



# The Impact of the Latino Vote on Election 2020

## NATIONAL AND STATE PROJECTIONS



### NATIONAL

**ELECTION  
2020**

**NALEO Educational Fund projects that at least 14.6 million Latinos will cast ballots nationally in November.**

An increase of 15% from November 2016.

**Election 2020:** More than 14 million Latino voters are expected to cast ballots this November nationwide, an increase of 15 percent from Election 2016. Between 2000 and 2016, the Latino vote nationwide grew from 5,934,000 to 12,682,000, an increase of 114 percent.



### ARIZONA

**ELECTION 2020: More than 595,000 Latinos are expected to cast ballots this November in Arizona,** an increase of nearly 10 percent from Election 2016.

Since the turn of the century, Latino turnout in Arizona Presidential elections has increased dramatically by 120 percent, from 247,000 in 2000 to more than 543,000 in 2016.



### CALIFORNIA

**ELECTION 2020: Nearly 4 million Latino voters will make their voices heard at the ballot box in 2020,** an increase of 20 percent from Election 2016.

Latino voter turnout in California more than doubled from 1,597,000 in 2000, to 3,345,000 in 2016, an increase of 109 percent.



### COLORADO

**ELECTION 2020: Nearly 280,000 Latino voters will make their voices heard at the ballot box in 2020,** an increase of 17 percent from Election 2016.

Since the turn of the century, Latino turnout in Colorado Presidential elections has increased by 50 percent, from 158,000 in 2000 to 237,000 in 2016.



### FLORIDA

**ELECTION 2020: More than 1.8 million Hispanic voters will make their voices heard at the ballot box in 2020,** an increase of 18 percent from Election 2016.

Since the turn of the century, Hispanic turnout in Florida Presidential elections has increased dramatically by 129 percent, from 678,000 in 2000 to more than 1.5 million in 2016.



## ILLINOIS

**ELECTION 2020: More than 527,000 Latinos are expected to cast ballots this November in Illinois, a slight increase from Election 2016.**

Since the beginning of the century, Latino turnout in Illinois Presidential elections increased by 142 percent, from 218,000 in 2000 to 527,000 in 2016.



## NEVADA

**ELECTION 2020: More than 238,000 Latino voters will make their voices heard at the ballot box in 2020, an increase of 22 percent from Election 2016.**

Between 2004 and 2016, Latino voter turnout in Nevada in presidential elections has grown from 72,000 to 196,000, an increase of 172 percent.



## NEW YORK

**ELECTION 2020: More than 1 million Latino New Yorkers will make their voices heard at the ballot box in 2020, an increase of 14.6 percent from Election 2016.**

Since the turn of the century, Latino turnout in New York Presidential elections has increased dramatically by 75 percent, from 502,000 in 2000 to more than 878,000 in 2016.



## NORTH CAROLINA

**ELECTION 2020: Nearly 230,000 Latino voters will make their voices heard at the ballot box in 2020, an increase of 23 percent from Election 2016.**

Over the last decade, Latino turnout in North Carolina Presidential elections dramatically increased by 142 percent, from 77,000 in 2008 to 186,000 in 2016.



## TEXAS

**ELECTION 2020: Nearly 2.2 million Latino voters will make their voices heard at the ballot box in 2020, an increase of 12 percent from Election 2016.**

Since the beginning of the century, Latino turnout in Texas Presidential elections increased by 49 percent, from 1.3 million in 2000 to nearly 2 million in 2016.



Latinos Shaping the Political Landscape  
as Voters in 2020

## METHODOLOGY

NALEO Educational Fund derived our projection of the Latino vote in Election 2020 by using a statistical modeling approach that takes into account trends in Latino voter turnout in the past several relevant Presidential election cycles. We determined Latino voter turnout in those cycles from Census Bureau data in its CPS biennial November supplements, Voting and Registration in the Elections of November 2000-2016. Because the projections are based on past voting trends, they do not take into account the potential increase or decrease in Latino turnout that could result from challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, more robust voter engagement efforts, naturalization trends, restrictive voter registration and voting laws or other factors.

