



# INCLUSION, NOT EXCLUSION

SPRING 2016 ASIAN AMERICAN VOTER SURVEY

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Asian Americans have, for nearly two decades, been the most rapidly growing racial group in the United States. More recently, they have also been growing significantly in their political presence, as measured by the growth of registered voters (an average increase of 600,000 per presidential election cycle), Congressional candidates (from 10 candidates in 2010, to 30 in 2012 and 40 in 2016), or the number of organizations involved in voter registration (from 154 participating in National Voter Registration Day in 2012 to 317 organizations in 2014).

Along with the growing presence of Asian American voters is a growing interest in the opinions and priorities of this electorate. This report presents the results of interviews conducted by telephone from April 11 to May 17, 2016, of 1,212 registered voters who identify as Asian American, producing an overall margin of sampling error of +/- 3%. Sampling was targeted towards the six largest national origin groups that together account for more than 75% of the Asian American adult citizen population. Interviews were conducted in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, and Vietnamese, and included landlines and mobile phones.

The data on Asian American public opinion reveal that:

- *Asian Americans are shifting in party identification towards the Democratic Party, and exclusionary rhetoric is a likely cause*
  - There has been a 12-point increase in the proportion of Asian Americans who identify as Democrats from 2012 to 2016 (pp. 27-28)
  - Bolstering evidence from 2014, our survey indicates that Asian American registered voters, including Independents, will punish candidates with anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim views (pp. 17-18)
- *On the presidential candidates:*
  - Hillary Clinton has the most net favorability, while Trump is viewed very unfavorably (pp. 8-9)
  - A large proportion still have no opinion of Bernie Sanders (p. 9)
  - Many Republican candidates were viewed unfavorably this year, highlighting the challenges for a party trying to attract immigrant voter support amid exclusionary rhetoric by many presidential candidates (p. 10)
- *On Congressional races:*
  - Democrats hold nearly a 2:1 advantage over Republicans in Senate races (p. 14)
  - The Democratic advantage is even greater in House races (p. 16)
  - In California's U.S. Senate race, voters favor Harris over Sanchez when they learn that Harris is part Asian American (p. 15)
- *Ethnic media is an important source of political information, especially for Chinese American and Vietnamese American voters (pp. 31-34).*

- *Young Asian Americans (ages 18 to 34) are a key demographic to watch*
  - Jobs and economic inequality rank higher among their concerns (p. 20)
  - They are much more likely to get political news from Internet sources (p. 31)
  - They display the strongest reaction against exclusionary rhetoric (pp. 17-18)
  - Candidates and parties risk losing out on the support of this up-and-coming generation that will shape the politics of the U.S. in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- *Asian Americans tend to favor the Democratic Party on many key issues*
  - The Democratic advantage is strongest on the environment, racial profiling, education, social security, and immigration reform (p. 21)
  - The Republican Party is evenly matched on one issue: terrorism (p. 21)
- *Overall, voter enthusiasm is significantly higher than in 2014 (p. 11)*
  - This bodes well for Asian American voter interest in the 2016 election year
  - But, voter mobilization and outreach by parties, candidates, and community organizations is key (p. 29).
  - Increased investments in voter outreach since 2012 seem only to have been sufficient to keep pace with this rapidly growing population, with no net increase in the rates of voter contact (p. 29).
  - Our 2012 post-election survey indicates that Asian Americans were less likely than other racial groups to be contacted, further indicating the need for further investments in partisan and nonpartisan voter outreach (p. 29).

## BACKGROUND: THE RAPIDLY GROWING ASIAN AMERICAN ELECTORATE

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities have long been among the fastest growing populations in the United States, with immigration playing a significant role. More recently, these communities have been notable for their quickly developing civic and political infrastructure, including a growing base of voters, donors, elected officials, appointees, and public policy advocates. This transformation is ongoing, but the potential is already being realized in many states and localities, and especially in elections with narrow margins.

According to a report from the Center for American Progress and AAPI Data, the number of Asian American voters in the last decade has nearly doubled from more than 2 million voters in 2000 to 3.9 million voters in 2012.<sup>1</sup> The report estimates that Asian Americans will reach 5 percent of voters nationally by 2025 and 10 percent of voters by 2044. In many states and localities, however, these milestones have already been achieved. For example, AAPIs are already 5 percent or more of the citizen voting age population (CVAP) in 6 states, including two (California and Hawaii) where they are over 10% of the CVAP.<sup>2</sup> Looking next at counties, AAPIs are 5 percent or more of the CVAP in 73 jurisdictions, including 33 jurisdictions where they are greater than 10 percent. When looking at congressional districts, there are 10 where AAPIs account for more than 25 percent of the CVAP, 35 districts where they account for between 10 percent and 25 percent, and 52 districts where they account for between 5 percent and 10 percent.

Just as the population of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders has grown, so too has the number of registered voters. And this has been true, not only during presidential election years but also in midterm elections. In the last three presidential cycles, the number of Asian American voters has grown by an average of 620,000 votes per cycle.<sup>3</sup> More recently, there has also been a rapid growth in the civic infrastructure of AAPI communities. For example, in September 2014, 317 AAPI serving organizations participated in National Voter Registration Day, more than double the number of organizations who participated in 2012 (154). Importantly, a growing number of community-based organizations are integrating voter registration into their regular activities and programs throughout the year. In doing so, these organizations amplify and reinforce the importance of civic engagement, especially as growing civic participation increases the ability of organizations to advocate for their communities' interests.

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<sup>1</sup> Center for American Progress and AAPI Data, "State of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders" (2014), available at <http://ampr.gs/AAPIreports2014>.

<sup>2</sup> For the most up-to-date data on the Citizen Voting Age population by geography, visit <http://aapidata.com/stats/>

<sup>3</sup> Analysis by AAPI Data can be found at <http://aapidata.com/blog/2016-new-year-electorate/>

The growth of AAPI civic participation is due, not only because community organizations are getting more involved, but also because of the growing number of AAPI elected officials and candidates running for office. Each time a leader from the community decides to run for office or secure an appointment, they engage their network of extended family and friends to become involved. According to the 2014 UCLA Asian Pacific American Political Almanac, there are at least 4000 Asian American and Pacific Islander elected officials and appointees from 39 states.<sup>4</sup> Recent years have seen a surge of Asian Americans running for Congress, from 8 in 2008 and 10 in 2010, to 30 in 2012,<sup>5</sup> 39 in 2014,<sup>6</sup> and 40 in 2016.<sup>7</sup> In addition to Congress, there are hundreds of AAPI elected officials at the state and local levels, including 182 state representatives from 21 states and territories.<sup>8</sup>

The growth of these elected officials is supported with the growing political infrastructure. The last two decades, more political PACs and Democratic and Republican clubs and caucuses have been established. There is also a growing number of staffers of Asian descent involved with campaigns. The Democratic National Committee has had an AAPI community desk focused on engagement with the AAPI community since the 1990s. More recently, the Republican National Committee has hired staff and provided assistance in outreach to AAPIs in several states.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Don T. Nakanishi and James Lai, eds., “National Asian Pacific American Political Almanac” (2014), University of California Los Angeles Asian American Studies Center.

