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A Political Profile of Nevada's Latino Population

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“Although recent studies have pointed to the potential significance of Nevada’s growing Latino electorate, the influences on Latino political participation in the state remain poorly understood.”

A Political Profile of Nevada’s Latino Population

DAVID F. DAMORE, JOHN P. TUMAN, AND MARIA JOSÉ FLOR ÁGREDÁ

Over the course of the past decade, Nevada’s Latino population has grown appreciably. Immigrants from Mexico and other parts of Latin America accounted for most of the growth in the state’s Latino population during this period. Nevertheless, the number of U.S.-born and naturalized Latinos residing in Nevada has also increased, and this growth has altered the political landscape of the state. Indeed, the density of Latinos in the Nevada’s electorate expanded steadily between 2000 and 2010 (see Figure 3). Although recent studies have pointed to the potential significance of Nevada’s growing Latino electorate, the influences on Latino political participation in the state remain poorly understood.¹

In this paper, we attempt to fill this gap by developing a political profile of Nevada’s Latino community. We begin by examining how two important electoral institutions – redistricting and term limits – affected Latino representation between 2000 and 2013. Next, we present aggregate data detailing turnout patterns among Latino voters in the 2000–2012 elections in Nevada. The third part of our analysis offers an individual level examination of Latino participation in the 2012 election, including analysis of presidential vote preferences by gender, age, education, and income, as well as an assessment of the geography of the Latino electorate in Clark County. We conclude by examining how increased participation and mobilization of Nevada’s Latino community has reshaped Nevada’s political landscape. The Appendix provides an overview of the data sources used here including discussions of the methodological issues that the use of these data raises.

The Institutional Context: The Impact of Redistricting and Term Limits

Perhaps the most obvious indicator of the increased electoral weight of Nevada’s Latino community can be gleaned from a comparison of the 2001 and 2011 reapportionment and redistricting processes. In 2001, despite an energetic lobbying effort by Latino activists on behalf of the near 20% of Nevadans who were classified as Latino by the 2000 US Census, Latinos received very little consideration in the final maps for the Nevada Legislature and U.S. House of Representatives that were used during the 2002–2010 elections.²

Table 1 Latino Composition of Nevada's U.S. House Districts			
District	Location	Latino Population	Latino Voting Age Population
1	Clark	42.77%	36.58%
2	Washoe and Rural	20.43%	16.60%
3	Clark	15.66%	22.93%
4	Clark and Rural	26.63%	22.33%

Note: Data from "United States House of Representatives Plan - Special Masters - October 14, 2011 Population Report," December 2011.
www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Districts/Reapp/2011/Proposals/Masters/CON-Masters-Tables.pdf

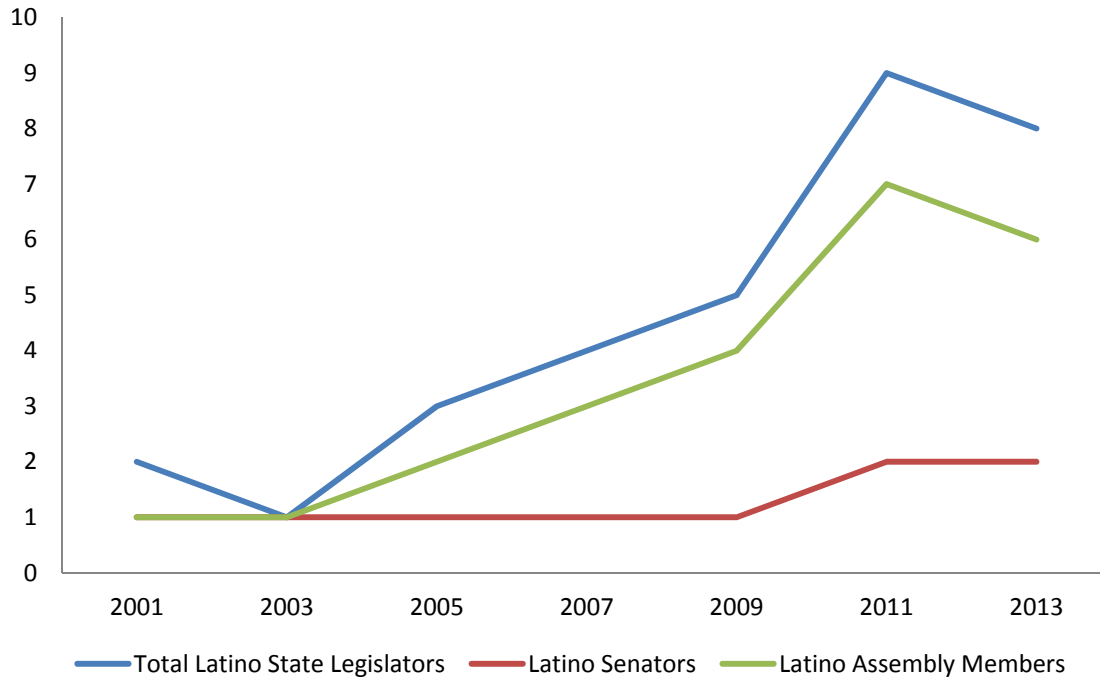
Ten years later, however, with Latinos constituting approximately 26.5% of Nevada's population, partisan differences about how to ensure Latino representation caused Nevada's 2011 reapportionment and redistricting process to be completed in state court.³ Compared to the outcome in 2001, growth of the Latino population, and the concentration of this population in the state's two urban counties (Clark and Washoe), meant that actors in the 2011 redistricting process faced strong pressures to be responsive to Nevada's Latino community.

Table 2 Latino Voting Age Population of State Legislative Districts				
Chamber	< 15%	15.1% – 30%	30.1% – 45%	> 45.1%
Senate (n = 21)	9	7	4	1
Assembly (n = 42)	14	19	6	3

Note: Data from "Senate Plan - Special Masters V2 - October 26, 2011 Population," December 2011 www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Districts/Reapp/2011/Proposals/Masters/SEN-Masters-V2-1026-Tables.pdf and "Assembly Plan - Special Masters V2 - October 26, 2011 Population," www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Districts/Reapp/2011/Proposals/Masters/ASM-Masters-V2-1026-Tables.pdf

Data in Tables 1 and 2 illustrate this point. The tables summarize the Latino population share for Nevada's four U.S. House and the 21 Senate and 42 Assembly districts in the Nevada Legislature using data from the 2010 U.S. Census. These tables clearly indicate that Nevada's Latinos are positioned to influence the winners and losers of a large number of seats in the Nevada Legislature and, to a lesser extent, outcomes in Nevada's first, third, and fourth U.S. House districts.

Figure 1
Number of Latinos Serving in the Nevada Legislature, 2001–2013



Note: Data from the National Conference of State Legislatures, “Legislator & Legislative Staff Information” (<http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections.aspx?tabs=1116,113,782#782>).

Another institutional factor, term limits, which were imposed on the Nevada Legislature after the 2009 session, has facilitated increased representation of Latino interests in the Nevada Legislature. As Figure 1 details, prior to the implementation of term limits, the number of Latinos serving in the Nevada Legislature was five. Once terms limits went into effect a number of veteran legislators who represented districts with a heavy concentration of Latinos were precluded from running for reelection and were replaced, in a number of instances, by Latinos, many of whom were first-time candidates.