# OVERVIEW

The Latino vote will help determine the outcome of the Presidential election in November 2020, and will have a decisive impact on Congressional, state and local elections throughout the nation. NALEO Educational Fund projects that at least 14.6 million Latinos will cast ballots nationally in November, an increase of 15% from November 2016. We have also presented estimates of the Latino vote in November 2020 for several states with relatively large Latino populations. These estimates are merely a floor, based on the steady growth of the Latino vote in the past two decades.

Election 2020 is taking place in an unprecedented economic, social and public health environment for any Presidential election in our nation's history. Thus, there are several factors that our projections cannot fully capture that will affect Latino turnout in November 2020. First, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, jurisdictions are making dramatic changes to how they provide access to the ballot box. In some cases, these involve promoting vote-by-mail (VBM) as the primary way of casting a ballot, and reducing the options for in-person voting. In some states, during the Election 2020 primaries, voters experienced long lines and confusion about where and how to vote.

In addition, there are indications that the pandemic is having an impact on Latino enthusiasm to vote in Election 2020. In its February 2020 Univision Noticias /Latino Community Foundation poll, research firm Latino Decisions found that 73% of Latinos nationwide indicated that they were almost certain to vote, and 12% indicated that they would probably vote. In contrast, in the firm's April 2020 SOMOS poll, only 60% of Latinos indicated that they were almost certain vote, and 15% indicated that they would probably vote.

To ameliorate the challenges created by the pandemic, it is important that election officials provide a broad range of both VBM and in-person opportunities for Latino voters in the general election. State and local officials must work with community organizations to conduct robust voter education and outreach to mobilize Latinos to vote and to provide them with information about voting options.

Moreover, various states continue to implement laws or practices that make it harder for Latinos and other voters to register and vote. For example, as many as 16 states, including Texas, do not provide universal access to VBM, and while some may relax their restrictions during the pandemic, the lack of access to VBM could create a significant obstacle to Latino voting.

In addition, trends in naturalization applications and approvals may affect the number of Latino voters in Election 2020. According to data from the Office of Immigration Statistics, between FY 2016 and 2019, the annual number of persons naturalized annually increased from 753,060 to 834,000. However, U.S. citizenship applicants are experiencing significant delays in waiting times for application processing and the conduct of swearing-in ceremonies, which the pandemic has exacerbated. For example, according to data from United States Citizenship and

Immigration Services (USCIS), the agency was making some progress in reducing its naturalization backlog between FY 2018 and 2019, with the number of pending applications decreasing from 738,148 to 645,576. However, the backlog has started to grow again, reaching 652,431 at the end of the first quarter of FY 2020 and 700,885 at the end of the second quarter of FY 2020. Because Latino naturalized citizens have higher turnout rates than native-born Latinos, significant changes in the number of Latinos who naturalize before Election 2020 could have an impact on Latino turnout.

Another factor which will have a significant effect on Election 2020 Latino turnout is the extent to which political parties and candidates invest in Latino mobilization for the November general elections. Typically, political parties and candidates focus their outreach on voters who are fully engaged in the political process and regularly vote, which means many Latinos are not contacted during the lead-up to elections. Moreover, in Presidential elections, parties and campaigns tend to target “battleground states,” and they have ignored states with sizeable Latino electorates such as Arizona, California, New York, and Texas where campaigns assume the outcome of statewide Presidential contests.

According to U.S. Census 2018 American Community Survey data (1-year estimates), over half (56%) of Latino voting age citizens live in these four states alone. However, in 2020, political observers believe that there will be competitive Presidential contests in states which have not traditionally been considered battleground states, such as Arizona and Texas, which may result in more investment in Latino mobilization and voter outreach in those states.

Ultimately, Latino turnout in Election 2020 will provide both an opportunity to assess the key role of Latinos in the 2020 political landscape, and serve as a measure of the strength of our democracy. Latinos comprise over one-sixth of our nation’s population (18%), and nearly one of every seven of its voting age citizens (13%). Our nation’s democracy cannot be responsive and accountable to all Americans unless Latinos have a strong voice in its electoral process.