<sup>5</sup> Jeffrey Stein, “With Surging Numbers, Asian-Americans Look for Congressional Gains” (2012) CNN, available at <http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/15/politics/asian-americans-congress/> (last accessed October 2014).

<sup>6</sup> Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies, “Advancement in Congress with 39 AAPI Candidates in the 2014 Elections,” (2014) available at <http://apaics.org/advancement-in-congress-with-39-aapi-candidates-in-the-2014-elections/> (last accessed October 2014).

<sup>7</sup> See Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies analysis at <http://apaics.org/2016-elections/>

<sup>8</sup> Nakanishi and Lai, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Moore, Martha T. “GOP Sees Need to Woo Asian-American Voters.” (2013) *USA Today* <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2013/04/11/republicans-asian-americans/2066389/> (last accessed October 2014)

## MOOD OF THE ELECTORATE

### Presidential approval

Respondents were asked “Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?” Table 1 below presents the results for Asian Americans overall, and by national origin, gender, and nativity.

Overall, two thirds of Asian American registered voters (67%) approve of Barack Obama’s job as President. By contrast, only 51% of the general public approves of the way President Obama is handling his job, according the latest CNN/ORC poll that coincided with the timing of our survey.<sup>10</sup>

There are considerable differences in approval by national origin, with Asian Indians giving the President the highest job approval ratings and Chinese Americans giving him the lowest. There are also significant differences by age, with young adults (ages 18 to 34) giving President Obama the highest job approval. There are no significant differences in Presidential approval by gender and nativity.

**Table 1. Obama Job Approval Among Asian American Registered Voters, April/May 2016**

	Asn Indian	Chinese	Filipino	Japanese	Korean	Vietnamese	Total
Approve	84%	56%	68%	70%	63%	66%	<b>67%</b>
Disapprove	11%	31%	23%	20%	24%	22%	<b>23%</b>
Don’t Know	4%	13%	7%	10%	12%	11%	<b>9%</b>
Refused	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	<b>1%</b>

	18 to 34	35 to 64	65 plus
Approve	85%	62%	64%
Disapprove	12%	29%	21%
Don’t Know	4%	8%	14%
Refused	0%	1%	1%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

<sup>10</sup> See the CNN/ORC Poll at <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/06/politics/obama-approval-poll-positive-territory/>

## Party Favorability

Respondents were asked to rate the favorability of the Republican and Democratic parties, as well as several public officials and candidates.

Asian American registered voters hold a net unfavorable view of the Republican Party, with 46% viewing the party unfavorably and 28% viewing it favorably. The unfavorability rating for the GOP is even higher among the American public, which stands at 33% favorable-62% unfavorable according to the latest Pew Research Center poll that coincided with our survey.<sup>11</sup> Finally, the 31% favorable-46% unfavorable rating in 2016 among Asian Americans is considerably higher than the 39% favorable-39% unfavorable rating the party got in our 2014 pre-election survey.<sup>12</sup>

Asian American registered voters give the Democratic Party a large net favorable rating (66%-19%), one that stands in sharp contrast to the party's slightly negative rating (45%-50%) among the general public.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the Democratic Party's standing among Asian Americans appears to have improved since 2014, when it had a rating of 55% favorable-29% unfavorable.

**Table 2. Party Favorability Among Asian American Registered Voters By Detailed Origin**

	Republican Party			Democratic Party		
	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	58%	24%	18%	17%	18%	65%
<b>Chinese</b>	30%	32%	38%	16%	23%	61%
<b>Filipino</b>	48%	21%	31%	21%	15%	64%
<b>Japanese</b>	64%	12%	24%	24%	8%	68%
<b>Korean</b>	62%	12%	26%	24%	10%	66%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	34%	21%	45%	19%	13%	68%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

<sup>11</sup> See the Pew Research Center Poll at <http://www.people-press.org/files/2016/04/04-28-2016-Party-favorability-topline-for-release.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> See the 2014 survey at <http://aapidata.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/APV-AAJC-LeftRightCenter-oct7.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> See the Pew Research Center Poll at <http://www.people-press.org/files/2016/04/04-28-2016-Party-favorability-topline-for-release.pdf>



In addition, there are some significant variations in party favorability by age group, with Republicans getting their highest unfavorability among Asian American youth (registered voters age 18 to 34). There is also some variation by state on the Democratic side and gender on the Republican side, although these differences are not statistically significant.

**Table 3. Party Favorability Among Asian American Registered Voters**

	Republican Party			Democratic Party		
	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable
<b>18 to 34</b>	73%	16%	12%	12%	11%	77%
<b>35 to 64</b>	41%	24%	35%	20%	17%	63%
<b>65 plus</b>	39%	24%	37%	22%	18%	61%
<b>Male</b>	40%	23%	37%	24%	16%	60%
<b>Female</b>	50%	23%	27%	15%	17%	68%
<b>California</b>	47%	24%	29%	18%	15%	67%
<b>New York</b>	41%	23%	36%	15%	12%	73%
<b>Nevada</b>	46%	18%	36%	34%	13%	53%
<b>Virginia</b>	38%	25%	37%	24%	24%	52%

*Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)*

### Candidate Favorability

Respondents were asked to rate the favorability of the Republican and Democratic parties, as well as several public officials and candidates. First, with respect to Barack Obama, he enjoys higher favorability ratings among Asian Americans (68%) than among the general public (50%).<sup>14</sup> Obama’s favorability rating is particularly high among younger Asian Americans. By contrast, Donald Trump’s favorable rating of 19% among Asian Americans is considerably lower than the 41% rating among the general public, and his unfavorable ratings are particularly high among young Asian Americans.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 4. Candidate Favorability Among Asian American Registered Voters**

	Barack Obama			Donald Trump		
	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	9%	8%	83%	62%	16%	22%
<b>Chinese</b>	30%	16%	54%	50%	33%	17%
<b>Filipino</b>	22%	10%	68%	62%	15%	23%
<b>Japanese</b>	25%	1%	74%	76%	9%	15%
<b>Korean</b>	33%	1%	66%	80%	10%	10%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	19%	7%	75%	57%	22%	22%
<b>Male</b>	21%	9%	70%	52%	22%	26%
<b>Female</b>	24%	9%	67%	69%	18%	13%
<b>18 to 34</b>	11%	3%	85%	86%	5%	9%
<b>35 to 64</b>	29%	9%	63%	63%	16%	22%
<b>65 plus</b>	22%	12%	66%	48%	30%	22%
<b>California</b>	18%	9%	72%	62%	21%	17%
<b>New York</b>	19%	12%	69%	48%	27%	25%
<b>Nevada</b>	30%	7%	62%	56%	13%	31%
<b>Virginia</b>	24%	19%	57%	58%	17%	26%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

