



## 2008 PRIMARY ELECTION PROFILES CALIFORNIA

**CALIFORNIA PRIMARY: FEBRUARY 5**  
**ELECTORAL COLLEGE VOTES: 55**

**TOTAL POPULATION (2006): 36,457,549    LATINO POPULATION (2006): 13,074,155**

Although California is the most populous state in the nation, it has had difficulty achieving prominence in past Presidential primary seasons because of its relatively late primary date. When the state decided to move its primary forward to “Super Tuesday,” parties, candidates and political observers have recognized the key role the state’s voters will have in determining the Presidential nominees.

California is also home to the nation’s largest population of Latinos, and Presidential contenders are actively courting their votes. Early on in the campaign season, candidates from both parties began to seek endorsements from Latino leaders in California, and have asked those leaders to campaign for them both within and outside of the state. Almost one out of four of California’s registered Democrats (23%) are Latino, and the state’s Latino electorate also includes a significant number of registered voters who have declined to state their party affiliation (also known as “DTS voters”). Latinos comprise 17% of California’s DTS voters, and under California’s modified closed primary system, these voters may vote in the Democratic or American Independent primary elections. Thus, the Democratic primary contenders hope to win the support of both California’s Latino Democrats and its DTS voters as well. The Democratic candidates have made a variety of appearances in areas where they anticipate reaching large Latino audiences, including downtown and East Los Angeles, Fresno and Salinas. Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama have also launched political ads on Spanish-language television, and their field operations use Spanish-language literature as part of their outreach efforts.

In addition, about one out of five of California’s Latino registered voters (21%) are affiliated with the GOP, and they comprise one out of 10 of the state’s registered Republicans. Winning California’s Latinos has now become an indispensable component of the campaign strategies for Presidential candidates of both political parties on Super Tuesday.

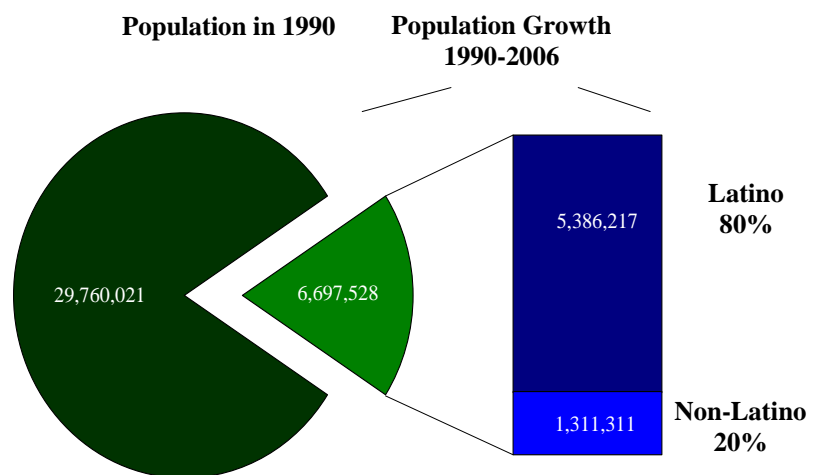
### THE LATINO POPULATION IN CALIFORNIA

In 2006, Latinos accounted for over one-third (36%) of California residents. Between 1990 and 2006, Latino population growth was the driving force for the state’s population increase. California’s population grew by 6.7 million persons, and 8 out of 10 of them were Latino.

#### California’s Latino Population: 2006

	Population	% of Total Population
Latinos	13,074,155	36%
Latino Adults	8,475,452	32%
Latino Adult U.S. Citizens	4,989,806	23%

### California Population Growth: 1990-2006



## THE LATINO ELECTORATE

The number of California Latino voters has increased significantly in the last three Presidential elections, growing from 1.3 million in 1996 to 2.1 million in 2004.

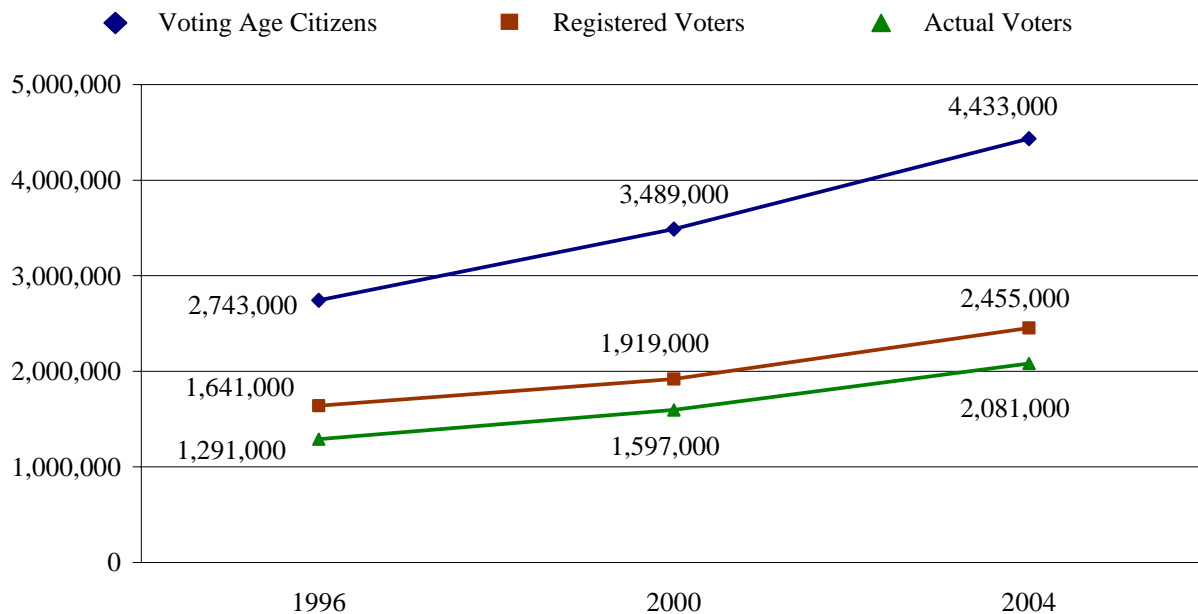
Latinos are also comprising a growing share of California voters, increasing from 12% in 1996 to 16% in 2004.

