

Chapter 5 Absentee Ballots

On its instructions to the Election Day Survey, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) defined absentee voting as “voting prior to Election Day which requires that the voter meet qualifications other than those generally required to register to vote.” Such requirements might be that the voter must attest that they will be absent from their voting jurisdiction on Election Day. The Election Day Survey instructions specifically request that ballots cast by military and overseas voters not be included in responses to the survey. Statistics on military and overseas absentee ballots were collected separately through the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) survey (which was labeled “The Military and Overseas Absentee Ballot Survey”).

On absentee voting, the Election Day Survey asked for the number of absentee ballots requested, the number returned, the number counted, the number not counted, and the five most common reasons for rejecting absentee ballots. Table 5 presents results from the Election Day Survey on absentee voting.

Applicability and Coverage

Nearly all states have some form of absentee ballots. The following 24 states provide “no excuse” absentee ballots:

Alaska	Idaho	North Carolina	South Dakota
Arizona	Iowa	North Dakota	Utah
California	Kansas	Nebraska	Vermont
Colorado	Louisiana	New Mexico	Washington
Florida	Maine	Nevada	Wisconsin
Hawaii	Montana	Oklahoma	Wyoming

In addition, Oregon conducts elections by mail. Absentee voting is reported in Oregon for persons who request a ballot because they will be away from their normal resident address when the mail ballots are shipped to the state’s voters. Those numbers are listed in Oregon’s absentee column in the tables, while the vote-by-mail counts are listed in the “Ballots Cast in Polling Place” column.

No jurisdiction among the following states reported absentee ballots requested: Alabama, Arizona (which classifies all absentee votes as early votes), Connecticut, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Vermont. No jurisdiction among the following states reported absentees returned: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Kansas, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, and Vermont. No jurisdiction within the following states reported absentees counted: Arizona, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, South Carolina, and South Dakota. No jurisdiction among 30 states reported absentees not counted.

Historical Context

Absentee voting was first established in the mid-1800s for soldiers during the Civil War. Northern soldiers were reported to have cast 154,045 votes in 1864 (Lee 1916). Vermont became the first state

to adopt absentee voting for civilians in 1896, followed by Kansas in 1901 (for rail workers only, expanded to all citizens in 1911) and Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, and North Dakota in 1914 (Steinbicker 1938). These early absentee balloting procedures did not operate in the same manner as today. For example, Kansas and Nebraska permitted persons traveling outside their home county to cast a vote on Election Day in the presence of an election judge in another county within the same state, which would be forwarded to the home county (Lee 1916). North Dakota was the first state to adopt absentee voting in the familiar form known to modern voters: absentee voting by mail. Like the secret ballot, the method was imported from Australia, which adopted absentee voting by mail in 1902 (Lee 1916). During and following World War I, absentee ballot laws were extended to military personnel in nearly all states and were extended to civilians in all states, except Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Kentucky by 1925 (Ray 1926).

As the number of states that allowed absentee voting increased, the acceptable reasons to be permitted to cast an absentee ballot expanded. For example, by 1925, 11 states permitted sick and disabled persons the right to cast an absentee ballot (Ray 1926). Michigan was perhaps the first state to allow “no excuse” absentee voting by permitting absentee voting for “any person necessarily absent while engaged in the pursuit of lawful business, *or recreation*” (*Election Laws of Michigan*, Revision of 1936, Ch. X. Art. 3134, as quoted in Steinbicker 1938, original emphasis). Today, states allow absentee balloting under a wide range of excuses that vary among the states, including: religion, business, school, disability, and persons who live far from their polling place. Twenty-four states permit absentee voting for any reason, or “no excuse.”

Complete historical statistics on absentee voting do not exist. A study of the 1936 election estimated that absentee ballots constituted about 2.0 percent, or 0.9 million, of all ballots counted (Steinbicker 1938). Another study estimated 4.9 percent, or 3.4 million, absentee ballots were counted in the 1960 election (Andrews 1966). These estimates are unreliable since they depend on extrapolating absentee statistics from a few states to the entire country.