<sup>14</sup> See the Fox News poll from May 2016: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/interactive/2016/05/18/fox-news-poll-2016-national-release-may-18/>

<sup>15</sup> See the Fox News poll from May 2016: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/interactive/2016/05/18/fox-news-poll-2016-national-release-may-18/>

Next, Hillary Clinton enjoys much higher favorability ratings among Asian Americans (62%) than among the general public (37%), and has the highest net favorability among all presidential candidates.<sup>16</sup> Bernie Sanders also has a net favorable rating, but nearly a third of Asian Americans have yet to form an opinion of him.<sup>17</sup>

**Table 5. Candidate Favorability Among Asian American Registered Voters**

	Hillary Clinton			Bernie Sanders		
	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	25%	12%	63%	15%	21%	64%
<b>Chinese</b>	22%	17%	61%	25%	48%	27%
<b>Filipino</b>	28%	13%	59%	23%	23%	54%
<b>Japanese</b>	30%	5%	66%	24%	20%	56%
<b>Korean</b>	37%	2%	60%	28%	25%	47%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	19%	14%	66%	18%	30%	51%
<b>Male</b>	29%	13%	58%	22%	30%	48%
<b>Female</b>	23%	12%	66%	22%	31%	47%
<b>18 to 34</b>	32%	13%	55%	19%	5%	75%
<b>35 to 64</b>	24%	12%	64%	26%	29%	45%
<b>65 plus</b>	24%	12%	63%	19%	43%	38%
<b>California</b>	23%	13%	65%	18%	33%	48%
<b>New York</b>	24%	9%	67%	22%	26%	51%
<b>Nevada</b>	43%	10%	46%	35%	16%	49%
<b>Virginia</b>	35%	14%	51%	34%	27%	39%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

Note: numbers may not add to 100% because of rounding

<sup>16</sup> See the Fox News poll from May 2016: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/interactive/2016/05/18/fox-news-poll-2016-national-release-may-18/>

<sup>17</sup> See the Fox News poll from May 2016: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/interactive/2016/05/18/fox-news-poll-2016-national-release-may-18/>

Finally, other Republicans who were presidential candidates or otherwise prominent during the campaigns this year did not score high on favorability, although their unfavorability ratings are considerably lower than those for Trump.

**Table 6. Candidate Favorability Among Asian American Registered Voters**

	Ted Cruz			John Kasich		
	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	59%	28%	13%	35%	37%	28%
<b>Chinese</b>	23%	58%	19%	27%	66%	8%
<b>Filipino</b>	42%	31%	28%	24%	48%	29%
<b>Japanese</b>	49%	25%	26%	28%	38%	34%
<b>Korean</b>	42%	36%	22%	21%	58%	22%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	39%	32%	29%	30%	51%	19%

	Marco Rubio			South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley		
	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable	Unfavo- rable	No opinion/ never heard	Favo- rable
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	50%	34%	16%	18%	57%	25%
<b>Chinese</b>	18%	61%	21%	15%	80%	5%
<b>Filipino</b>	34%	39%	27%	16%	70%	14%
<b>Japanese</b>	39%	40%	20%	22%	67%	12%
<b>Korean</b>	40%	42%	19%	9%	80%	11%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	41%	45%	14%	12%	79%	9%

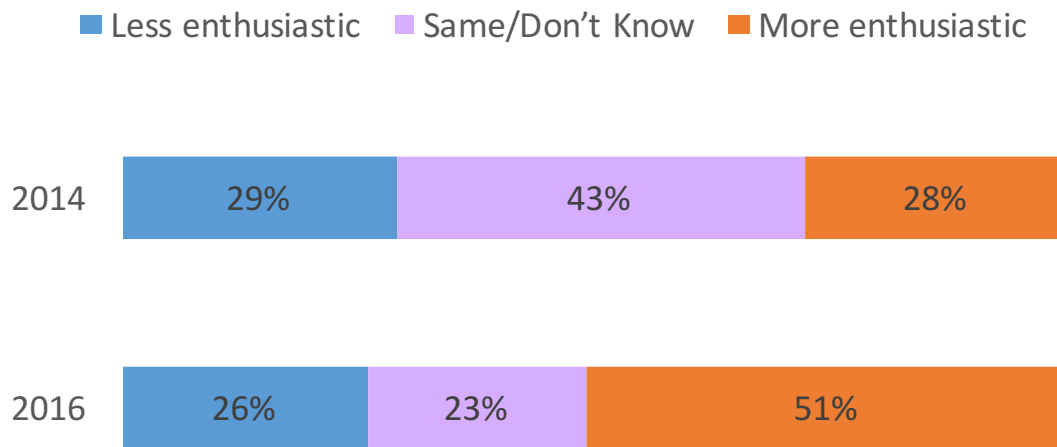
Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

Note: numbers may not add to 100% because of rounding

### Voter Enthusiasm

Respondents were asked, “Compared to previous elections, are you more enthusiastic than usual about voting this year or less enthusiastic?” As Figure 1 indicates, voter enthusiasm among Asian American registered voters is significantly higher than in 2014. It is unclear, however, if this uptick is the result of dynamics particular to the 2016 election, or to the difference between midterm elections and presidential elections, as the latter tend to draw out many more low-propensity voters, and particularly so among Asian Americans. This higher-level of enthusiasm is found across the board for Asian American voters, with no statistically significant differences by ethnicity, gender, age, nativity, and state of residence.

**Figure 1. Voter Enthusiasm Among Asian American Voters, Compared to Prior Elections**



*Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)*

## CANDIDATE PREFERENCES 2016

### Presidential Primary Choices

Among those who had voted in their state primaries or planned on doing so,<sup>18</sup> we asked who they voted for, or planned to vote for. Table 7 below presents the results for Asian Americans overall, and by national origin, gender, nativity, age, and state of residence. We urge caution in interpreting these findings given the high proportion who said “someone else,” as this may indicate instead either uncertainty or unwillingness among respondents to indicate who they support.

**Table 7. Candidate Choice Among Asian American Registered Voters**

	Clinton	Sanders	Trump	Cruz	Rubio	Kasich	Jindal	Someone else*
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Asian</b>								
<b>Indian</b>	42%	30%	7%	0%	2%	2%	0%	17%
<b>Chinese</b>	27%	26%	12%	7%	0%	0%	0%	28%
<b>Filipino</b>	36%	24%	11%	1%	1%	2%	0%	26%
<b>Japanese</b>	44%	9%	7%	3%	0%	2%	0%	34%
<b>Korean</b>	29%	20%	7%	12%	0%	0%	0%	32%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	24%	46%	14%	2%	0%	0%	0%	14%
<b>Male</b>	30%	24%	14%	4%	0%	1%	0%	27%
<b>Female</b>	35%	28%	8%	4%	1%	1%	0%	23%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

<sup>18</sup> In states where primaries had occurred, they were asked: “Generally speaking, fewer people vote in primaries and caucuses before the November general election. How about you? Did you vote in the presidential primaries this year?” In other states, the last question was modified to: “Do you plan to vote in the presidential primaries this year?”