As of December 2007, 18% of all registered voters in California were Latino (2,737,266).

### California's Electorate (2007)

Total Registered Voters	15,609,146
Latino Registered Voters	2,737,266
Latino Share of All Registered Voters	18%

### California Latino Registration and Voting in Past Presidential Elections

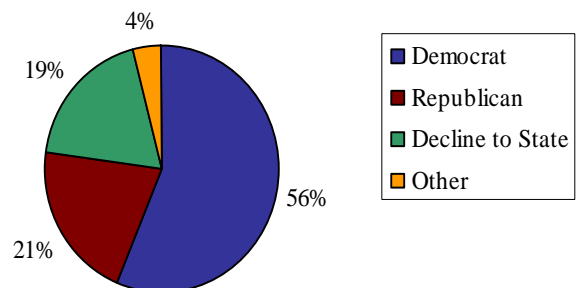


See "Sources" for information regarding the limitations of the foregoing data.

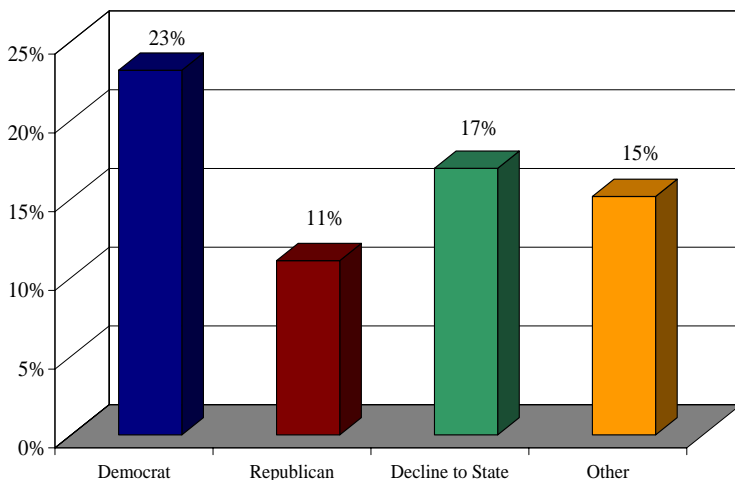
## CALIFORNIA LATINO PARTISAN AFFILIATION

Slightly over half of California's Latino registered voters are registered Democrats (56%). Nearly one-quarter (21%) are registered Republicans, and a considerable share – nearly one out of five – are registered as decline to state.

### Latino Party Affiliation, 2007



### Latino Share of Total California Party Registration, 2007

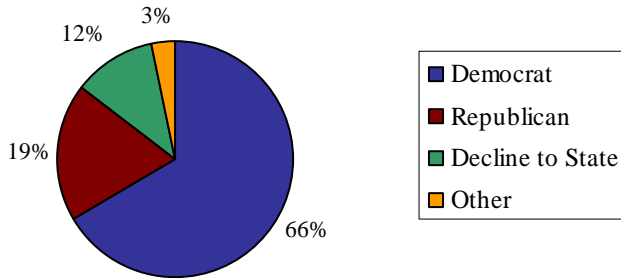


Latinos also comprise a significant portion of all of the state's registered Democrats (23%), as well as 17% of those voters who are registered as decline to state. (Under California's modified closed primary system, registered voters who decline to state their party affiliation may vote in the Democratic and American Independent primary elections, but currently cannot vote in the Republican Party primary.)

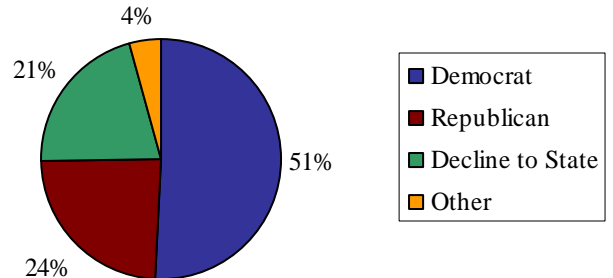
**Period of Registration:** There are some significant differences between the party affiliation of California’s Latinos, depending on whether they registered to vote before 2000, or in more recent years. Overall, more recent registrants are less likely to register as Democrats, and are more likely to decline to state their party affiliation.