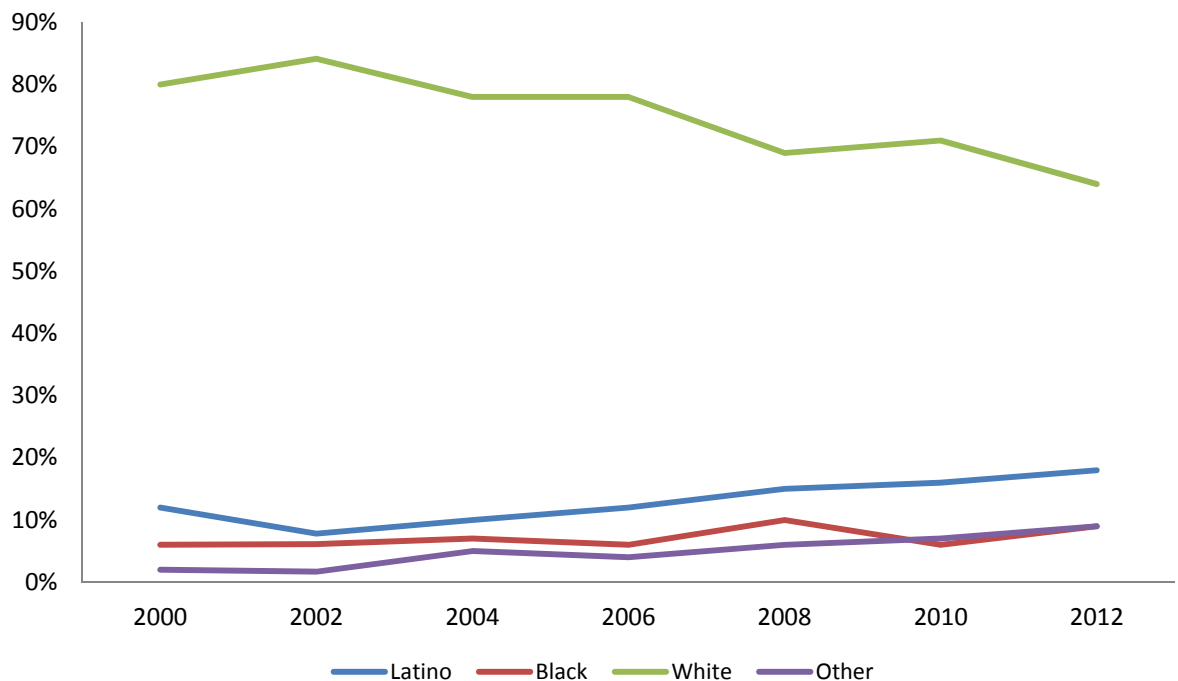
As a consequence, the number of Latinos serving in the Nevada Legislature increased to nine during the 2011 session. After the 2012 election, a total of eight state legislators were Latino; two Latinos are serving in the Senate, while six members are in the Assembly.⁴ In addition, two of Nevada’s constitutional offices are held by politicians with Latino roots: Governor Brian Sandoval, elected in 2010, and Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto, who was first elected in 2006 and reelected in 2010. Still, even with this increase in Latino representation, during the 2013 legislative session Latino representation lagged significantly behind population share.

Moreover, only one Latino presently serving in the Nevada Legislature represents a district with a Latino voting age population that is less than 20%.⁵ Thus, redistricting and term limits, coupled with Nevada’s demographic change, have increased the opportunities for Latino representation in state government. Yet, the number of Latinos elected to office remains well below the community’s share of Nevada’s population.

Latino Voter Turnout⁶

While the reelections of U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid in 2010 and President Barack Obama in 2012 demonstrated to the national audience the importance of the Latino vote in Nevada, the results of these contests were a continuation, rather than the beginning, of efforts to mobilize and engage the state's Latino community in the electoral process. Starting in the late 1990s, the Nevada Democratic Party, organized labor, and community organizations (e.g., the Latin Chamber of Commerce, Hispanics in Politics, and clubs representing Mexican and Latin American immigrants) began efforts to register and turnout Latinos who had previously been unengaged in politics. Subsequently, following the Las Vegas immigration protests in 2006, a number of groups in southern Nevada attempted to sustain the political momentum generated by the demonstrations by urging Latinos who were eligible to register and vote.⁷

Figure 2
Exit Poll Estimates of the Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Nevada Electorate, 2000–2012

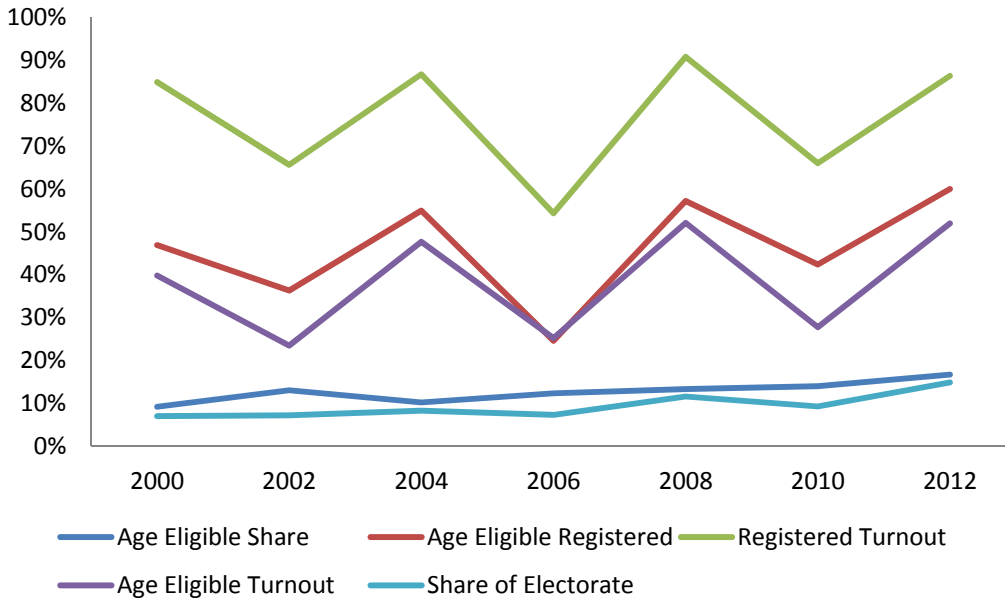


Note: Data from the Voter News Service (2000 and 2002) and National Election Pool Exit Polls (2004–2012) for Nevada.

The data in Figure 2, which summarize the racial and ethnic components of the Nevada electorate using data from the 2000-2012 exit polls, indicate that the result of these efforts was a gradual increase in the Latino share of the electorate. Between 2000 and 2012, the portion of the Nevada electorate that self-identified as Latino increased from 12% in 2000 to 18% to 2012.

Commensurate with this increase, as well as increased turnout among other minority groups, the white share of the vote in Nevada decreased from 80% in 2000 to 64% in 2012.