	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>Sanders</b>	<b>Trump</b>	<b>Cruz</b>	<b>Rubio</b>	<b>Kasich</b>	<b>Jindal</b>	<b>Someone else*</b>
<b>Native Born</b>	16%	54%	7%	4%	0%	0%	0%	19%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	43%	10%	12%	4%	1%	1%	0%	28%
<b>18 to 34</b>	16%	61%	3%	5%	0%	0%	0%	15%
<b>35 to 64</b>	34%	27%	14%	2%	0%	1%	0%	22%
<b>65 plus</b>	44%	2%	12%	4%	2%	2%	0%	35%
<b>California</b>	33%	21%	12%	5%	0%	1%	0%	28%
<b>New York</b>	42%	15%	8%	2%	0%	0%	0%	34%
<b>Nevada</b>	38%	24%	19%	11%	0%	1%	0%	8%
<b>Virginia</b>	12%	1%	29%	15%	10%	11%	0%	22%

*Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)*

## Senate Races

In states where there is a Senate election in November, respondents were asked “Thinking about the upcoming November election for the U.S. Senate in your senate... If the election were being held today would you be inclined to vote for the Republican or Democratic candidate?” The choice of Republican and Democrat were rotated in a random order. As we can see from Table 8, Asian American voters favor Democratic over Republican candidates by nearly a two-to-one ratio. This party advantage is particularly pronounced among young Asian Americans, and holds across all ethnic groups with the exception of Vietnamese Americans.

**Table 8. Candidate Choice Among Asian American Registered Voters for U.S. Senate**

	Republican	Democrat	Someone else	Don't Know/Ref
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	27%	59%	0%	14%
<b>Chinese</b>	29%	40%	3%	28%
<b>Filipino</b>	24%	41%	1%	34%
<b>Japanese</b>	12%	69%	2%	17%
<b>Korean</b>	16%	63%	0%	21%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	43%	33%	5%	19%
<b>Male</b>	24%	48%	2%	26%
<b>Female</b>	28%	51%	2%	20%
<b>Native Born</b>	26%	61%	0%	13%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	26%	43%	2%	28%
<b>18 to 34</b>	9%	78%	0%	14%
<b>35 to 64</b>	38%	40%	2%	21%
<b>65 plus</b>	22%	46%	2%	30%
<b>California</b>	--	--	--	--
<b>New York</b>	8%	51%	2%	39%
<b>Nevada</b>	29%	54%	1%	15%
<b>Other states</b>	31%	49%	2%	19%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

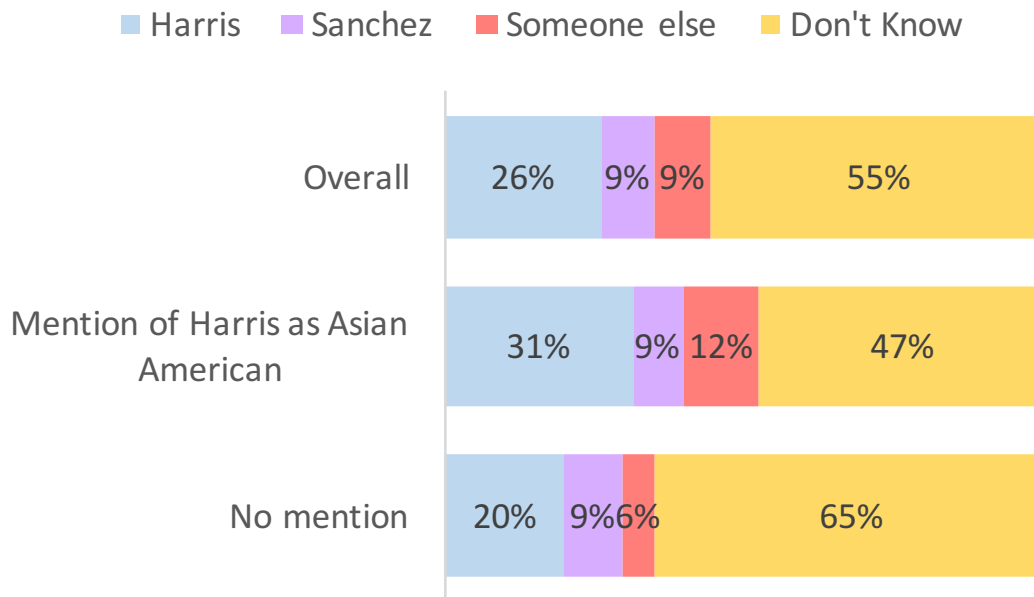
Next, in California, we asked specifically about voter choices between Kamala Harris and Loretta Sanchez, both Democrats and the clear front-runners in the state’s modified open



primary. We introduced one additional innovation, with a split sample that mentioned the fact that Kamala Harris is half Asian American, and the other half making no such mention.<sup>19</sup>

As shown in Figure 2, most Asian Americans in California are still undecided about a choice between Harris and Sanchez, with 55% saying that they do not know and 9% indicating that they would be voting for someone else in the June primary. Importantly, we also find a sizeable boost in the proportion of Asian Americans who say they will vote for Harris when her Asian American background is mentioned; without such mention, there is no statistically significant difference in Asian American voter support for Harris over Sanchez.

**Figure 2. Asian American Voter Preference in California Senate Race**



Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

Note: Those who refused to answer are excluded.

<sup>19</sup> “Thinking about the upcoming November election for the U.S. Senate in California... [ROTATE ORDER] Kamala Harris and [ROTATE] Loretta Sanchez are Democrats and both might be on the ballot in November. [<no mention>/Kamala Harris is half Asian American]. If the election were being held today, who would you vote for?” Question developed by Danielle Lemi and Karthick Ramakrishnan at the University of California, Riverside.

## House Races

Respondents were asked “Thinking about the upcoming November election for House of Representatives in your district... If the election were being held today would you be inclined to vote for the Republican or Democratic candidate?” The choice of Republican and Democrat were rotated in a random order. As we can see from Table 9, Asian American voters favor Democratic over Republican candidates by more than a two-to-one ratio. By contrast, the general electorate is essentially split between Republican and Democratic support for the House of Representatives.<sup>20</sup> This party advantage is particularly pronounced among young Asian Americans, and holds across all ethnic groups.

