



## NEWS RELEASE

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**Contact:** Kevin Perez-Allen, [kperezallen@naleo.org](mailto:kperezallen@naleo.org)  
(202) 360-4186, (714) 499-4481 (cell)

Marcus Silva, [msilva@naleo.org](mailto:msilva@naleo.org)  
(213) 765-9427, (510) 456-5444 (cell)

### **\*\*\*ELECTION 2020 PRIMARY PROFILE\*\*\***

#### **Texas: Nearly 2.2 Million Latino Voters Expected to Cast Ballots in Election 2020**

*Latino voters expected to play a critical role in the outcome of the Texas Democratic Primary*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – With less than one week before Latinos will make a decisive impact on the outcome of the Texas Democratic primary on Super Tuesday (March 3), the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund released its profile of the Texas Latino electorate and key Congressional races to watch. The full Texas primary profile is available for download [here](#).

**According to NALEO Educational Fund analysis, 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 two million in 2016.

“Latinos in Texas care deeply about the same issues as all Texans, such as economic opportunity, access to affordable health care, and immigration reform. After our community endured senseless tragedy in El Paso last year, Latinos in Texas are deeply aware of what is at stake this year at the ballot box,” stated Arturo Vargas, Chief Executive Officer of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund. “Texas has one of the largest Latino populations in the country, and we fully expect our community to have a substantial impact on the 2020 election.”

#### Key Characteristics of the Latino Electorate/Community in Texas:

- **Population and Electorate Size**
  - Texas is home to more than 11 million Latinos, who comprise 40 percent of the state’s total population (28.7 million).
  - The nearly four million Latino registered voters (as of September 2019) in Texas account for 26 percent of all registered voters in the state (14.4 million) or more than one-quarter of registered voters.
- **Age**
  - Latino registered voters tend to be younger than non-Latinos, with 18- to 24-year-olds comprising 17 percent of all registered Latinos in Texas, compared to only 11 percent of the same age group for non-Latino voters.

- Similarly, 21 percent of Latino registered voters are 25- to 34-year-olds, compared to 17 percent for non-Latinos, respectively.
- In contrast, nearly half (48 percent) of non-Latino registered voters are 50 and older, compared to just 36 percent of Latinos.
- **Political Representation**
  - In 2019, 2,739 Latinos served in elected office in Texas, with 98 percent serving at the local level, including county, municipal, school board, judicial and law enforcement, and special district officials.
  - Between 1996 and 2019, the number of Latinos serving in elected office in Texas increased substantially, from 1,689 to 2,739.

In the past five presidential contests (2000 – 2016), Texans have supported the Republican candidate. In 2000 and 2004, former governor George W. Bush (R) received 59 percent and 61 percent of the vote, respectively. In 2008, 2012, and 2016, the respective shares of votes garnered by U.S. Senator John McCain (R), Governor Mitt Romney (R), and Donald Trump (R) were somewhat smaller – 55 percent, 57 percent, and 52 percent.

In contrast, Latino partisan preferences in the presidential contests fluctuated significantly between 2004 and 2016. In 2004, exit poll data indicate that the Latino vote was nearly evenly split between Senator John Kerry (D) and President Bush (50 percent to 49 percent). In 2012, the gap between the Republican and Democratic candidates appeared much larger, with 71 percent of Latinos supporting President Barack Obama (D) compared to 27 percent for Senator McCain. In 2016, the gap between Latino support for candidates from the two parties appeared to grow even wider, with 80 percent of Latinos favoring Hillary Clinton (D) and 16 percent favoring Donald Trump.

Looking forward to Election 2020, with Latinos comprising more than a quarter of Texas registered voters (26 percent), Latino voters are poised to play a key role in the primary and general elections.

### Congressional Primary Races to Watch

- U.S. Senate
  - The field of Democratic contenders seeking the nomination for U.S. Senator is a crowded one, with worker advocate Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez being the most competitive Latino in the contest. She is in a tough race, and her opponents include Air Force combat veteran MJ Hegar, former U.S. Rep. Chris Bell, and Texas State Senator Royce West. The victor of the primary will very likely face incumbent U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R).
- U.S. House of Representatives
  - Six of Texas' seven incumbent Latino U.S. Representatives are running for re-election. Five of the six incumbent candidates do not have serious opposition in either the primary or general election: Democrats Joaquin Castro, Veronica Escobar, Sylvia Garcia, Vicente Gonzalez, and Filemon Vela. U.S. Rep. Bill Flores (R) is retiring.
  - In the 28th Congressional District Democratic primary, U.S. Rep. Henry Cuellar is facing a competitive challenge from immigration attorney Jessica Cisneros.

- In the 7th Congressional District Republican primary, businessperson Maria Espinoza is a viable contender whose opponents include accountant Cindy Siegel (R) and real estate executive Wesley Hunt (R). The victor of this contest will likely face incumbent U.S. Rep. Lizzie Fletcher (D).
- In the 23rd Congressional District, competitive Latinos include Navy veteran Tony Gonzales, home builder Raul Reyes Jr., and dentist Alma Arredondo-Lynch, who are in a crowded field of candidates vying to be the Republican nominee for the seat held by retiring U.S. Rep. Will Hurd (R). In 2018, U.S. Rep. Hurd narrowly defeated Filipina former Air Force Intelligence Officer Gina Ortiz Jones (D), who is once again pursuing the seat and is considered the Democratic primary frontrunner.
- In the 24th Congressional District, both parties have also targeted the open seat held by retiring U.S. Rep. Kenny Marchant (R). Former Carrollton-Farmers Branch School Board Member Candace Valenzuela (D) and Army veteran and business owner Desi Maes (R) are among a crowded field in both the Democratic and Republican primaries.

Ahead of Super Tuesday and in the lead up to Election 2020, NALEO Educational Fund will continue its efforts to ensure that Latino voters in Texas and nationwide have the necessary information to make their voices heard at the ballot box. These efforts include operating the NALEO Educational Fund toll-free bilingual election protection hotline 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (1-888-839-8682), providing vital information on every aspect of the electoral process, from registering to vote, to voter ID requirements, to finding polling places on Election Day.

*NALEO Educational Fund's [2020 Texas Primary Profile](#) is available for download [here](#).*

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**About NALEO Educational Fund**

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