Compared with the historical numbers, the number of absentee ballots cast has increased in recent elections. Mitofsky International and Edison Media Research (the national exit poll organization) estimate that 16.0 percent or 16.8 million absentee ballots were counted in the 2000 presidential election. A similar percentage of 16.0 percent, or 12.5 million, were counted in the 2002 congressional election. Previous election estimates are not as reliable due to missing data for some states. At a minimum, 12.0 percent, or 8.7 million, absentee ballots were cast in the 1998 election; 11.0 percent, or 10.6 million, in the 1996 election; 8.4 percent, or 6.4 million, in the 1994 election; and 7.7 percent, or 8.1 million, in the 1992 election.

Some states have kept track of absentee balloting in the past, but most states have not. In many instances, in both states and localities, absentee balloting numbers and results are combined with the results from polling place voting and reported as just a single number. Therefore, data is not available for a great deal of the country, especially on election returns. Some localities do keep separate totals on absentee voting, but keep them only at the county level, not by precinct. As more and more people vote via absentee, any kind of demographic and political analysis becomes much more difficult to conduct in those jurisdictions.

Survey Results

Table 5 presents data on absentee ballots requested, returned, and counted from questions 4–6 on the Election Day Survey. In the table, the number of absentee ballots requested is calculated as a percentage of reported total registration, the number of absentee ballots returned is calculated as a percentage of absentee ballots requested, and the number of absentee ballots counted is calculated as a percentage of absentee ballots returned. The column headings in Table 5 are as follows:

Table 5 Column Headings. Absentee Ballots

Col.	Heading	Description
1	Code	State census code
2	Name	Respondent to Election Day Survey
3	Jurisdiction	Number of local election jurisdictions from survey question 22
4	Total Registration	Number of active and inactive registered voters, number of persons who voted on Election Day in six states, and VAP data for North Dakota and jurisdictions in Wisconsin that do not have voter registration, from col. 4 of Table 2
5	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to survey question 1, that provided Election Day registration data, or for which VAP data was substituted for voter registration data
6	Total Requested Absentee Ballots	Number of absentee ballots requested from survey question 4
7	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to question 4
8	Percent Requested of Absentee Registration	Number of absentee ballots requested (col. 6) divided by the number of registered voters (col. 4)
9	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to survey questions 1 and 4, that provided Election Day registration data, or for which VAP data was substituted for voter registration data
10	Cases > 100%	Number of jurisdictions where the reported number of absentee ballots requested (col. 6) is greater than the reported number of registered voters (col. 4)
11	Total Absentees Returned	Number of absentee ballots returned from survey question 5
12	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to question 5
13	Percent Absentees Returned of Requested	Number of absentee ballots returned (col. 11) divided by the number of absentee ballots requested (col. 6)
14	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to survey questions 4 and 5
15	Cases > 100%	Number of jurisdictions where the reported number of absentee ballots returned (col. 11) is greater than the reported number of absentee ballots requested (col. 6)

Table 5 Column Headings (cont.)

Col.	Heading	Description
16	Absentees Counted	Number of absentee ballots counted from survey question 6b
17	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to question 6b
18	Percent Absentee Counted of Returned	Number of absentee ballots counted (col. 16) divided by the number of absentee ballots returned (col. 11)
19	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to questions 5 and 6b
20	Cases > 100%	Number of jurisdictions where the reported number of absentee ballots counted (col. 16) is greater than the number of absentee ballots returned (col. 11)
21	Total Absentees Not Counted	Number of absentee ballots not counted from survey question 6c
22	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to question 6c
23	Percent Absentees Not Counted of Returned	Number of absentee ballots not counted (col. 21) divided by the number of absentee ballots returned (col. 11)
24	Cases	Number of jurisdictions that responded to questions 5 and 6c
25	Cases > 100%	Number of jurisdictions where the reported number of absentee ballots not counted (col. 21) is greater than the reported number of absentee ballots returned (col. 11)

Analysis of Survey Results

The following is our analysis of the data in Table 5 for each of the 18 cross-tabulation factors described earlier in this report. A description of each factor follows a general summary and a state-level summary of the survey data.

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| 1) Regions | 10) Changed Voting Equipment since 2000 |
| 2) Urban to Rural | 11) Statewide Voter Registration Database |
| 3) Size of Jurisdiction | 12) Election Day Registration |
| 4) Race and Ethnicity | 13) Provisional Ballot Acceptance |
| 5) Median Income | 14) No Excuse Absentee Balloting |
| 6) High School Education | 15) Early Voting |
| 7) Section 203 Language Minority Requirements | 16) Battleground States |
| 8) Section 5 Preclearance of Voting Procedures | 17) Presidential Margin of Victory |
| 9) Type of Voting Equipment | 18) Red versus Blue Jurisdictions |

This analysis is based only on data that was *reported* to the EAC on the Election Day Survey. Many state responses to a survey question or part of a question did not cover all local election jurisdictions. In Table 5 as well as other tables in this report, a jurisdiction was excluded from a statistical calculation if its response was missing for one or more of the data items (i.e., columns) used in the calculation. A column labeled “Cases” next to each statistical calculation shows the number of jurisdictions covered by that calculation.