Figure 3
Current Population Survey Estimates of Latino Electoral Participation
2000–2012



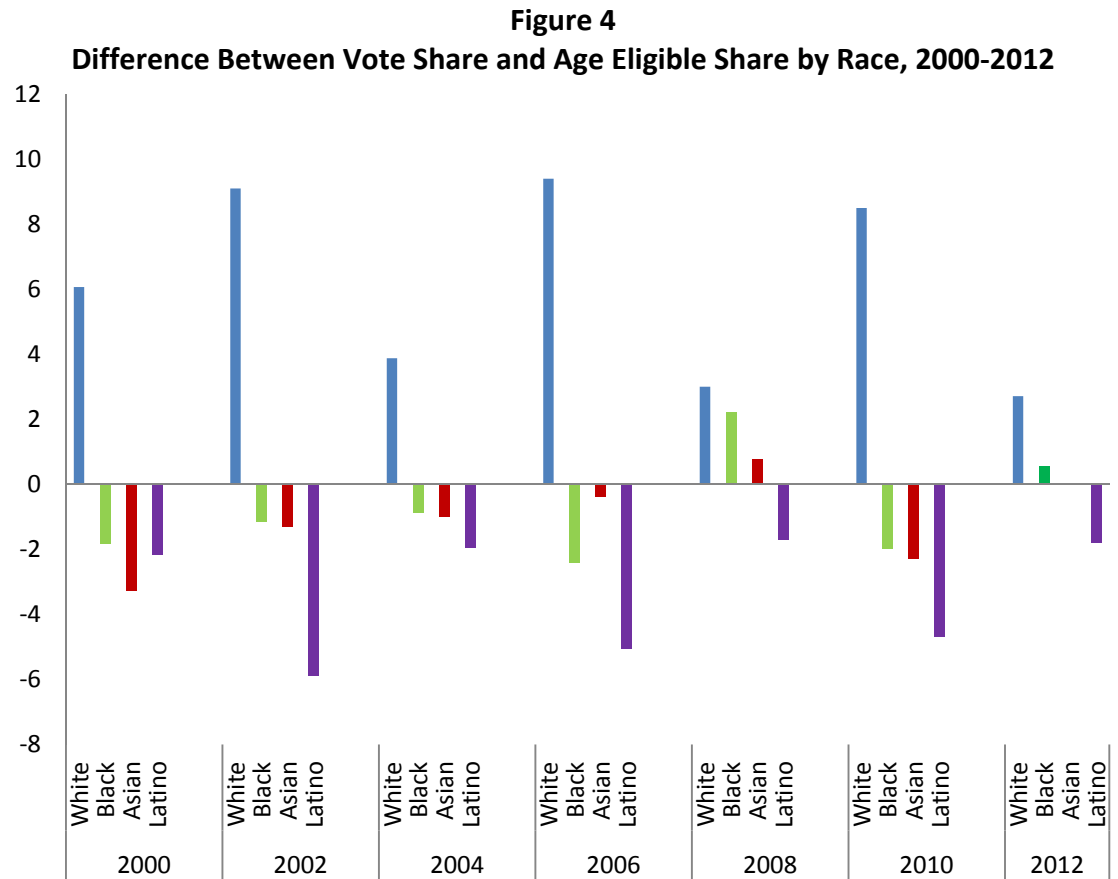
Note: Data from the 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012 Current Population Survey administered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/cps/>)

To be sure, the growth in the size of the Latino electorate is notable. However, as the data presented in Figures 3 and 4 suggest, despite these increases, there is a large reservoir of untapped Latino voters. Specifically, Figure 3 uses data from the election year Current Population Surveys to estimate a number of indicators of Latino electoral participation: the Latino share of the age eligible population (dark blue line); Latino registration and turnout relative to age eligible population (red and purple lines respectively); turnout among registered Latinos (green line); and the Latino share of the electorate (light blue line).

As the green line in Figure 3 indicates, Latinos who registered to vote turned out at rates ranging from 54% in 2006 to a remarkable 91% in 2008. While these values offer an optimistic view of Latino electoral participation, they are somewhat misleading as they only consider turnout among registered voters. Inspection of the red line, which estimates the share of age eligible Latinos who registered to vote, suggests that registration among eligible Latinos exceeded 50% for the 2004, 2008, and 2012 presidential elections, but is much lower for the midterm elections.

As a consequence, the age eligible turnout (the purple line) ranges from a low of 23% in 2002 to a high of 52% in 2008 and 2012. Or put differently, in only two of the last six elections did more than half of Nevada’s age eligible Latinos vote.

The bottom two lines, which capture the Latino age eligible population (dark blue line) and the share of the overall electorate that was Latino (light blue line), indicate that Latino turnout lags behind population share in the midterm elections but narrows for presidential elections.



Note: Data from the 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012 Current Population Survey administered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/cps/>).

To further assess these dynamics, Figure 4 compares the difference between the share of the electorate and the age eligible population for whites, blacks, Asians, and Latinos for the 2000-2012 elections using the Current Population Survey data. These data allow us to gauge the degree to which different racial and ethnic groups vote relative to their population shares. Consistent with national patterns, Figure 4 makes clear that, on average, whites constitute 7% more of the Nevada electorate than their share of the population owing to their higher registration and turnout levels relative to non-whites, particularly during midterm elections. In contrast, for most of the elections examined here, the participation of blacks, Asians, and Latinos lags relative to each groups' share of the voting age population. However, these differences decrease during presidential elections and in the 2012 election, blacks and Asians voted at levels equivalent to their share of the state's population, while the Latino vote lagged less than 2% behind the Latino population share.

Thus, the degree to which the preferences of white voters differ from those of other racial and ethnic groups means that *white voters are exerting outsized influence on electoral outcomes in Nevada, particularly during midterm elections, even as the white share of the electorate decreases.*

The 2012 Election: Taking a Closer Look

The discussion presented above allows us to assess the contours of Nevada's Latino political participation in broad strokes. Lacking from this analysis, however, is any sense of individual level difference in Latino electoral participation in Nevada. Fortunately, for the 2012 election we are able to analyze individual level survey data from the Nevada sub-sample of the impreMedia/Latino Decisions Election Eve Poll, which surveyed 400 Latinos in Nevada who either voted early or indicated that they were sure to vote on Election Day, to more finely parse variation in the Latino vote.

We begin by considering the partisan self-identification of Latinos who voted (or were likely to vote) in Nevada during the 2012 presidential election (see Figure 5). Two-thirds of the sample reported that they generally think of themselves as Democrats compared to 16% self-identifying as Republicans. Also note that Latino voters were more likely to identify as either nonpartisans or with a minor party as compared to identifying with the GOP. Not surprisingly, the Democratic registration advantage translated into significant support for President Obama in November as Obama won the votes of 80% of Nevada's Latinos (including 27% of self-identified Republicans) as compared to 17% for Romney.

