



NEWS RELEASE

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New Report Outlines Problems Experienced by Latino Voters in Election 2016

NALEO Educational Fund's 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA voter protection and information hotline received nearly 11,000 unique calls on Election Eve and Election Day

Issues with voter registration status, mail-in ballots and long lines among problems most reported to our hotline by Latino voters in Election 2016

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Nearly two weeks after Election Day, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund released a [report](#) outlining the top problems [reported](#) by Latino voters to the organization's [1-888-VE-Y-VOTA \(1-888-839-8682\) hotline](#) on Election Eve and Election Day.

Nearly 11,000 unique calls came into NALEO Educational Fund's [1-888-VE-Y-VOTA hotline](#) in during those two days, allowing hotline operators to [document](#) issues at the polls and provide answers to questions relating to the election process. Analysis of the [4,438 calls](#) that were documented in the [Ve Y Vota hotline](#) database from November 7 and 8 found that [8 percent](#) were flagged as potential violations of the law or a breach of sound and fair election administration.

Other [major findings](#) include:

- **Voter registration issues were the most frequent problem cited:** A majority of problems ([65 percent](#)) came from voters who had tried to register or whose registration was confirmed, but who were not found on voter registration rolls or in pollbooks.
- **Mail ballots either did not arrive or arrived unsolicited for many:** Significant numbers of Latinos ([9 percent](#)) reported not receiving mail ballots that had been requested, or being sent mail ballots unsolicited.
- **Long lines and equipment failures, as well as lack of language assistance were also noted:** The third most common issue flagged by Latino voters ([8 percent](#)) was long lines at the polls and equipment failures. Some Latino voters ([5 percent](#)) also reported a lack of language assistance at their polling locations.
- **Adequate training of and information from poll workers was also a concern:** Analysis showed that [4 percent](#) of Latino voters experienced poll workers who insisted on enforcing the wrong rules or provided misinformation.
- **Hostility and intimidation did occur for a number of Latino voters:** [4 percent](#) of calls from Latino voters included mention of voter intimidation or hostile behavior at the polls.

“While we know that Latino voters turned out in historic numbers in Election 2016, a close examination of calls to the [1-888-VE-Y-VOTA hotline](#) shows that more work remains to be done before all eligible Latinos and Americans are able to make their voices heard at the ballot box,” stated Arturo Vargas, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund Executive Director. “We will continue to strive to make the electoral system more accessible and responsive to its citizens, pushing for the eradication of barriers to voting and the implementation of new technologies that would expand access to the ballot box for Latinos and all Americans.”

To maximize the number of eligible Latinos and all Americans who participate in our electoral system going forward, NALEO Educational Fund recommends a set of actions and changes. These [recommendations](#) include:

- **Adopt same day voter registration, and use technology to more effectively modernize voter registration:** A majority of the disfranchised, disillusioned voters who called our hotline could not vote because they were not recognized as registered. Outdated systems that rely primarily on the transmission of information from paper voter registration systems contribute to voter registration problems, particularly at agencies required to comply with the National Voter Registration Act. NALEO Educational Fund documented the benefits of electronic voter registration in our [2015 report](#).
- **Placing a priority on funding for elections:** We cannot afford to let critical equipment grow older and more prone to disrepair if we expect Americans to have confidence in our elections. Elected officials must allocate significant funding to the task of modernizing election machinery in the coming years to replace voting and vote-counting machines with updated and more durable technology.
- **Restoration of the Voting Rights Act (VRA):** Callers to our hotline testified to a persistence of different treatment of individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity and linguistic ability. Latino voters need strong, effective protections in place to ensure they can cast ballots. The protections that were once afforded to them through the VRA were significantly weakened when the pre-clearance process was invalidated by the Supreme Court in 2013.

In the lead up to Election 2016, NALEO Educational Fund was hard at work mobilizing Latino voters through our extensive nonpartisan get-out-the vote operation. The campaign targeted more than 602,000 households by phone and 23,242 households in person, reaching a total of nearly 705,000 households. NALEO Educational Fund also utilized a variety of digital and social media platforms (including Facebook, Pandora, and more) to reach as many Latino voters as possible this year, in addition to running targeted advertising spots on television and radio that ensured voters were prepared and informed when they headed to 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.