**Table 9. Candidate Choice Among Asian American Registered Voters for U.S. House**

	Republican	Democrat	Someone else	Don't Know/Ref
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	16%	62%	1%	21%
<b>Chinese</b>	20%	45%	7%	28%
<b>Filipino</b>	19%	58%	1%	22%
<b>Japanese</b>	16%	69%	0%	15%
<b>Korean</b>	23%	52%	0%	25%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	30%	46%	4%	20%
<b>Male</b>	26%	47%	4%	24%
<b>Female</b>	16%	60%	2%	22%
<b>Native Born</b>	15%	71%	0%	14%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	23%	46%	4%	27%
<b>18 to 34</b>	10%	74%	1%	15%
<b>35 to 64</b>	23%	53%	2%	21%
<b>65 plus</b>	22%	46%	4%	27%
<b>California</b>	20%	58%	3%	19%
<b>New York</b>	8%	48%	4%	40%
<b>Nevada</b>	29%	39%	1%	31%
<b>Virginia</b>	34%	40%	6%	20%
<b>Other states</b>	22%	52%	2%	23%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

<sup>20</sup> April 2016 NBC/WSJ poll:

[http://msnbcmedia.msn.com/i/MSNBC/Sections/A\\_Politics/16229%20NBCWSJ%20April%20Poll.pdf](http://msnbcmedia.msn.com/i/MSNBC/Sections/A_Politics/16229%20NBCWSJ%20April%20Poll.pdf)

## REACTION AGAINST EXCLUSIONARY RHETORIC

Anti-immigrant rhetoric has been on the rise in the past decade,<sup>21</sup> and there is a growing sense that it is having electoral consequences among Asian Americans. We try to gauge the potential electoral impact of this kind of rhetoric in our survey. First, we asked, “If a political candidate expressed strongly anti-immigrant views, but you agreed with him or her on other issues, would you still vote for that candidate, or would you vote for someone else?” This is a replication of a question we asked in 2014, and we found that 41% of Asian American registered voters would switch their support.<sup>22</sup>

**Table 10. Reaction to Anti-Immigrant Rhetoric Among Asian American Registered Voters**

	Still vote for candidate	Vote for someone else	Don't Know	Refused
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	29%	43%	27%	1%
<b>Chinese</b>	43%	32%	25%	1%
<b>Filipino</b>	38%	42%	18%	2%
<b>Japanese</b>	26%	40%	33%	1%
<b>Korean</b>	32%	49%	18%	1%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	30%	43%	26%	1%
<b>Male</b>	35%	40%	24%	1%
<b>Female</b>	35%	40%	23%	2%
<b>Native Born</b>	40%	36%	22%	2%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	33%	42%	25%	1%
<b>18 to 34</b>	25%	51%	21%	3%
<b>35 to 64</b>	47%	30%	23%	0%
<b>65 plus</b>	28%	45%	26%	1%
<b>California</b>	34%	39%	26%	1%
<b>New York</b>	38%	41%	21%	0%
<b>Nevada</b>	34%	44%	22%	0%
<b>Virginia</b>	40%	43%	15%	1%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

<sup>21</sup> See Pratheepan Gulasekaram and Karthick Ramakrishnan, *The New Immigration Federalism* (Cambridge University Press 2005).

<sup>22</sup> See <http://aapidata.com/blog/immigration-rhetoric/> for an analysis of the 2014 data

As before, we find that such exclusionary rhetoric would be electorally costly, with about 2 in 5 registered voters indicating they would switch their support (Table 10, prior page). This is particularly so for young Asian Americans, a majority of whom say that they would vote for someone else, pointing to the potential long-term consequences that anti-immigrant rhetoric might have for candidate and party support. Notably, even Republican identifiers (37%) and Independents (37%) indicated that they would switch their support when a preferred candidate uses anti-immigrant rhetoric.

Next, we asked “if a political candidate expressed strong anti-Muslim views, and you agreed with him or her on other issues, would you still vote for that candidate, or would you vote for someone else?” Again, we find a strong rejection of divisive rhetoric as an electoral strategy, with the electoral reaction against anti-Muslim rhetoric particularly strong among Indian Americans, Korean Americans, young Asian Americans, and the native born. Notably, the effects are much weaker for Chinese Americans. Finally, it is important to note that even Republican identifiers (33%) and Independents (40%) indicated that they would switch their support when a preferred candidate uses anti-Muslim rhetoric.

**Table 11. Reaction to Anti-Muslim Rhetoric Among Asian American Registered Voters**

	Still vote for candidate	Vote for someone else	Don't Know	Refused
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	24%	59%	15%	2%
<b>Chinese</b>	47%	24%	29%	0%
<b>Filipino</b>	31%	45%	20%	4%
<b>Japanese</b>	27%	46%	26%	1%
<b>Korean</b>	34%	52%	13%	1%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	34%	48%	17%	1%
<b>Male</b>	38%	37%	24%	1%
<b>Female</b>	31%	49%	18%	2%
<b>Native Born</b>	34%	50%	15%	1%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	35%	40%	23%	2%
<b>18 to 34</b>	15%	73%	10%	2%
<b>35 to 64</b>	40%	39%	21%	0%
<b>65 plus</b>	38%	35%	25%	2%
<b>California</b>	31%	46%	21%	2%
<b>New York</b>	29%	36%	34%	1%
<b>Nevada</b>	40%	41%	18%	0%
<b>Virginia</b>	36%	49%	14%	1%

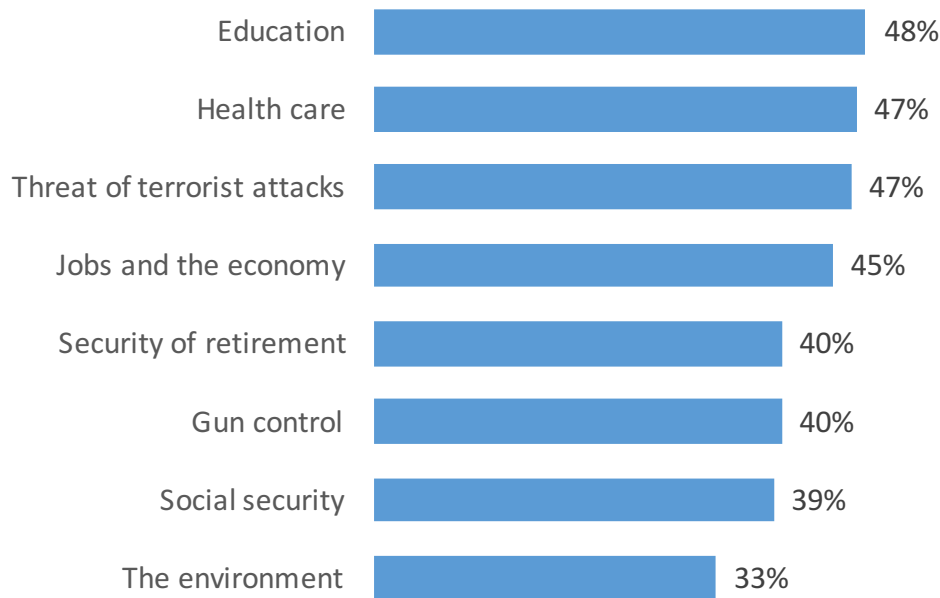
Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

## MOST IMPORTANT ELECTION ISSUES

Respondents were asked “Now I'd like to ask you about some issues that might be important in the elections in November. Please tell me how important the following issues are to you personally in deciding how to vote.” Respondents were given a choice of “extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not that important.”