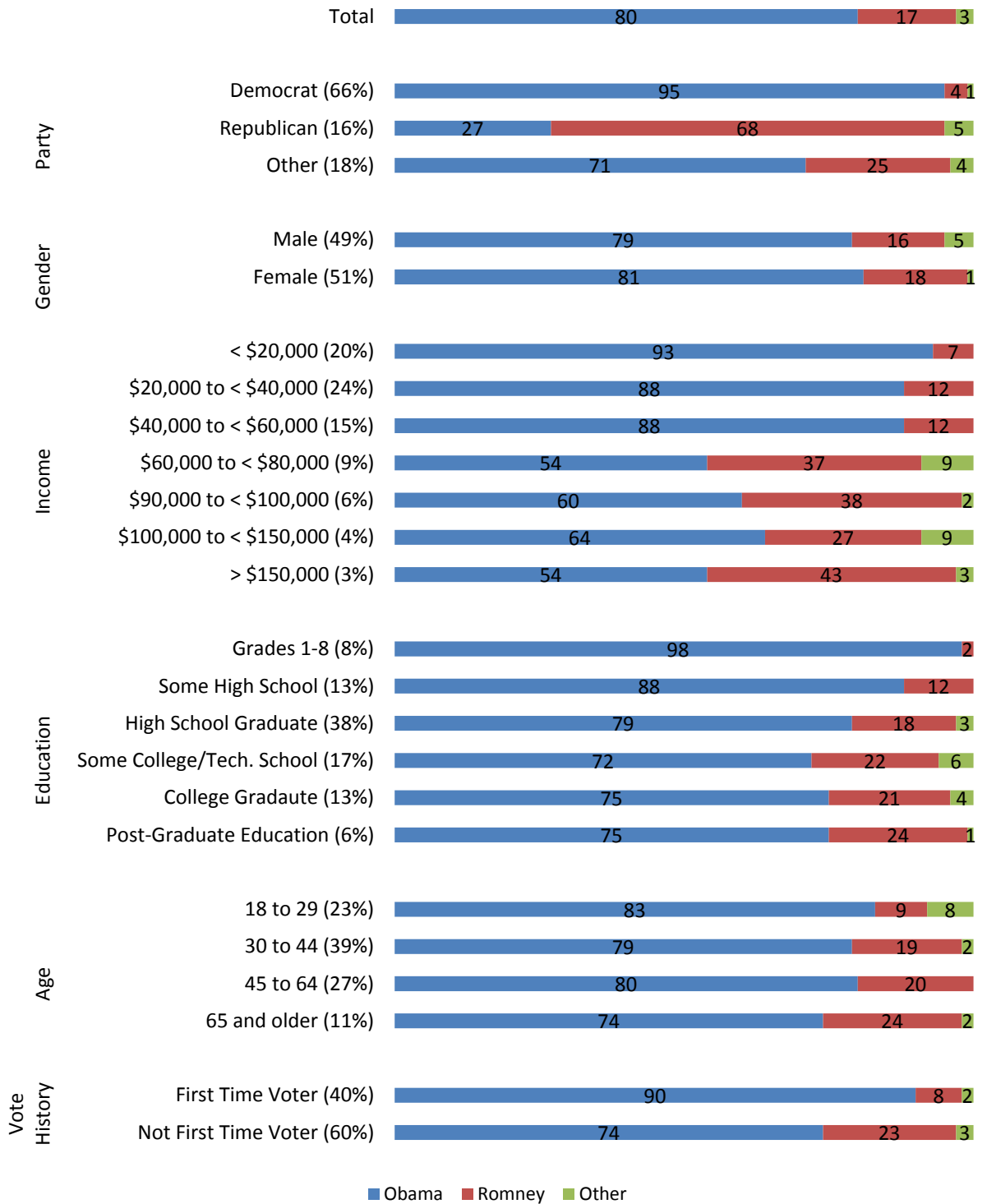
More generally, as Figure 5 makes clear, across every sub-category, Obama won comfortably. Of particular note is the near equivalent support for Obama among male and female Latinos. Whereas polling conducted by Latino Decisions in June and October suggested a small gender gap, this did not come to fruition in November.

The vote distributions for income and education highlight the President's overwhelming support among lower income and less educated Latinos. Perhaps the one bit of good news for the Republicans can be found among higher income Latinos.⁸ While Obama won every income category, his margin decreased among those with family incomes greater than \$60,000. Unfortunately for the Republicans, just over 20% of Nevada Latinos who voted in 2012 had household incomes above that level. Romney's vote share also increased among the 36% of the Latino electorate with some post-high school education.

Lastly, Figure 5 suggests troubling long term prospects for the Republican Party in Nevada. Latinos who were 29 years old or younger were the least likely to support Romney among all age groups. Moreover, not only did this cohort constitute nearly a quarter of the Latino electorate, these voters were over five and half times as likely to identify themselves as Democrats as opposed to Republicans. The patterns are even more lopsided for first time voters, who accounted for 40% of the 2012 Latino turnout in Nevada. These voters supported President Obama at a 90% clip and were more than

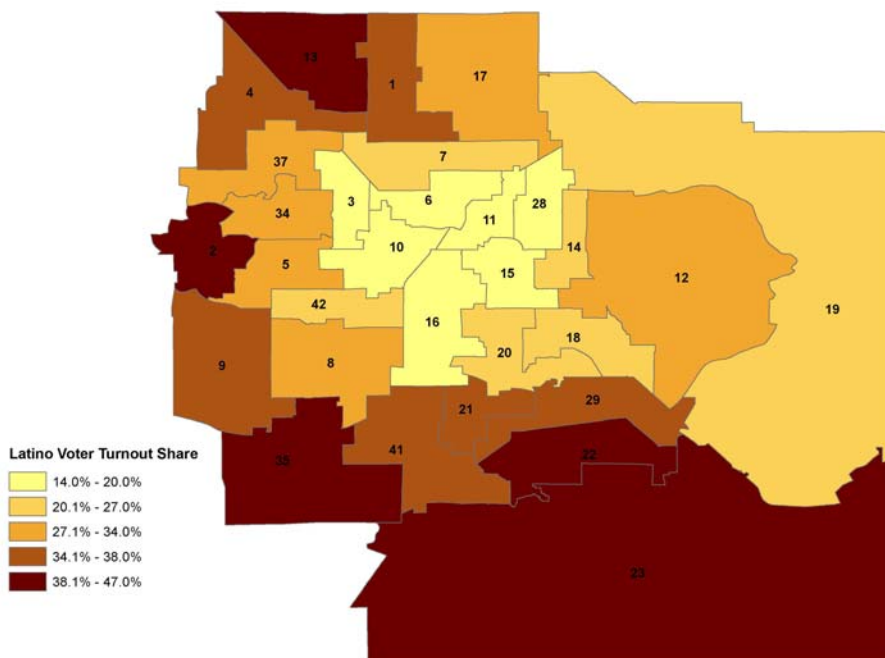
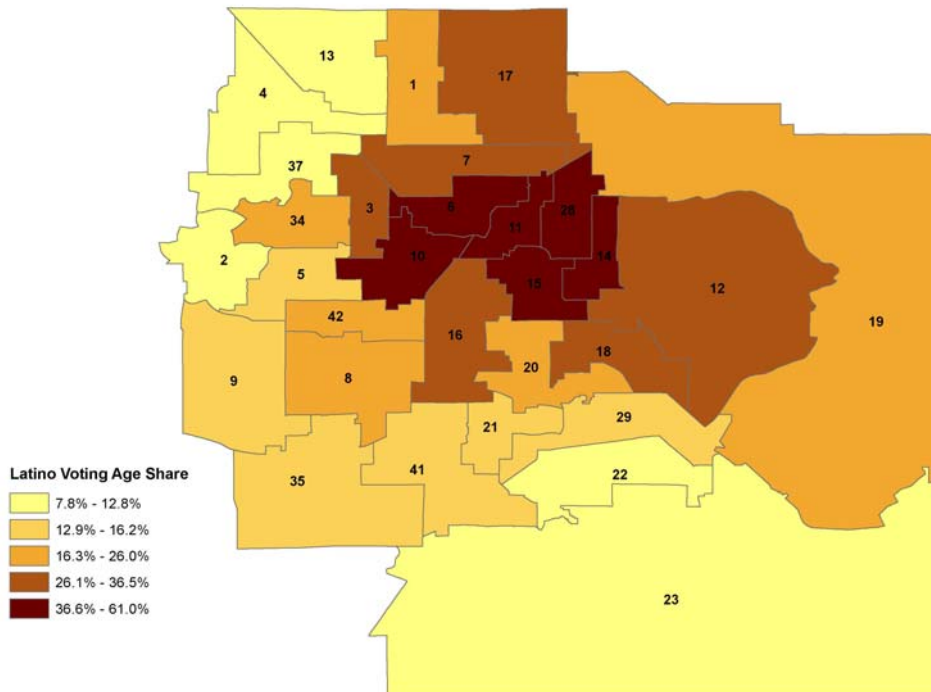
nine times more likely to self-identify as Democrats as opposed to Republicans.