Summary

In the Election Day Survey, the EAC requested the number of absentee ballots requested, the number returned, and the number counted in each jurisdiction. Analysis is provided for four measures reported in Table 5. The total number of absentee ballots requested is calculated as a ratio to the total voter registration. The number of absentee ballots returned is calculated as a ratio to the number of absentee ballots requested. The number of absentee ballots reported counted and not counted is calculated as a ratio to the number of absentee ballots returned.

States were also asked to provide the five most common reasons why the absentee ballots were rejected, although the actual numbers of ballots rejected by the reasons for rejection were not requested. The states were not asked to provide this information for their individual jurisdictions, just a statewide summary. The reasons, according to their frequency of mention by states, are as follows:

Reasons for Rejecting Absentee Ballots	Frequency of Mention
No voter signature	11
Ballot not timely received	9
Non-matching signature	8
Elector voted early or at the polls	6
Ballot returned as undeliverable	5
Ineligible to vote	4
No ballot application on record	3
No witness signature	3
Spoiled ballot	3
Ballot missing from envelope	2
Ballot returned in unofficial envelope	2

Reasons for Rejecting Absentee Ballots (cont).	Frequency of Mention
Multiple ballots returned in one envelope	2
Elector deceased	2
Ballot replaced	1
Envelope not sealed	1
First-time voter without proper identification	1
No election official's signature on ballot	1
No residence address on return envelope	1

Since fewer jurisdictions reported absentee ballots not counted, and because this should be the reciprocal of ballots counted, the analysis below is discussed in terms of absentee ballots counted. However, because of the high rate of counting returned absentee ballots, we found little variation among jurisdictions that might provide insight into why absentee ballots were not counted beyond the reasons provided by the states.

A pattern emerges in the tabulations between reported requested and returned absentee ballots. Those jurisdictions reporting a lower rate of absentee ballots requested tend to have higher rates of absentee ballots returned (correlation = -0.22).

An explanation may be related to the ease of requesting an absentee ballot. Jurisdictions with "no excuse" absentee balloting report much higher request rates, but lower return rates, by about six percentage points, than other jurisdictions. This pattern was similar to those jurisdictions permitting early voting. We suspect jurisdictions with administrative procedures aimed to make voting more accessible have other administrative provisions (unasked on the Election Day Survey) that ease the request of absentee ballots, such as permanent absentee balloting. Where absentee ballots are more difficult to obtain, the request rates may be lower, but the return rates are higher since these voters truly desire to cast an absentee ballot.

We also note that centralized management of voter registration databases increases return rates and counting of absentee ballots. Jurisdictions with statewide voter registration databases reported slightly lower request rates compared to jurisdictions in states without statewide voter registration databases, but reported a return rate almost 6 percentage points higher and a counting rate over 3 percentage points higher.

There is a general pattern of absentee ballot requests according to socioeconomic status, with lower income and education jurisdictions tending to report lower rates of requesting absentee ballots than high income and education jurisdictions. However, lower socioeconomic status jurisdictions reported higher rates of return.

There is also a general pattern of absentee ballot requests according to size of the jurisdiction and the urban and rural character of a jurisdiction. Small-sized and rural jurisdictions tended to report the lowest rates of absentee requests while large-sized and urban areas reported the highest rates of absentee ballot requests. Like socioeconomic status, the large population and urban areas tended to report the lowest rates of absentee ballots returned.

Among Section 203 covered jurisdictions, we see a higher reported rate of requested absentee ballots, and a lower rate of return than other jurisdictions. This is consistent with the findings already

discussed above, that jurisdictions that report higher rates of requesting absentee ballots report fewer ballots returned than other jurisdictions, though there may be a slight amplification of this negative relationship in Section 203 jurisdictions when compared to similar tabulations, in terms of absentee ballots requested, such as jurisdictions that permit early voting or “no excuse” voting. This relationship may be related to the lower return rates in predominantly Hispanic and predominantly non-Hispanic Native American jurisdictions, these latter jurisdictions in particular reported both a low request rate and a low return rate.

