources:  
Los Angeles County Voter File (February 7, 2007),  
Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

2006 Southern California Voter Survey,  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

### **BY CITY**

**Table VI1: Largest Number of Vietnamese American Registered Voters by City in LA County, 2006 General Election**

CITY	Registered Voters		Voters		Vietnamese Am Voter Turnout*
	# Vietnamese Am	% Vietnamese Am	# Vietnamese Am	% Vietnamese Am	
Los Angeles	9,576	1%	3,510	0%	37%
El Monte	2,704	10%	902	8%	33%
Rosemead	2,694	16%	770	11%	29%
Long Beach	2,412	1%	881	1%	37%
Alhambra	2,062	6%	781	5%	38%
<b>LA County</b>	<b>40,585</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>15,137</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>37%</b>

### **BY AGE**

**Table VI2: Turnout\* of Vietnamese American Registered Voters by Nativity and Age in LA County, 2006 General Election**

	Age			
	18 to 24	25 to 64	65 & Over	All Vietnamese Am
% of Vietnamese American Registered Voters Who Voted in 2006 General Election	19%	37%	50%	37%

\* Turnout represents the percent of registered voters eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election who cast ballots in that election.



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