Figure 5
Variation in the Presidential Vote among Nevada Latinos, 2012



Note: Data from the Nevada sub-sample of the impreMedia/Latino Decisions Election Eve Poll

Figure 6
Voting Age Population and Voter Turnout in Clark County Assembly Districts,
2012



In thinking about the long-term implications of these results, it is worth recalling that in 2011 approximately 48% of all Latinos in Nevada were 24 years old or younger (and 86% of this age group was born in the U.S.).⁹ If younger Latinos continue to show such a strong preference for the Democratic Party, Republicans will face an increasingly challenging environment as greater numbers of young Latinos enter Nevada's electorate.

Whereas the data presented in Figure 5 offers insight into variation in the voting preferences of the Latino electorate, Figures 6 and 7 captures the geography of the 2012 Latino vote in southern Nevada, which is home to roughly 80% of Nevada's Latino population. Specifically, each figure maps the share of the Latino voting age population and the Latino turnout in each Assembly (Figure 6) and state Senate (Figure 7) district in Clark County. Inspection of these figures reveals an interesting dynamic: in areas with high concentration of voting age Latinos (the dark shaded districts in the top panels of Figures 6 and 7), turnout is low (the light shaded districts in the bottom panels of Figures 6 and 7), while in areas with low concentrations of voting age Latinos (the light shaded districts in the top panels of Figures 6 and 7), turnout is much higher (the dark shaded districts in the bottom panels of Figures 6 and 7).

As such, these data suggest two important aspects of Latino political participation in Nevada. First, patterns of Latino turnout are similar to other racial and ethnic groups. That is, assuming that areas in the urban core with high concentrations of voting age Latinos tend to be populated by lower socio-economic status Latinos and the suburbs tend to be home to higher socio-economic Latinos then not surprisingly we find, all else equal, significantly higher Latino turnout in the suburbs. Second, the figures reiterate the point made above that even though electoral participation among Nevada's Latino population has increased in recent elections, a significant share of the age eligible Latino population, particularly in areas with high concentrations of Latinos, remains untapped.

Collectively then the data presented in Figures 5, 6, and 7 allow us to determine the variation in participation across a number of demographic and geographic variables. Yet, these data do not explain why President Obama won the votes of so many Nevada Latinos.

The data presented in Figures 8, 9, and 10 provide some understanding of the drivers of the Latino vote. We begin by considering the degree to which Obama and Romney were perceived as caring about the Latino community. Specifically, the top panel of Figure 8 summarizes the responses to two questions relevant to this point.¹⁰

Figure 7

Voting Age Population and Voter Turnout in Clark County Senate Districts, 2012

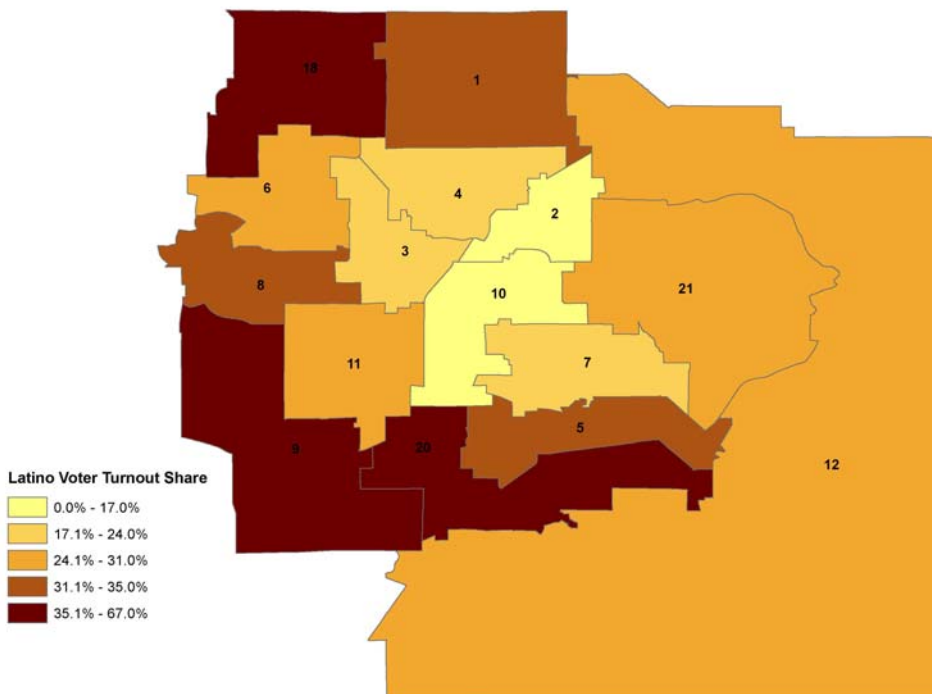
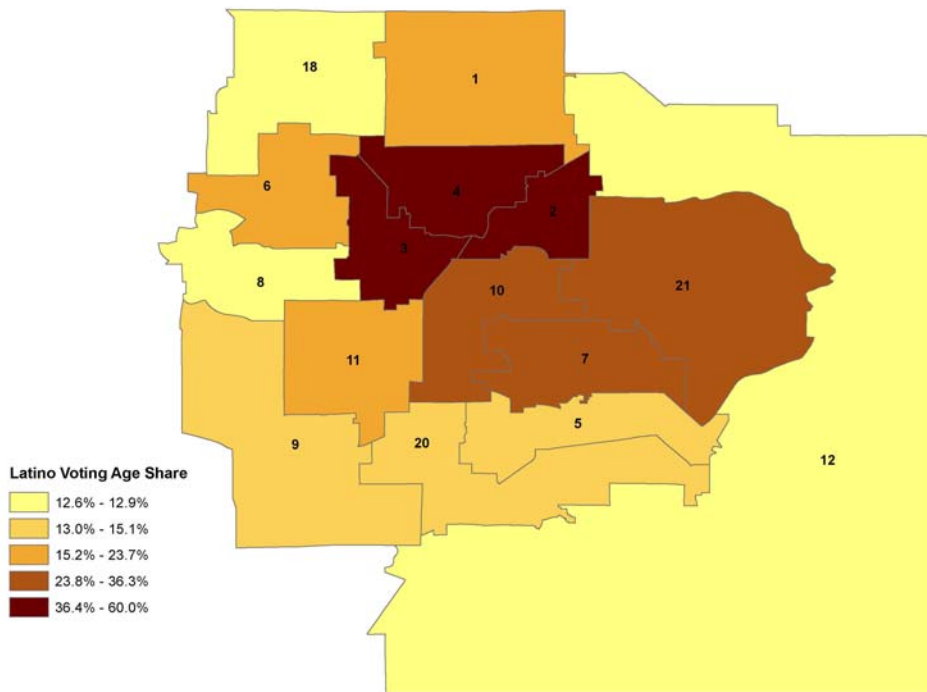
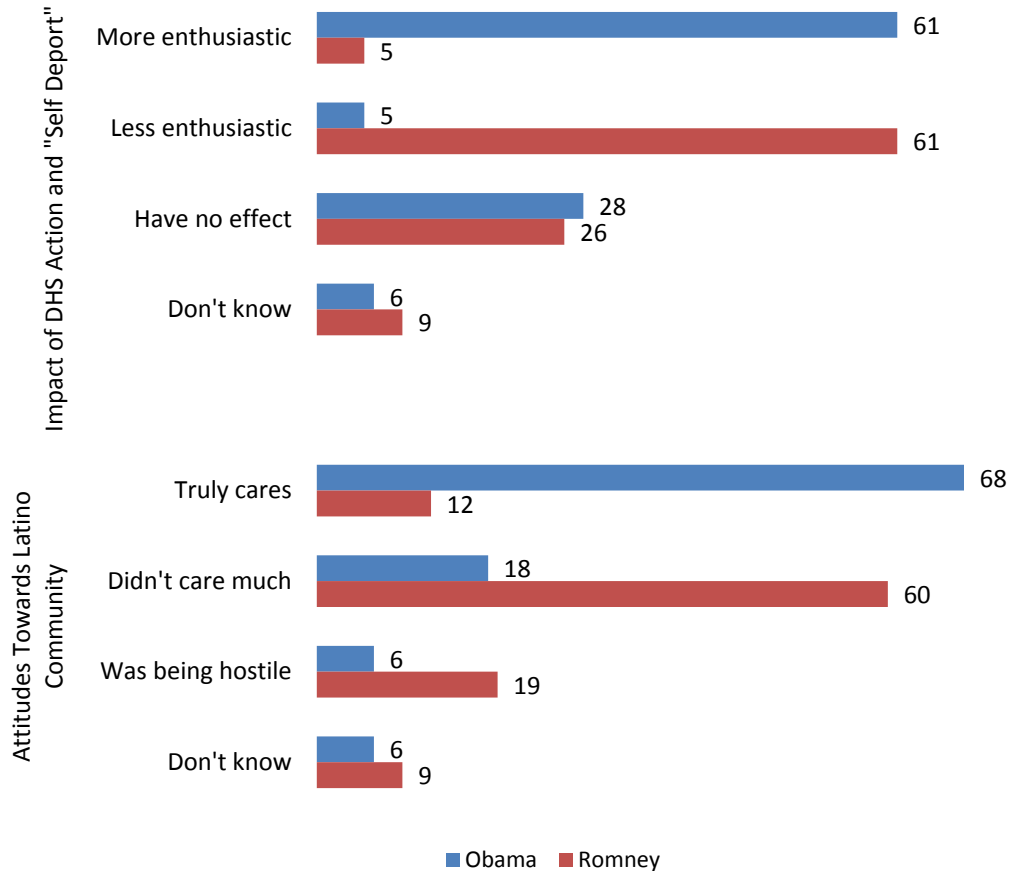