States

Washington reported the highest rate of absentees cast as a percentage of registration, at 64.5 percent, more than twice that of the next closest state, California. Oregon reported the lowest percentage, at 0.9 percent, but this report is deceptive since the state’s balloting is completely by mail and absentees refer only to people who request a ballot because they will be away from their normal residence when the normal mail ballots are to be sent out. Next to Oregon, Louisiana had the lowest percentage of absentee ballots requested, at 1.2 percent. Twenty states and two territories reported absentee ballots requested as a percentage of registration at 5 percent or lower.

The District of Columbia reported the lowest percentage of returned absentee ballots (at 72.6 percent), and five states reported return rates between 70 to 80 percent. However, states with low rates of return may count absentees returned to polling places on Election Day as votes cast within polling place, rather than as an absentee ballot. Colorado had the highest return rate of 98.0 percent, and 20 states and two territories reported return rates above 90 percent.

The most consistent reporting across jurisdictions is the counting of absentees. Jurisdictions reported that most returned absentee ballots were counted. The District of Columbia reported the lowest rate of counting absentee ballots at 87.5 percent and Maryland reported the highest rate, slightly over 100 percent. Approximately 81 jurisdictions reported more absentee ballots counted than the number returned because voters turned in absentee ballots in the polling place or other locations and they were not counted as part of the returned pool of ballots.

Regions

The West had, by far, the highest reported rate of absentee ballots requested, due to the popularity of absentee voting within states in the region and laws that promote absentee voting. The request rate would be even higher if all of Oregon’s mail-in ballots were classified as absentee. The reported request rate of absentee balloting in the West, 27.1 percent, was more than six times that of the lowest region, the Northeast, at 4.3 percent. The Midwest reported an absentee request rate of 9.0 percent and the South, 6.9 percent.

The South reported the lowest rate of absentee return, 88.4 percent, followed by, in increasing order, the Northeast, 88.5 percent; the West, 86.6 percent; and the Midwest, 94.1 percent.

The South reported a counting rate of returned absentee ballots of 93.7 percent; all other regions reported a counting rate around 98 percent.

Urban to Rural

As one would expect, suburban jurisdictions reported the highest rate of requested absentee ballots (at 13.5 percent). On the other hand, urban jurisdictions reported the lowest request rate of absentee ballots, 9.5 percent.

Small town jurisdictions reported the lowest rate of return, 87.3 percent, and rural areas report the highest rate of return, 92.2 percent.

Urban areas reported the lowest rates of counting absentee ballots, 94.3 percent, and suburban areas reported the highest rates, 98.6 percent.

Size of Jurisdiction

The largest population jurisdictions, those over one million voting age population (VAP), reported a rate of requested absentee ballots of 14.8 percent, more than double that of the smallest population jurisdictions, 6.8 percent. There is no discernible pattern among jurisdictions with populations in-between, which vary within 7.8 and 11.6 percent.

On the other hand, the reported rate of return tends to decrease with population size of the jurisdiction. The largest population jurisdictions reported the lowest rate of return, 86.4 percent, while the smallest population jurisdictions reported this highest, 95.6 percent.

Reported rates of counting absentee ballots were slightly over 98 percent for all jurisdictions except the largest, which reported a counting rate of 93.0 percent.

Race and Ethnicity

Predominantly Hispanic jurisdictions reported the highest request rate for absentee ballots, 13.6 percent, slightly more than twice the lowest reported rate in predominantly non-Hispanic Black jurisdictions, at 5.7 percent. Predominantly non-Hispanic White jurisdictions reported a rate, 10.9 percent, slightly lower than predominantly Hispanic jurisdictions. Predominantly non-Hispanic Native American jurisdictions reported a rate, 6.1 percent, slightly higher than predominantly non-Hispanic Black jurisdictions.

Predominantly Hispanic jurisdictions reported the lowest return rate, 87.5 percent, and predominantly non-Hispanic Black jurisdictions reporting the highest return rate, 90.7 percent.

Predominantly non-Hispanic White jurisdictions reported the lowest counting rate, 96.8 percent, and predominantly non-Hispanic Black jurisdictions reported the highest counting rate, 99.7 percent.