Figure 3 presents the results for the top 8 issues that Asian American registered voters ranked as extremely important: education, health care, terrorism, jobs, retirement and social security, gun control, and the environment. This deviates somewhat from priorities among the general electorate, where the economy, terrorism, and health care are top concerns, followed by immigration, education, and income disparities.<sup>23</sup> Importantly, gun control remains an important issue in the minds of many Asian American voters, although this issue has receded from importance in the general electorate.

**Figure 3. “Extremely” Important Election-Related Issues  
Among Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**



*Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)*

<sup>23</sup> See the CBS News/New York Times Poll at <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/09/18/us/politics/18EVENING-POLL-DOC.html>

Finally, there are some interesting differences that emerge with respect to age groups and gender, with “jobs and the economy” and the “growing gap between rich and poor” ranking higher among young Asian American voters (ages 18 to 34), and social security ranking much lower for this group. We also find that the ordering of issue priorities is similar for women and men, although the level of concern about education and health care is higher among women.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 12. “Extremely” Important Election-Related Issues  
Among Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**

	Total	18 to 34	35 to 64	65 plus	Male	Female
<b>Education</b>	<b>48%</b>	43%	49%	51%	42%	54%
<b>Health care</b>	<b>47%</b>	38%	52%	48%	41%	52%
<b>Threat of terrorist attacks</b>	<b>47%</b>	28%	46%	55%	44%	49%
<b>Jobs and the economy</b>	<b>45%</b>	42%	49%	43%	43%	47%
<b>Gun control</b>	<b>40%</b>	25%	37%	50%	37%	42%
<b>Retirement security or the security of your retirement</b>	<b>40%</b>	26%	37%	49%	38%	42%
<b>Social security</b>	<b>39%</b>	20%	39%	49%	35%	42%
<b>The environment</b>	<b>33%</b>	33%	32%	37%	29%	37%
<b>Taxes</b>	<b>26%</b>	19%	24%	31%	23%	28%
<b>Growing gap between the rich and poor</b>	<b>26%</b>	36%	23%	24%	21%	30%
<b>Growing hostility towards immigrants</b>	<b>20%</b>	25%	22%	17%	17%	23%
<b>Racial profiling</b>	<b>20%</b>	24%	20%	20%	19%	22%
<b>Passing immigration reform</b>	<b>19%</b>	19%	17%	22%	16%	22%

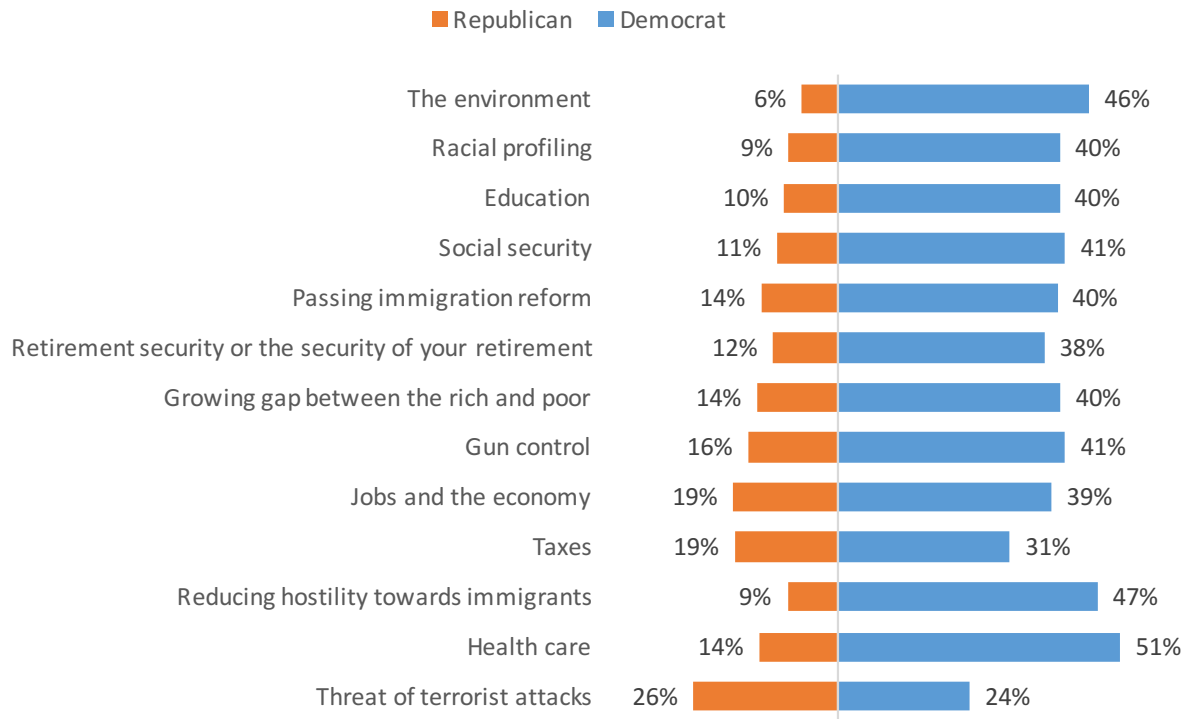
<sup>24</sup> These differences are statistically significant at the 90% level.

## VIEWS OF PARTIES ON ISSUES

Respondents were asked “For each of the following issues, please tell me whether you think the Democratic Party or the Republican Party is doing a better job with this issue, or if there is no difference.”

Figure 4 presents the results for Asian American registered voters overall. As we can see, the Democratic Party holds a sizable advantage on several issues, despite Republican Party efforts to make inroads into Asian American voters with greater outreach efforts. The Democratic Party advantage is especially strong on the environment, racial profiling, education, social security, and immigration reform, and remains statistically significant on nearly all issues. The Republican party draws parity on only on one issue: the threat of terrorist attacks.

**Figure 4: Views of Party Advantage on Issues, Among Asian American Registered Voters**



*Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)*

## IDEOLOGY

In December 2015, Gallup released results, based on English-only respondents from a three-month period in fall 2015, which indicated that Asian Americans are more ideologically liberal (35%) than conservative (19%), and showed higher support for Bernie Sanders than Hillary Clinton.<sup>25</sup> As we have already seen, Asian Americans in our in-language survey from a one-month period in April-May 2016 indicated greater net favorability for Clinton than Sanders. The ideology numbers here also indicate a slightly less liberal population than what Gallup found in 2015, although the differences are within each survey's margin of error.