Among Latinos who registered prior to the 2000 general election, two out of three (66%) registered with the Democratic Party, while approximately one in five (19%) registered with the Republican Party. In the period between the 2000 general election and the state’s 2005 special election, a smaller share of Latinos registered as Democrats, while a greater share - one in four (24%) - registered as Republican. A larger share also declined to state their party affiliation – 21%, compared to 12% for Latinos who registered prior to the 2000 election. In the period following the 2005 special election, the share of new Latino registrants who declined to state their party affiliation further increased to 27%.

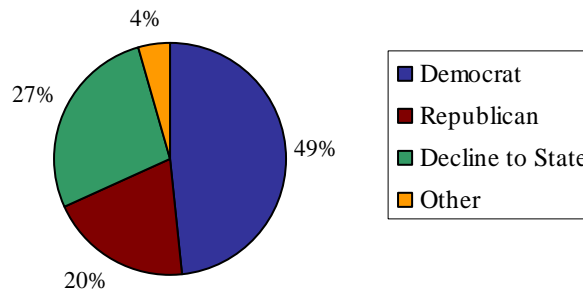
**Latino Party Affiliation, Registrations Before 2000**



**Latino Party Affiliation, Registrations 2000-2005**

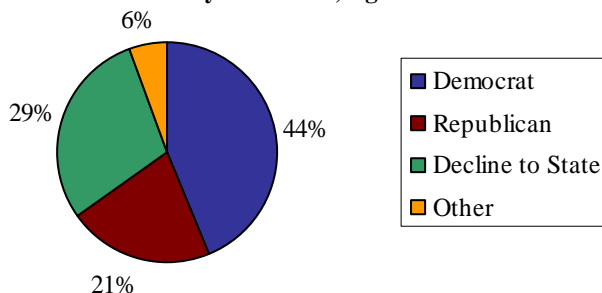


**Latino Party Affiliation, Registrations 2005-2007**

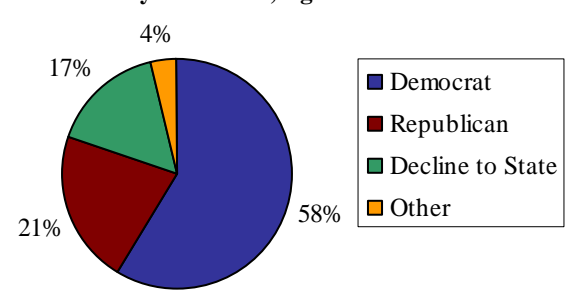


**Age:** There are also significant differences between the party affiliation of younger and older Latino registered voters in California. Among Latino “youth voters” (those under the age of 26), nearly one in three (29%) decline to state a party affiliation, compared to 17% for Latino voters over the age of 25. Latino youth voters are less likely to affiliate with the Democratic Party - 44% of Latino youth voters are registered Democrats, while 58% of Latinos over 25 are registered Democrats. These differences may have implications for outreach by Presidential candidates campaigning in California.

**Latino Party Affiliation, Age 18-25**



**Latino Party Affiliation, Age 26 and older**



## LATINO ELECTED OFFICIALS IN CALIFORNIA

In January 2007, 1,163 Latinos served in elected office in California – nearly one-fourth (23%) of the nation’s Latino elected officials are from the state.

One sign of the growing influence of Latinos in California is the number of Latinos in the state legislature and the leadership positions they hold. Latinos comprise 25% of California’s State Senators, and 23% of its State Assemblymembers. California Latinos serve in prominent positions in both chambers of the legislature. Fabian Nuñez is Speaker of the State Assembly, and Gloria Romero is the State Senate Majority Leader.

	Total Districts	Number Held by Latinos	Share of Total Delegation
California State Senate	40	10	25%
California State Assembly	80	18	23%

For more information about the NALEO Educational Fund’s 2008 Election publications, please contact Rosalind Gold at [rgold@naleo.org](mailto:rgold@naleo.org) or (213) 747-7606, ext. 120.

### Sources

NALEO Educational Fund, *2007 National Directory of Latino Elected Officials*.

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2006), General Information and Custom Tables.

U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), *Voting and Registration in the Elections of November: 1996-2004*. The CPS data used in these reports and the survey from which they are derived are subject to certain limitations. First, actual voter turnout and registration may be overestimated by the CPS, because individuals may tend to over-report electoral participation. Additionally, the CPS is a national survey, and estimates derived for smaller sub-groups within the national population may be based on relatively small sample sizes. Consequently, the margin of error associated with estimates of voting and registration for these sub-groups is greater than the margin associated with the national population or larger population sub-groups.

U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000.

California Secretary of State, CALVOTER Statewide Voter File, as of December 2007. Sacramento, CA.



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