Median Income

Reported rates of absentee ballots requested tend to increase with jurisdiction median income, though the rate slightly drops off at the highest income level. The reported request rate for the highest income jurisdictions, 13.8 percent, is about three times greater than the lowest income jurisdictions, 4.7 percent.

Reported rates of return tend higher for lower income jurisdictions than for higher income jurisdictions. The lowest income jurisdictions reported the highest rate of return, 92.2 percent,

slightly more than five percentage points greater than jurisdictions with median income \$45,000–50,000, at 87.4 percent.

Reported rates of counting absentee ballots tended not to vary in a discernible pattern with median income. The lowest rate of counting was 92.8 percent for jurisdiction median income \$40,000–45,000, and the highest rate was 99.3 percent for jurisdictions with median income \$45,000–\$50,000.

High School Education

Reported rates of absentee ballots requested tend to increase with education levels, except for the second lowest level of education, which reported a rate much higher than the trend, 12.5 percent. Jurisdictions with the lowest level of education reported a request rate of 3.4 percent and those at the highest level reported 17.8 percent.

Reported rates of absentee ballots returned tend to increase with education levels, except that the highest rate of return was reported by jurisdictions with the lowest rates of education, 97.2 percent. This surprising result may be related to the small request rate within these jurisdictions. The second lowest education category reported a return rate of 96.0 percent and the highest reported 90.2 percent.

Reported rates of counting absentee ballots tend not to vary greatly with education, between 96.3 and 98.6 percent.

Section 203 Language Minority Requirements

Jurisdictions covered by Section 203 reported almost twice the absentee request rate than other jurisdictions, 15.9 versus 8.6 percent. Jurisdictions covered by Section 203 reported a return rate five percentage points lower than other jurisdictions, 85.9 versus 90.9 percent. Jurisdictions covered by Section 203 reported a counting rate four percentage points lower than other jurisdictions, 94.6 versus 98.6 percent.

Section 5 Preclearance of Voting Procedures

Jurisdictions covered by Section 5 reported a lower absentee request rate than other jurisdictions, 7.3 versus 11.8 percent. Jurisdictions covered by Section 5 reported a return rate slightly higher than other jurisdictions, 90.4 versus 88.3 percent. Jurisdictions covered by Section 5 reported a counting rate slightly higher than other jurisdictions, 98.4 versus 96.6 percent.

Type of Voting Equipment

Optical scan voting equipment jurisdictions reported the highest absentee ballot request rate, 14.5 percent, more than four times higher than the lowest reported rate for lever jurisdictions, 3.2 percent. Optimal scan jurisdictions were followed by, in descending order: multiple-systems, electronic, punch-card, and paper-equipment jurisdictions.

Lever voting-equipment jurisdictions reported the lowest rate of absentee ballot return, 85.6 percent. Paper jurisdictions had the highest rate, 95.2 percent. Paper jurisdictions were followed by, in descending order: multiple-systems, electronic, optical-scan, punch-card, and lever jurisdictions.

Reported rates of counting absentee ballots were above 97 percent for all jurisdictions except electronic, at 93.5 percent.

Changed Voting Equipment since 2000

Jurisdictions that changed voting equipment reported higher rates of requesting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 14.2 versus 9.3 percent. Jurisdictions that changed voting equipment reported slightly lower rates of returned absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 88.4 versus 88.8 percent. Jurisdictions that changed voting equipment reported lower rates of counting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 95.1 versus 98.0 percent.

Statewide Voter Registration Database

Jurisdictions with statewide voter registration databases reported lower rates of requesting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 8.7 versus 11.3 percent. Jurisdictions with statewide voter registration databases reported higher rates of returned absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 93.4 versus 87.8 percent. Jurisdictions with statewide voter registration databases reported higher rates of counting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 99.0 versus 96.4 percent.

Election Day Registration

Jurisdictions with Election Day registration reported slightly lower rates of requesting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 10.2 versus 10.8 percent. Jurisdictions with Election Day registration reported higher rates of returned absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 94.7 versus 88.4 percent. Jurisdictions with Election Day registration reported slightly lower rates of counting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 96.6 versus 96.9 percent.