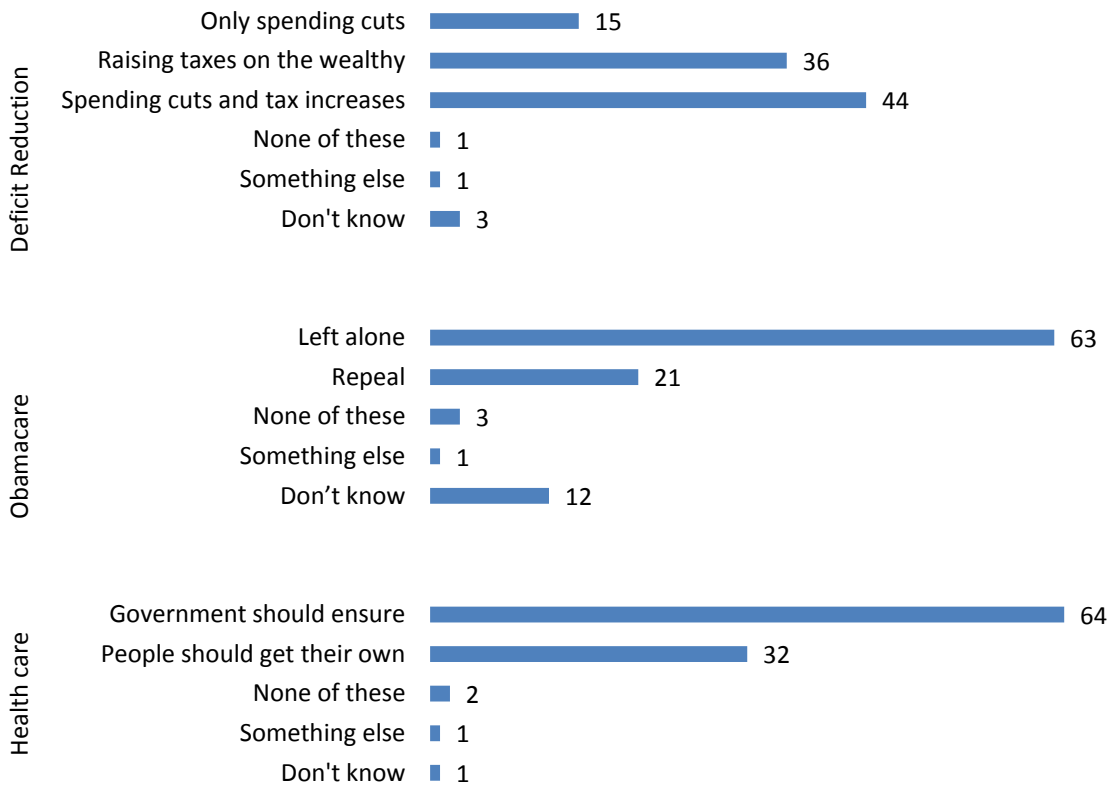
Figure 8
Perceptions of Obama and Romney's Attitudes towards the Latino Community and Impact of Immigration Related Issues on Enthusiasm for Obama and Romney among Nevada Latino Voters, 2012



Note: Data from the Nevada sub-sample of the impreMedia/Latino Decisions Election Eve Poll.

The first asks if Obama’s decision in June to stop the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) from deporting undocumented youth who attend college or serve in the military and provide them with a renewable work permit made respondents more or less enthusiastic about Obama. The second assesses if Romney’s statement that immigrants who cannot legally work in the United State should “self-deport” affected voters’ enthusiasm for Romney. Obama’s DHS action was quite popular among Latino voters as 61% of the sample indicated that the decision made them more enthusiastic about Obama. In contrast, the same share of respondents suggested that Romney’s advocacy for “self-deportation” made them less enthusiastic about his candidacy. Not surprisingly and as is summarized in the bottom panel of Figure 8, nearly four out of five Latino voters in Nevada saw Romney as either uncaring or hostile to the Latino community.

Figure 9
Policy Preferences of Nevada Latino Voters for Selective Issues, 2012



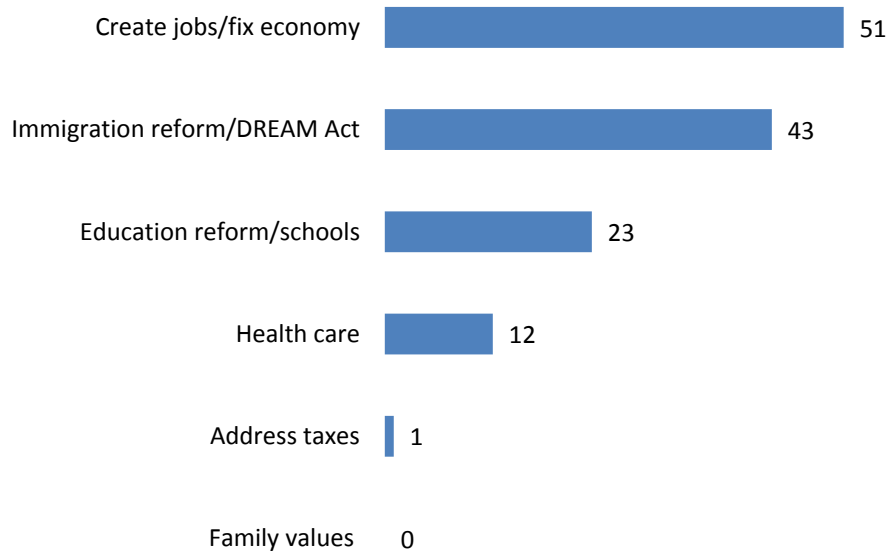
Note: Data from the Nevada sub-sample of the impreMedia/Latino Decisions Election Eve Poll.

