Memorandum

To: Concerned Parties

From: Antonio Gonzalez, WCVI President

Date: March 7, 2012

Re: Recent Trends and Challenges for the Latino Vote

Introduction

The results of the US Census Bureau Current Population Survey, Voting and Registration in 2010 (hereafter CPS 2010 Survey) bring both good and bad news to proponents and analysts of the Latino Vote. This report analyzes and compares CPS Surveys from 1972-2010.

Findings

The Good News: “Off Year Cycle” Latino Registration and Voting Surged during 2006-10

According to the CPS 2010 and 2006 Voting and Registration Surveys, Latinos cast over 6 million votes for the first time in their history (6.6 million votes cast or an 18.8% increase) or an “off-year cycle” record growth of 1,051,000 votes cast over 2006. The 2010 Latino turn out rate of 60.5% of registered was slightly higher than their 2006 rate (60.1%). Latino voter registration also grew from 9.3 million voters in 2006 to 10.98 million in 2010.
While some analysts have decried the supposedly low participation of traditionally “Democratic” subgroups compared to higher than normal turn out by “Republican” subgroups as the cause of the now well-known Republican ascent to power in the lower house of Congress in Nov. 2010, according the CPS 2010 Study results this thesis does not describe Latino behavior. Indeed, Latino registration and voting in 2010 grew at a record rate compared to 2006.

**National Progress versus State Churning**

Though in the aggregate Latino turnout was up in 2010, there was notable churning on a state by state basis. That is, among the top 16 Latino-concentrated states (containing over 90% of all Latino voters), eight states had Latino turnout growth at higher rates than the 2010 national Latino average of +18.8% (compared to 2006):


Conversely, eight states had Latino turn out growth at below the Latino national average in 2010 compared to 2006. Indeed five of these states had turnout declines in 2010 compared to 2006:

- Colorado, Connecticut, New Mexico, New Jersey, Michigan, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

### % Turnout Growth in States with 100,000+ Latino Voters, 2006-2010

![Bar chart showing Latino turnout growth in states with 100,000+ Latino voters, 2006-2010](image)

The Bad News: Latino Voter Registration Declines 5% during 2009-10
According to CPS Surveys, for the second “post-presidential cycle” in a row, Latino voter registration declined nationally. During 2009-10 Latino voter registration declined significantly from 11.608 million voters to 10.982 million voters (-626,000 voters or a 5% decline). This deepens a pattern first detected in the 2005-06 when Latino voter registration declined very slightly (-4000 voters).

This “post-presidential” decline in Latino voter registration is very different from the patterns of 1979-2004. Latino voter registration expanded robustly and uninterruptedly during 1979-1988 (growing from 2.233 million to 4.578 million voters) and 1991-2004 (growing from 4.442 million to 9.308 million voters).

Unfortunately, the new growth pattern in Latino registration appears similar to patterns during 1972-78, i.e. surges in Presidential cycles followed by contractions in the ensuring two years.

Underlying the significant 2009-2010 national decline in Latino voter registration may be a spike in residential mobility as well as intensive downward economic mobility due to the combined effect of significant (and disproportionate) unemployment and mortgage foreclosures in nine Latino-concentrated states during the past two years. These nine Latino concentrated states experienced significant declines in the number of registered Latino voters during 2009-2010.

- California, Texas, Nevada, Florida, Washington, New Mexico, Michigan, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania;
Moreover three other Latino-concentrated states experience flat or no-growth scenarios:

- New York, Illinois and Colorado

These 12 underperforming Latino-concentrated states came from every region:

- Northeast (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania;)
- Midwest (Illinois, Michigan)
- South (Florida, Texas)
- Mountain-Desert West (Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico)
- Pacific (California, Washington)

**States with 100,000+ Latino Voters, Change in Latino Voter Registration, 2008-2010**

Numbers in Thousands

The scale of this cycle’s decline in the Latino electoral universe is unprecedented and should concern proponents of Latino mobilization for 2012.
% Change in Latino Voter Registration, 2008-2010
Numbers in Thousands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Latino Voter Registration Nov, 2008</th>
<th>Latino Voter Registration Nov, 2010</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>-50</td>
<td>-31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>-97</td>
<td>-28.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>-104</td>
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<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>-21.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NV</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>-28</td>
<td>-21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>-34</td>
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<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>1,380</td>
<td>1,239</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>3,263</td>
<td>3,025</td>
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<td>NY</td>
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<tr>
<td>IL</td>
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<td>388</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>CT</td>
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<tr>
<td>NC</td>
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<td>105</td>
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<td>MA</td>
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<td>AZ</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
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<td>16 State Total</td>
<td>10,581</td>
<td>10,002</td>
<td>-579</td>
<td>-5.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous national projections for Latino voter growth to 15 million registered voters now appear overly ambitious given that the 2011-12 mobilization started from a 2010 baseline of about 11 million voters instead of the projected 12 million voters. That is, the Latino vote shrank by 5% nationally during 2009-10 instead of growing by 5% (the average Latino voter registration off year growth from 1991 to 2006) -a swing of 10%!

Therefore, WCVI’s national Latino voter growth projections will be revised downward to a ceiling of 13 million (from our previous projection of 14-15 million) registered Latinos, and national Latino turnout is projected to be no higher than 10.5 million votes cast (from our previous projection of 11-12 million).

It is up to Latino leadership, their allies, and other “interested” forces to quickly mobilize significant resources into “problem states” to reverse this worrisome trend by hyper-mobilizing the Latino vote in 2012.

Notably, this scenario of significant Latino vote registration and turnout growth (that overcomes a recent decline in Latino registration) in the final 2 years of a presidential cycle is not unprecedented, occurring for example in 2007-08 and 1991-92.