Provisional Ballot Acceptance

Jurisdictions employing within-jurisdiction provisional ballot acceptance reported a higher rate of requesting absentee ballots than jurisdictions employing within-precinct provisional ballot acceptance, 16.1 versus 7.6 percent. Jurisdictions employing within-jurisdiction provisional ballot acceptance experienced lower rates of returned absentee ballots than jurisdictions employing within-precinct provisional ballot acceptance, 87.4 versus 90.0 percent. Jurisdictions employing within-jurisdiction provisional ballot acceptance experienced higher rates of counting absentee ballots than jurisdictions employing within-precinct provisional ballot acceptance, 98.0 versus 95.4 percent.

No Excuse Absentee Balloting

Jurisdictions with “no excuse” absentee balloting reported almost four times the rate of requesting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 20.1 versus 5.1 percent. Jurisdictions with “no excuse” absentee balloting reported lower rates of returned absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 87.1 versus 92.3 percent. Jurisdictions with “no excuse” absentee balloting reported lower rates of counted absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 96.1 versus 98.5 percent.

Early Voting

Jurisdictions with early voting reported almost twice the rate of requesting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 14.6 versus 7.8 percent. Jurisdictions with early voting reported lower rates of returned absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 87.5 versus 90.3 percent. Jurisdictions with early

voting reported lower rates of counting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 95.4 versus 98.9 percent.

Battleground States

Jurisdictions in battleground states reported a higher rate of requesting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 14.2 versus 8.9 percent. Jurisdictions in battleground states reported slightly higher rates of returned absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 89.3 versus 88.1 percent. Jurisdictions in battleground states reported slightly lower rates of counting absentee ballots than other jurisdictions, 96.0 versus 97.6 percent.

Presidential Margin of Victory

The reported absentee ballot request rate is similar among jurisdictions according to the presidential margin of victory, ranging between 11.1 and 13.1 percent. The reported absentee ballots return rate is similar among jurisdictions according to the presidential margin of victory, ranging between 88.0 and 90.3 percent. The reported absentee ballot counting rate is similar among jurisdictions according to the presidential margin of victory, ranging between 96.1 and 98.8 percent. It should be noted that the lowest rate of counting absentee ballots was from the least competitive jurisdictions.

Red versus Blue Jurisdictions

Jurisdictions won by Kerry tended to have slightly higher rates of requesting absentee ballots than jurisdictions won by Bush, averaging about 13 percent among jurisdictions won by Kerry and 10 percent for those won by Bush. The reported rate of returning absentee ballots was similar across jurisdictions with regard to the presidential vote within the jurisdiction, ranging between 88.5 and 90.4 percent. The reported rate of counting absentee ballots was similar across jurisdictions with regard to the presidential vote within the jurisdiction, above 97.7 percent for all jurisdictions except those won overwhelmingly by Kerry, which reported a counting rate of 93.9 percent.