Just 12% responded that Romney truly cared about the Latino community. In contrast, 68% of voters perceived Obama as caring, with 18% responding that the President did not care much, and only 6% felt that Obama was hostile.

So while Romney did himself no favors among Latino voters in Nevada, there is also ample evidence that the Republican Party is out of step with the preference of the Latino community. Figure 9 summarizes respectively Nevada Latinos' preferences for deficit reduction, repealing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (e.g., "Obamacare"), and the role of government in providing access to health care. For all three policies, the vast majority of Nevada Latinos hold attitudes that are inconsistent with the policies advocated by the Republican Party.

In terms of deficit reduction, just 15% support a solution that relies exclusively on spending cuts, while 36% favor closing the deficit by raising tax on the wealthy and 44% prefer a combination of spending cuts and tax increases; the position Obama advocated during the campaign. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is overwhelmingly popular among Nevada Latinos as 63% indicated that they want the law left as is and only 21% favor its repeal.

Figure 10
Perceptions of the Most Important Problem Facing the Latino Community among Nevada Latino Voters, 2012



Note: Data from the Nevada sub-sample of the impreMedia/Latino Decisions Election Eve Poll.

Also, as is suggested by Figure 9, twice as many Nevada Latinos support a role for the federal government in ensuring universal access to health insurance as compared to making individuals responsible for getting their own health insurance.

Throughout the 2012 election cycle, a common Republican refrain was that Latinos are a “natural” consistency for the GOP given the party’s economic messages and its family values agenda (i.e., opposition to abortion and gay marriage). At least in Nevada, there is little evidence to support these claims. Specifically, Figure 10 summarizes the responses to an open-ended question assessing the issues that Latino voters thought were the most important for their community.

Not surprisingly, economic issues and job creation were the primary concern of Latino voters, followed by immigration reform and passage of the DREAM Act, and improving education, while health care was a distant fourth. Among voters who identified the economy and jobs as the most important issue, over 77% voted for Obama. Obama’s vote share increased to 87% for those who identified immigration and passage of the DREAM Act as the Latino community’s most important issue and 92% for voters concerned about education and schools. Also note how little resonance that family values (1%) and taxes (0%) have as political issues for Nevada Latinos. Beyond these results, there is little evidence that parties emphasizing social issues will be more successful among Latin American *immigrants* who might become naturalized citizens.

For example, data from the Latino National Survey indicated that only 1% of Latin American immigrants residing in Nevada felt that family values/morality was the most important issue facing the Latino community. Significantly, in the same survey, no immigrant respondents rated abortion as the most important issue.¹¹

In sum, based upon analysis of survey data from the 2012 election it appears that within Nevada's Latino community there are few if any sub-populations where the Republican Party has much traction. Much of the Republican Party's struggles with Latino voters in Nevada stems from the inconsistency between the GOP's policy agenda and the preferences of most Latino voters in the state and the perceived insensitivity of the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, towards the state's Latino community.

Discussion and Conclusion

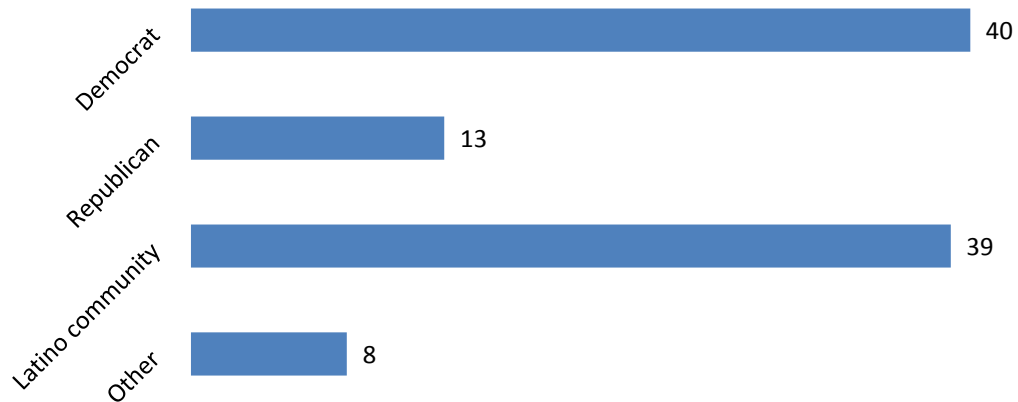
The above analysis has offered a profile of the Latino electorate in Nevada. The overall picture that emerges is of a voting group whose participation has gradually increased over the course of recent elections. Yet, despite these gains, there remains a significant segment of Nevada's Latino population that remains uninvolved in the political process.

With respect to the representation of Latino interests in Nevada's governing institutions, the number of Latinos elected to public office has increased in recent election cycles. However, much of the increase has been limited to the Nevada Legislature as presently there are no Latinos serving on the powerful Clark County Commission, the Board of Regents, the Clark County School District, and there are only two Latinos serving on the city councils for the state's three largest cities, Las Vegas, Henderson, and North Las Vegas - all of which are located in southern Nevada.

At the same time, as a consequence of the growth of the Latino community and the outcomes of the 2011 reapportionment and redistricting process, with additional electoral participation, Latinos are positioned to affect electoral outcomes up and down the ballot. Thus, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or partisanship, candidates competing for many local, state, and federal elective positions will need to be responsive to Latino interests if they hope to win and hold office. Moreover, the continued development of a Latino political infrastructure that is distinct from the Nevada Democratic Party and the service based unions (e.g., SEIU and the Culinary Union Local 226) is producing a new generation of Latino leaders who are likely to run for elective offices in the near future.

Thus, while Latino political development in Nevada has yet to be fully realized, there are clear indications that increased participation to date has had significant effects on Nevada's political environment, particularly in statewide races. Most notably, Nevada is one of four states (along with Colorado, Florida, and New Mexico) in 2012 where the Latino vote tipped the outcome for President Obama.¹² It is also unlikely that U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid would have been reelected in 2010 without strong Latino turnout.¹³

Figure 11
Motivation for Voting among Nevada Latino Voters, 2012



■ I'm voting in 2012 because I wanted to support the

Note: Data from the Nevada sub-sample of the impreMedia/Latino Decisions Election Eve Poll.

As such, it can be safely argued that much of Nevada's Democratic tilt during the prior decade has been driven primarily by the Latino vote.

This, however, does not mean that Latinos in Nevada will continue to support Democratic candidates at the levels enjoyed by Reid and Obama in future elections. Indeed, as is detailed in Figure 11, one of the most instructive findings from the impreMedia/Latino Decisions Election Eve Poll is that while 40% of Latino voters in Nevada indicated that they were motivated to turnout in 2012 to support Democrats (13% voted to support the Republicans), a near equal share (39%) responded that they voted to support the Latino community. This suggests an opportunity for the Republican Party provided that it can more clearly align its rhetoric and policy agenda, starting with support for comprehensive immigration reform that includes a pathway to citizenship, with the values and priorities of Nevada's Latino community. However, as Nevada's demography continues to shift and Latino voters, particularly the immense under-thirty heavily Democratic cohort, become more engaged in politics, the GOP's window of opportunity, and by extension its ability to compete in Nevada, may be rapidly closing.

