



## NEWS RELEASE

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**\*\*NEW ANALYSIS AND BATTLEGROUND STATE POLLING RELEASED\*\***

### **Latinos Poised for Potential Gains in Congress, Statewide Office and State Legislatures Post-Election 2016**

*Latino candidates running for top offices in at least 38 states, including in regions with emerging communities such as the Plains States, Midwest, Deep South and New England*

*Latest polling shows Hillary Clinton with sizeable lead among Latino voters in key battleground states, including Arizona, Florida, Nevada and North Carolina*

**Washington, D.C.** – One day before the last presidential debate in Las Vegas, Nevada, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund released new Election 2016 analysis and polling during a briefing at the National Press Club today. Video of the event and all materials are available at [www.naleo.org/election2016briefing](http://www.naleo.org/election2016briefing).

“Latinos from coast-to-coast continue to make their mark on the nation’s political landscape as both voters and candidates,” stated Arturo Vargas, NALEO Educational Fund executive director. “Election 2016 will be no different, with Latinos poised to show their political power in traditional Latino states like Texas and California, as well as in the emerging Latino areas of the Deep South, Midwest and New England.”

According to [new analysis](#) from NALEO Educational Fund, Latinos are poised to see potential representation gains at the federal and state levels following Election 2016. Running for top posts in 38 states nationwide this election season, Latino candidates are demonstrating their ability to successfully pursue seats in the executive and legislative branches of government across the country. Key [findings](#) show:

- **The number of Latinos in the U.S. Senate could increase from three to five**, if all competitive contenders win their bids (incumbent U.S. Senators Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ) are not up for re-election). Contests include:
  - **Florida:** Incumbent U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R) faces a challenge from U.S. Rep. Patrick Murphy (D).
  - **Nevada:** Former State Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto (D) is battling U.S. Rep. Joe Heck (R) for the seat being vacated by retiring Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D).

- California: U.S. Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D) faces a tougher contest with California Attorney General Kamala Harris (D).
- If elected, Cortez Masto and Sanchez would be the first Latinas in the U.S. Senate, and the first Latino to serve in Congress' upper chamber from their respective states.
- **Latinos in the U.S. House of Representatives could increase by as many as seven, from 29 to 36**, with the likely addition of several new Latinos post-Election 2016. Races include:
  - California: Latino candidates for U.S. Representative who have good prospects of winning include Santa Barbara County Supervisor Salud Carbajal (D CA-24), and former state legislator and Orange County Supervisor Lou Correa (D CA-46).
  - Florida: State Senator Darren Soto (D FL-9) is poised to become the first Puerto Rican to represent Florida in the U.S. House of Representatives.
  - New York: State Senator Adriano Espaillat (D NY-13), faces no serious opposition in his contest. If victorious, Espaillat would be the first Dominican American to serve in the U.S. House.
  - Texas: Attorney Vicente Gonzalez (D TX-15) faces excellent prospects of victory for the seat being vacated by retiring U.S. Rep. Ruben Hinojosa (D).
- **At the statewide executive level, five Latino candidates are running in four states**, including Indiana (2), New Mexico, Delaware and Illinois.
- **The number of Latinos in State Senates could increase from 73 to 80 after Election 2016**, with potential net gains in Arizona (3), Florida (1), Illinois (1), West Virginia (1), and Wyoming (1).
- **In state lower houses, there could be a net increase in the total number of Latinos from 234 to 245.**
  - California may see the largest potential net gain (3), followed by Colorado and Florida (2 each).
  - States which could see net losses include Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, New Hampshire, and New York.

During the briefing, NALEO Educational Fund also presented [new battleground state polling](#) of Latino voters in Arizona, Florida, Nevada and North Carolina conducted by Latino Decisions between September 26 - October 13, 2016. Major [findings](#) from the poll include:

- **Hillary Clinton would win Latino voters in key battleground states by a wide margin** if the election were held today, including in Arizona (70 percent), Florida (63 percent), Nevada (72 percent) and North Carolina (69 percent);
- **The majority of Latino voters (78 percent nationwide) are almost certain they will cast ballots in Election 2016**, including in Arizona (83 percent), Florida (78 percent), Nevada (76 percent) and North Carolina (73 percent);
- **Key issues for Latino voters vary state-by-state**, especially with regard to passing comprehensive immigration reform. Florida Latino voters did not see this as one of their top three issues (terrorism ranked highest) this election, compared to voters in Nevada and North Carolina who noted it as their top issue in 2016.

The Latino electorate is expected to play a decisive role in Election 2016, with NALEO Educational Fund projecting that more than [13.1 million Latinos](#) will cast ballots nationwide.

In lead up to Election Day, NALEO Educational Fund will continue its efforts to ensure Latino voters are prepared to cast ballots this year, including operating our toll-free bilingual hotline [1-888-VE-Y-VOTA \(1-888-839-8682\)](#) that provides Latino voters with information on every aspect of the electoral process. On Election Day (and Election Eve), the hotline is connected to the Election Protection efforts and [1-866-OUR-VOTE](#), offering Latino voters nationwide a bilingual resource to get assistance and report any problems they may experience at the polls.

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**About NALEO Educational Fund**

*NALEO Educational Fund is the nation's leading non-profit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.*