REFERENCES

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Absentee

EAC Election Day Survey		Cases = Number of Jurisdictions Reporting Subject Matter																							
Absentee Ballots 2004 General Election		Requested Absentees						Returned Absentees						Counted Absentees						Not Counted Absentees					
Updated: 09/19/2005 13:03:57		Election Administration Jurisdictions	Total Registration	Cases	Total Requested Absentee Ballots	Cases	Percent Requested Absentee of Registration	Cases >100%	Total Absentees Returned	Cases	Percent Absentees Returned of Requested	Cases >100%	Absentees Counted	Cases	Percent Absentee Counted of Returned	Cases >100%	Total Absentees Not Counted	Cases	Calculated Absentees Not Counted	Percent Absentees Not Counted of Returned	Cases >100%				
Code	Name																								
Election Administration																									
Voting Equipment Used in 2004 General Election																									
	None / Unknown	908	14,484,493	877	723,148	247	5.3	246	663,998	246	93.4	245	108	657,844	238	97.4	232	6	2,489	6	6,154	2.6	6		
	Punch card	260	15,767,547	259	1,334,105	234	8.9	234	1,193,054	237	87.7	218	2	1,183,648	233	99.3	227	5	5,647	45	9,406	4.1	45		
	Lever	394	21,662,619	390	692,678	215	3.4	214	627,179	369	85.6	199	4	583,080	369	97.2	366	4	13,827	109	44,099	3.5	108		
	Paper	1,734	3,085,167	1,733	168,260	1,330	6.7	1,329	156,285	1,311	95.2	1311	6	150,782	1,256	99.0	913	22	1,003	136	5,503	5.6	77		
	Optical scan	2,541	69,198,628	2,523	8,310,070	2,056	14.5	2,055	7,231,586	1,981	88.0	1945	28	7,347,262	2,126	98.0	1799	23	49,417	589	-115,676	2.6	563		
	Electronic	608	40,068,685	608	3,962,711	553	11.1	553	3,588,232	587	88.5	543	5	3,269,181	560	93.5	551	21	78,202	358	319,051	2.7	358		
	Multiple Systems	123	12,997,891	122	1,679,688	101	13.6	101	1,390,998	98	92.2	98	1	1,548,418	120	97.3	98		32,405	46	-157,420	3.7	46		
Changed Voting Equipment Since 2000 General Election																									
	Yes	1,753	51,149,755	1,746	6,504,908	1,164	14.3	1,164	5,738,187	1,224	88.5	1148	4	5,573,374	1,265	95.1	1045	27	43,532	284	164,813	2.4	273		
	No	4,815	126,115,275	4,766	10,365,752	3,572	9.4	3,568	9,113,145	3,605	88.9	3411	150	9,166,841	3,637	98.0	3141	54	139,458	1,005	-53,696	3.2	930		
State Wide Voter Registration System in Place																									
	Yes	1,335	37,384,852	1,321	2,651,016	985	8.9	984	2,615,511	1,144	93.6	974	1	2,584,867	1,124	99.0	1030	11	34,615	449	30,644	2.0	449		
	No	5,233	139,880,178	5,191	14,219,644	3,751	11.3	3,748	12,235,821	3,685	87.8	3585	153	12,155,348	3,778	96.4	3156	70	148,375	840	80,473	3.0	754		
Election Day Registration																									
	Yes	2,823	10,323,368	2,806	565,096	1,837	10.3	1,836	539,973	1,833	94.7	1832	2	640,285	1,652	96.7	1322	6	327	27	-100,312	0.7	27		
	No	3,745	166,941,662	3,706	16,305,564	2,899	10.9	2,896	14,311,359	2,996	88.5	2727	149	14,099,930	3,250	96.9	2864	75	182,663	1,262	211,429	2.8	1176		
Provisional Ballot Acceptance																									
	In Overall Jurisdiction	1,162	65,077,741	1,143	9,632,591	849	16.1	848	7,999,995	754	87.4	751	23	8,298,521	1,074	98.0	739	33	112,382	468	-298,526	3.7	382		
	In Precinct Only	4,350	103,336,604	4,316	6,972,065	3,173	7.6	3,170	6,591,782	3,360	90.1	3094	23	6,051,666	3,294	95.5	3239	48	70,058	774	540,116	1.8	774		
	None	1,056	8,850,685	1,053	266,004	714	5.4	714	259,555	715	97.6	714	108	390,028	534	99.3	208		550	47	-130,473	1.0	47		
No Excuse Absentee Balloting																									
	Yes	3,781	64,333,790	3,750	11,763,686	2,731	20.2	2,729	9,948,196	2,711	87.1	2707	15	9,775,880	2,403	96.1	2128	50	114,278	584	172,316	2.9	499		
	No	2,787	112,931,240	2,762	5,106,974	2,005	5.2	2,003	4,903,136	2,118	92.4	1852	139	4,964,335	2,499	98.6	2058	31	68,712	705	-61,199	2.6	704		
Early Voting Allowed																									
	Yes	1,701	73,710,075	1,686	9,923,747	1,288	14.6	1,287	8,352,808	1,215	87.5	1209	23	8,434,428	1,546	95.4	1213	17	148,987	877	-81,620	3.0	792		
	No	4,867	103,554,955	4,826	6,946,913	3,448	7.9	3,445	6,498,524	3,614	90.4	3350	131	6,305,787	3,356	98.9	2973	64	34,003	412	192,737	2.0	411		
Covered By Section 203, Language Minority Requirements																									
	Yes	468	50,756,496	453	7,377,338	415	15.9	414	6,278,091	414	85.9	402	18	6,020,135	400	94.6	393	9	97,439	276	257,956	3.3	276		
	No	6,100	126,508,534	6,059	9,493,322	4,321	8.7	4,318	8,573,241	4,415	91.0	4157	136	8,720,080	4,502	98.6	3793	72	85,551	1,013	-146,839	2.1	927		
Covered By Section 5 of Voting Rights Act																									
	Yes	880	40,868,855	864	2,622,102	760	7.3	758	2,270,593	700	90.4	697	16	2,180,434	706	98.4	651	1	-9,512	411	90,159	3.2	411		
	No	5,688	136,396,175	5,648	14,248,558	3,976	11.9	3,974	12,580,739	4,129	88.4	3862	138	12,559,781	4,196	96.6	3535	80	192,502	878	20,958	2.7	792		