**Table 13. Self-described Ideology Among Asian American Registered Voters**

	Very conservative	Conservative	Moderate	Liberal	Very liberal
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	2%	16%	52%	24%	6%
<b>Chinese</b>	1%	16%	59%	21%	3%
<b>Filipino</b>	5%	21%	40%	28%	6%
<b>Japanese</b>	3%	24%	41%	23%	9%
<b>Korean</b>	5%	39%	35%	16%	6%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	1%	10%	47%	26%	15%
<b>Male</b>	2%	24%	42%	24%	9%
<b>Female</b>	4%	16%	53%	23%	5%
<b>Native Born</b>	2%	12%	50%	27%	9%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	3%	23%	47%	22%	6%
<b>18 to 34</b>	0%	8%	44%	35%	13%
<b>35 to 64</b>	2%	20%	51%	21%	6%
<b>65 plus</b>	4%	24%	45%	21%	5%
<b>California</b>	2%	16%	48%	26%	8%
<b>New York</b>	4%	20%	48%	23%	5%
<b>Nevada</b>	7%	23%	44%	17%	9%
<b>Virginia</b>	5%	26%	39%	19%	10%

*Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)*

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/187577/bernie-sanders-popular-candidate-among-asian-americans.aspx>



## DEEPER LOOK AT 2016 ELECTION ISSUES

Education, health care, economic inequality, the environment, and gun control: these are not only issues that are of high salience to Asian American registered voters, they are also featured in important policy debates occurring at both the national and state levels. Below, we present more detailed information on where Asian Americans stand on these salient policy issues.

### Health Care Access

We asked “Do you support or oppose the health care law passed by Barack Obama and Congress in 2010?” This replicates a question in a Quinnipiac poll from November 2014 which found overall opposition to the law, with 40% supporting it and 54% opposing it.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, the Kaiser Health Tracking Poll has found overall opposition to the Affordable Care Act, with 38% having a favorable view and 49% having an unfavorable view in April 2016.

We find that Asian Americans, like Latinos and African Americans,<sup>27</sup> continue to support the Affordable Care Act, much as they did in 2012.<sup>28</sup> Thus, 57% support the health care law, 29% oppose, and 12% said they didn’t know or refused to answer (see Table 13, next page). And support for the law is consistent across subgroups, with the exception of Korean Americans where opinion is evenly split.

### Education

President Obama, Hillary Clinton, and Bernie Sanders have all proposed new government spending to reduce student loan debt, with Clinton calling for the need to eliminate loans and Sanders has called for an end to tuition in public colleges and universities.<sup>29</sup>

Mirroring language from a 2015 survey by Quinnipiac,<sup>30</sup> respondents were asked: “Do you support or oppose major new spending by the federal government that would help undergraduates pay tuition at public colleges without needing loans?” The Quinnipiac survey indicated public support at 61-34 percent, and our results are similar, with 62% supporting and 26% opposing. Support is highest among young Asian Americans, at 90%, and lowest among Chinese Americans, at 41%.

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<sup>26</sup> <http://www.quinnipiac.edu/news-and-events/quinnipiac-university-poll/national/release-detail?ReleaseID=2115>

<sup>27</sup> Tracking poll data on African American and Latinos support of the ACA can be found at <http://kff.org/interactive/kaiser-health-tracking-poll-the-publics-views-on-the-aca/>

<sup>28</sup> <http://naasurvey.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/NAAS12-sep25-issues.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/10/us/politics/hillary-clinton-to-offer-plan-on-paying-college-tuition-without-needing-loans.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/10/us/politics/hillary-clinton-to-offer-plan-on-paying-college-tuition-without-needing-loans.html?_r=0)

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.qu.edu/news-and-events/quinnipiac-university-poll/national/release-detail?ReleaseID=2275>

**Table 14. Opinion Among Asian American Registered Voters on Health and Education Policies**

	Affordable Care Act			Federal Support on College Affordability		
	Support	Oppose	No Opinion	Support	Oppose	No Opinion
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	74%	18%	8%	69%	21%	10%
<b>Chinese</b>	52%	36%	12%	41%	45%	14%
<b>Filipino</b>	49%	33%	18%	67%	22%	10%
<b>Japanese</b>	62%	25%	13%	57%	28%	15%
<b>Korean</b>	39%	38%	23%	69%	19%	12%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	68%	18%	14%	78%	8%	14%
<b>Male</b>	58%	27%	15%	60%	28%	12%
<b>Female</b>	56%	30%	14%	63%	24%	13%
<b>Native Born</b>	56%	34%	10%	65%	30%	6%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	58%	26%	16%	60%	24%	15%
<b>18 to 34</b>	65%	21%	14%	90%	8%	2%
<b>35 to 64</b>	56%	34%	10%	54%	35%	12%
<b>65 plus</b>	54%	28%	18%	58%	26%	17%
<b>California</b>	64%	24%	12%	60%	27%	12%
<b>New York</b>	56%	20%	23%	71%	17%	13%
<b>Nevada</b>	61%	28%	11%	62%	26%	12%
<b>Virginia</b>	48%	39%	13%	63%	31%	6%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

## Gun control

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with this statement: “We should have stricter gun laws in the United States.”

## Minimum Wage

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with this statement: “Congress should increase the federal minimum wage from its current level of \$7.25 an hour.”

**Table 15. Opinion Among Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**

	Stricter Gun Laws Needed			Raise Federal Minimum Wage		
	Agree	Disagree	Neither/DK	Agree	Disagree	Neither/DK
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	85%	10%	4%	79%	13%	8%
<b>Chinese</b>	72%	22%	6%	67%	20%	12%
<b>Filipino</b>	67%	26%	6%	71%	24%	4%
<b>Japanese</b>	77%	14%	8%	73%	17%	10%
<b>Korean</b>	76%	13%	11%	76%	9%	15%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	89%	7%	4%	78%	14%	5%
<b>Male</b>	75%	19%	6%	71%	19%	8%
<b>Female</b>	78%	16%	6%	75%	16%	9%
<b>Native Born</b>	64%	29%	6%	73%	25%	3%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	82%	11%	6%	73%	14%	12%
<b>18 to 34</b>	67%	25%	8%	80%	17%	2%
<b>35 to 64</b>	75%	20%	5%	73%	20%	7%
<b>65 plus</b>	83%	11%	6%	71%	15%	13%
<b>California</b>	75%	17%	7%	66%	22%	11%
<b>New York</b>	86%	9%	4%	86%	7%	6%
<b>Nevada</b>	77%	18%	5%	72%	16%	11%
<b>Virginia</b>	73%	20%	7%	69%	18%	13%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

## Environment

Respondents were asked, “Do you support or oppose setting stricter emission limits on power plants in order to address climate change?”

## Legalizing Marijuana

Respondents were asked, “Do you support or oppose legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use?”