Appendix of Data Sources

In the analysis presented here, we employ data from a number of sources. The benefit of doing so is that we are able to capture a number of dimensions of Latino political behavior over time and at different levels of analysis. The downside is that many of these data source raise methodological issues owing to concerns about their ability to measure the behavior of a representative cross-section of Nevada’s Latino population. In particular, evidence from 2012 in Nevada and nationally for prior cycles reveals that attempts to assess the preferences of Latino voters consistently under sample segments of the Latino population that are the most Democratic leaning (e.g., young and first time voters and less educated and poorer Latinos).¹⁴ In what follows, we detail some of the specific issues surrounding the data sources used in our analysis.

Exit Polls

To estimate the Latino share of the Nevada electorate (see Figure 2) we use data from the Voter News Service (2000 and 2002) and National Election Pool Exit Polls (2004–2012) for Nevada. The main concern with these data is their ability to estimate the vote preferences of the Latino electorate.¹⁵ However, because we use these data to assess the share of the Nevada electorate that was Latino, as opposed to the vote choice of Latino voters, this issue has less bearing on our analysis. A more significant concern is that exit polling does not survey voters who cast their ballots early; an increasingly common phenomenon in Nevada. Thus, the degree to which the demographic characteristics of early voters differ from Election Day voters could be a source of error in estimating the racial and ethnic composition of the Nevada electorate.

Current Population Survey (CPS)

The CPS is a monthly, national survey conducted by the Census Bureau that yields a sample of 50,000 occupied households. The survey is administered using in-person and telephone interviews. Each state sample is conducted independently and results are weighted to reflect updated census estimates. Because the CPS uses probability sampling to select respondents, the estimates it provides are subject to sampling variation. Unfortunately, the error margins for the CPS estimates can be quite large, particularly for minority groups. Thus, the data presented in Figures 3 and 4 should be interpreted cautiously given the large confidence intervals for some of these estimates.

The impreMedia/Latino Decisions Election Eve Poll

Much of the analysis presented in the third section above (“The 2012 Election: Taking a Closer Look”) uses data from a survey conducted in the days leading up to the 2012 election and includes responses from 400 Latino voters in Nevada who had either voted early or reported that they were certain to vote on Election Day. The poll’s margin of error is 4.9%. Respondents were selected based upon three sources of information: Latino surnames gleaned from voter registration data; U.S. Census data capturing the geography of Nevada’s Latino population; and consumer information such as magazine subscriptions. Surveys were conducted in both English and Spanish using cell phones and landlines. The end result is that the survey contains a representative cross-section of Nevada’s Latino population including sub-groups of Latino voters (e.g., first time

voters and lower socio economic Latinos) who are often omitted from election polling conducted in Nevada.

Latino Voter Turnout in Clark County

The voter turnout data are provided by the Clark County Elections Department and consist of a Latino surname search of registered voters who voted in the November 2012 election. Because these data are available only for Clark County, we are unable to analyze Latino turnout in the rest of the state. The major limitation associated with these data is they rely on surnames to identify Latino voters. Because roughly 80% of Latinos can be identified in this manner, these data are likely to underestimate Latino turnout.

ENDNOTES

¹ See, for example, William H. Frey, “Hispanics, Race and the Changing Political Landscape of the United States and the Mountain West,” in Ruy Teixeira (ed.) *America's New Swing Region*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2012, 82-106.

² For an extended discussion, see David F. Damore, “The 2001 Nevada Redistricting and Perpetuation of the Status Quo,” *American Review of Politics*, Vol. 27 Summer (2006): 149-168.

³ See David F. Damore, “Slowing the Tide: Partisan Gridlock and the 2011 Nevada Redistricting,” in *The Political Battle over Congressional Redistricting*, eds. William J. Miller and Jeremy D. Walling. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, forthcoming.

⁴ With the expulsion of Steven Brooks from the Nevada Legislature on March 28, 2013 the number of Latinos serving in the Assembly was reduced by one.

⁵ Assembly District 27 in Washoe County, which has a Latino voting age population of 19%, is represented by Democrat Teresa Benitez-Thompson.

⁶ See the Appendix for methodological limitations associated with the data used in this section.

⁷ See John P. Tuman, *Latin American Migrants in the Las Vegas Valley: Civic Engagement and Political Participation*, Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2009, 14-15; John P. Tuman and Dawn Gearhart, “The Guatemalans,” in *More Peoples from Las Vegas: One City, Many Faces*, eds. Jerry Simich and Tom Wright, Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2010, 213-230; and Xochitl Bada, Jonathan Fox, and Robert Donnelly *Context Matters: Latino Immigrant Civic and Political Participation in Nine Cities*, Washington, D.C. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2010, 57-59.

⁸ Note that 20% of the sample either did not know or refused to report their household income.

⁹ Calculated from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey (ACS), 1-year Estimates. File S0506. “Selected Characteristics of the Foreign-Born Population by Region and Birth: Latin America. Geography: Nevada,” and File B010011, “Sex by Age (Hispanic or Latino). Geography: Nevada” <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkml>, accessed February 22, 2013. Note that although the ACS data does include data for the Latino population aged 29 and younger, they do not include an estimate of the foreign-born Latino population between the ages of 25 and 29 (they report foreign-born Latinos between the ages of 25 and 44). As a result, we use the 24 and under data here because it allows us to adjust for immigration.

¹⁰ Note that for these questions, the sample was split in half so that 200 respondents were asked the Obama DHS question and 200 respondents were asked the Romney “self-deport” question.

¹¹ Although slightly dated, the 2006 Latino National Survey, which included a representative sample of immigrants in the U.S. and in Nevada, remains one of the best sources for immigrant attitudes. See Luis Fraga et al., *Latino National Survey (2006)*, ICPSR machine-readable data set. While attitudes

toward abortion and other social issues remain conservative in Latin America, attitudes are changing. For some discussion on Mexico, see John P. Tuman, Danielle Roth-Johnson, and Ted Jelen, "Conscience and Context: Attitudes toward Abortion in Mexico," *Social Science Quarterly* 94, no.1 (2013): 100-112.

¹² Latino Decisions estimates that without taking into consideration the Latino vote, President Obama trailed Mitt Romney by four points in Nevada (see Matt Barreto, "Comprehensive Immigration Reform and Winning the Latino Vote," *The Latino Decisions Blog*, http://www.latinodecisions.com/files/2813/6250/5298/Immigration_refom_March5_Final.pdf, accessed March 18, 2012).

¹³ See Matt Barreto, "Proving the Exit Polls Wrong – Harry Reid Did Win over 90% of the Latino Vote," *The Latino Decisions Blog*, <http://www.latinodecisions.com/blog/2010/11/15/proving-the-exit-polls-wrong-harry-reid-did-win-over-90-of-the-latino-vote/>, accessed March 18, 2013 and David F. Damore "Reid vs. Angle in Nevada's Senate Race: Harry Houdini Escapes the Wave," in *Cases in Congressional Campaigns: Storming the Hill*, 2nd ed., eds. David Dulio and Randall Adkins, New York: Routledge, 2011, 32-53.

¹⁴ See David F. Damore, "Nevada's Odd Numbers: The Complexity of Polling the Silver State," *The Latino Decisions Blog*, <http://www.latinodecisions.com/blog/2012/11/21/nevadas-odd-numbers-the-complexity-of-polling-the-silver-sate/>, accessed March 18, 2013 and Gary Segura, "How the Exit Polls Misrepresent Latino Voters, and Badly," *The Latino Decisions Blog*, <http://www.latinodecisions.com/blog/2012/11/01/how-the-exit-polls-misrepresent-latino-voters-and-badly/>, accessed March 18, 2013.

¹⁵ See David Leal, Matt Barreto, Jongho Lee, and Rodolfo de la Garza, "The Latino Vote in the 2004 Election," *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 38 January (2005):41-49.

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