Absentee

EAC Election Day Survey		Cases = Number of Jurisdictions Reporting Subject Matter																								
Absentee Ballots 2004 General Election		Requested Absentees						Returned Absentees						Counted Absentees						Not Counted Absentees						
Updated: 09/19/2005 13:03:57		Election Administration Jurisdictions	Total Registration	Cases	Total Requested Absentee Ballots	Cases	Percent Requested Absentee of Registration	Cases	Cases >100%	Total Absentees Returned	Cases	Percent Absentees Returned of Requested	Cases	Cases >100%	Absentees Counted	Cases	Percent Absentee Counted of Returned	Cases	Cases >100%	Total Absentees Not Counted	Cases	Calculated Absentees Not Counted	Percent Absentees Not Counted of Returned	Cases	Cases >100%	
Code	Name																									
Political																										
Background States in 2004 Presidential Election																										
	Yes	3,093	64,166,639	3,062	7,822,484	2,058	14.3	2,056	2	6,568,964	1,955	89.4	1953	18	6,992,306	2,373	96.0	1950	23	38,329	293	-423,342	1.3	292		
	No	3,475	113,098,391	3,450	9,048,176	2,678	8.9	2,676		8,282,368	2,874	88.1	2606	136	7,747,909	2,529	97.6	2236	58	144,661	996	534,459	3.5	911		
Margin of Victory in 2004 Presidential Election																										
	< 2.5%	515	15,923,548	513	1,580,879	336	11.7	336		1,479,904	362	89.7	327	1	1,448,820	353	98.8	285	5	19,126	73	31,084	2.3	68		
	>=2.5% to < 5.0%	476	11,133,130	472	1,146,426	326	11.0	326		933,092	334	88.0	313	5	1,037,806	328	98.8	263	5	9,651	59	-104,714	2.3	51		
	>=5.0% to < 7.5%	510	13,830,932	508	1,703,199	380	13.0	379		1,338,088	390	88.1	368	5	1,448,166	379	98.2	322	5	15,543	82	-110,078	2.3	73		
	>=7.5% to < 10.0 %	429	8,833,490	428	963,415	291	12.9	291		883,284	295	90.3	277		889,544	313	98.3	247	3	6,845	54	-6,260	1.7	49		
	>=10.0 %	4,492	125,044,988	4,463	11,472,993	3,288	10.6	3,286	2	10,206,247	3,331	88.5	3159	36	9,904,864	3,408	96.1	2952	63	131,825	1,021	301,383	3.0	962		
Red vs Blue Jurisdictions Won By in 2004 Presidential Election																										
	Bush > 55%	3,115	68,178,580	3,094	5,812,982	2,408	10.1	2,407	1	5,264,857	2,424	88.7	2318	32	5,075,995	2,407	97.9	2209	56	104,781	832	188,862	3.2	826		
	Bush 50% to 55%	982	26,682,203	979	2,570,129	697	10.4	696		2,071,546	704	88.5	668	5	2,279,780	721	97.8	588	9	31,355	162	-208,234	2.3	150		
	Bush < 50%	136	2,041,746	135	168,761	85	9.4	85		156,198	96	90.4	83		153,040	81	98.3	59	1	2,134	16	3,158	1.7	12		
	Kerry < 50%	150	4,850,492	150	649,776	93	15.2	93		590,593	108	88.1	93		570,565	96	97.7	78		9,974	21	20,028	2.4	19		
	Kerry 50% to 55%	872	23,160,396	866	2,337,981	591	11.5	591		2,115,483	614	89.1	568	6	2,115,907	632	99.4	505	9	11,151	113	-424	2.0	93		
	Kerry > 55%	1,161	49,846,628	1,154	5,326,659	742	12.0	741	1	4,641,330	761	88.5	709	4	4,533,913	844	94.0	630	6	23,595	145	107,417	2.9	103		
	Tied	25	14,032	21	663	10	9.3	9		708	11	97.1	10		482	10	100.0	6		0	226					