**Table 16. Opinion Among Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**

	Stricter Emissions Limits			Legalize Marijuana Possession		
	Support	Oppose	No Opinion	Support	Oppose	No Opinion
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	73%	12%	16%	31%	61%	8%
<b>Chinese</b>	74%	11%	15%	22%	67%	11%
<b>Filipino</b>	68%	19%	13%	34%	55%	11%
<b>Japanese</b>	69%	14%	17%	35%	56%	9%
<b>Korean</b>	71%	11%	18%	11%	83%	6%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	83%	9%	8%	26%	60%	14%
<b>Male</b>	73%	16%	11%	32%	59%	9%
<b>Female</b>	73%	10%	17%	22%	67%	11%
<b>Native Born</b>	78%	13%	9%	46%	44%	11%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	71%	13%	17%	18%	72%	10%
<b>18 to 34</b>	77%	16%	8%	57%	31%	12%
<b>35 to 64</b>	78%	11%	11%	27%	65%	8%
<b>65 plus</b>	68%	13%	19%	13%	76%	11%
<b>California</b>	74%	11%	15%	34%	57%	9%
<b>New York</b>	74%	10%	16%	22%	62%	16%
<b>Nevada</b>	76%	13%	11%	31%	60%	9%
<b>Virginia</b>	77%	16%	7%	32%	62%	6%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

## PARTY IDENTIFICATION

Ever since the arrival of national, in-language polling on Asian Americans in 2008, one finding has remained fairly consistent: Asian Americans may vote for Democrats and may hold progressive opinions on a range of issues, but they have tended to have weak party identification. As noted in prior studies, this pattern is largely due to the fact that Asian Americans are the most heavily immigrant racial group in the United States, and have had far less experience with political parties.<sup>31</sup> Since 2012, both parties have increased their investments in outreach to Asian American communities. We might have expected that with heavy investments by the Republican National Committee, combined with a smaller baseline of existing support, this would perhaps lead to a disproportionate growth in Republican party affiliation. At the same time, the anti-immigrant rhetoric of several presidential candidates might have wiped out any potential gains from these investments.

Our survey of Asian American registered voters indicate that not only has this erosion occurred, but that there has been a net shift towards the Democratic Party in the last 4 years. In the 2012 AAPI Post-Election Survey, 35% of Asian Americans identified as Democrats, 18% identified as Republican, and 47% identified themselves either as Independent or unsure where they stand with respect to political parties (what we call “non-identifiers”).<sup>32</sup>

As Table 13 indicates (next page), there has been a significant leftward shift among Asian American registered voters since 2012, from 35% in 2012 to 47% today. Most of that shift seems to have come from a decline of non-identifiers; the shift from 18% Republican in 2012 to 15% in 2016 is well within each survey’s margin of error.

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<sup>31</sup> See Center for American Progress and AAPI Data, “State of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders,” available at <http://ampr.gs/AAPIREports2014>

<sup>32</sup> Asian American Justice Center, Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote, and National Asian American Survey, “Behind the Numbers: Post-Election Survey of Asian American and Pacific Islander Voters in 2012” (2013), available at <http://naasurvey.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/2012-aapipes-national.pdf>

**Table 17. Party Identification Among Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**

	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Non-Identifier</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	55%	8%	36%
<b>Chinese</b>	40%	8%	52%
<b>Filipino</b>	54%	16%	27%
<b>Japanese</b>	62%	15%	22%
<b>Korean</b>	54%	24%	23%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	28%	27%	45%
<b>Male</b>	38%	19%	41%
<b>Female</b>	55%	11%	34%
<b>Native Born</b>	56%	9%	34%
<b>Foreign Born</b>	43%	17%	38%
<b>18 to 34</b>	49%	7%	41%
<b>35 to 64</b>	49%	15%	36%
<b>65 plus</b>	45%	18%	37%
<b>California</b>	49%	13%	37%
<b>New York</b>	55%	6%	36%
<b>Nevada</b>	41%	26%	32%
<b>Virginia</b>	40%	26%	34%

Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

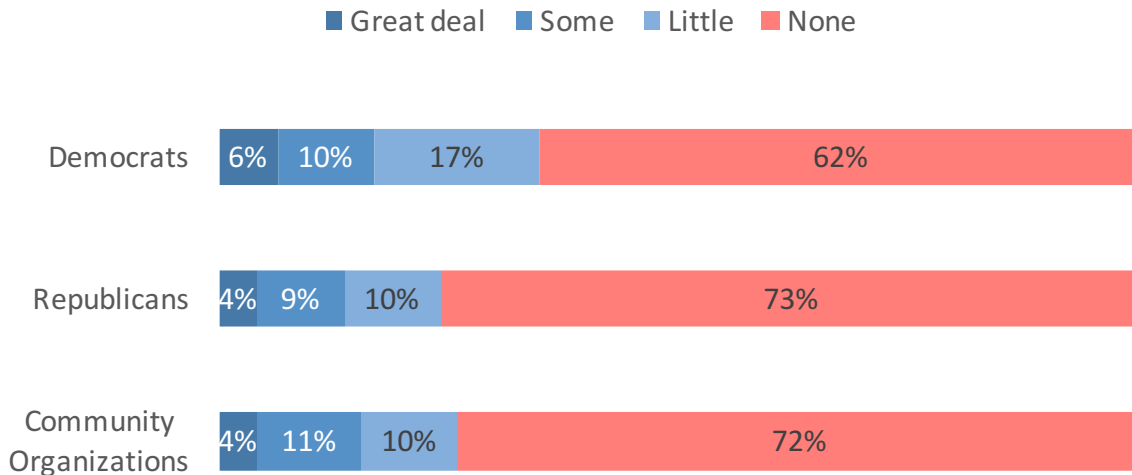
Note: "Some other party" excluded, see Data Appendix for more details

## VOTER CONTACT

Respondents were asked whether they were contacted by the Democratic Party, Republican Party, and community organizations, “have you been contacted any of the following groups in the past year: a great deal, some, a little, or not at all.”

We find that, by and large, Asian American registered voters are not being contacted by either Democrats or Republicans (Figure 5). Only one in three Asian American registered voters reported being contacted by Democrats, and only 6 percent reported being contacted “a great deal.” An even smaller proportion of voters (23%) reported being contacted by Republicans, with 4 percent saying they were contacted “a great deal.” Finally, 25% of registered voters said they were contacted by community organizations.

**Figure 5. Reports of contact by political parties/candidates and community organizations**



Source: APIAVote/AAJC/AAPIData, Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS)

In the May 2012 APIAVote/AAJC survey,<sup>33</sup> 34% of Asian American registered voters said they had been contacted by Democrats and 26% said they had been contacted by Republicans, and 28% of Asian Americans had been contacted by community organizations. These numbers from 2016 are very similar, suggesting that there is still a lot of room for improvement. Increased investments in voter outreach since 2012 may only have been sufficient to keep pace with this rapidly growing population, with no net increase in contact. Investment in outreach is particularly important for Asian Americans: our 2012 post-election survey with cross-racial samples showed that Asian Americans were less likely to be contacted (31%) than Latinos (36%), African Americans (39%), and whites (43%).<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Lake Research Partners, *Asian American Survey: Findings from a Survey of 700 Asian American Voters nationwide plus 100 each in FL, IL, NV, and VA*, (2012), available at [http://www.advancingequality.org/sites/aaic/files/AsianAmericanSurvey.f.050412.final\\_.pdf](http://www.advancingequality.org/sites/aaic/files/AsianAmericanSurvey.f.050412.final_.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> <http://naasurvey.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/infographics-aapipes2012.pdf>

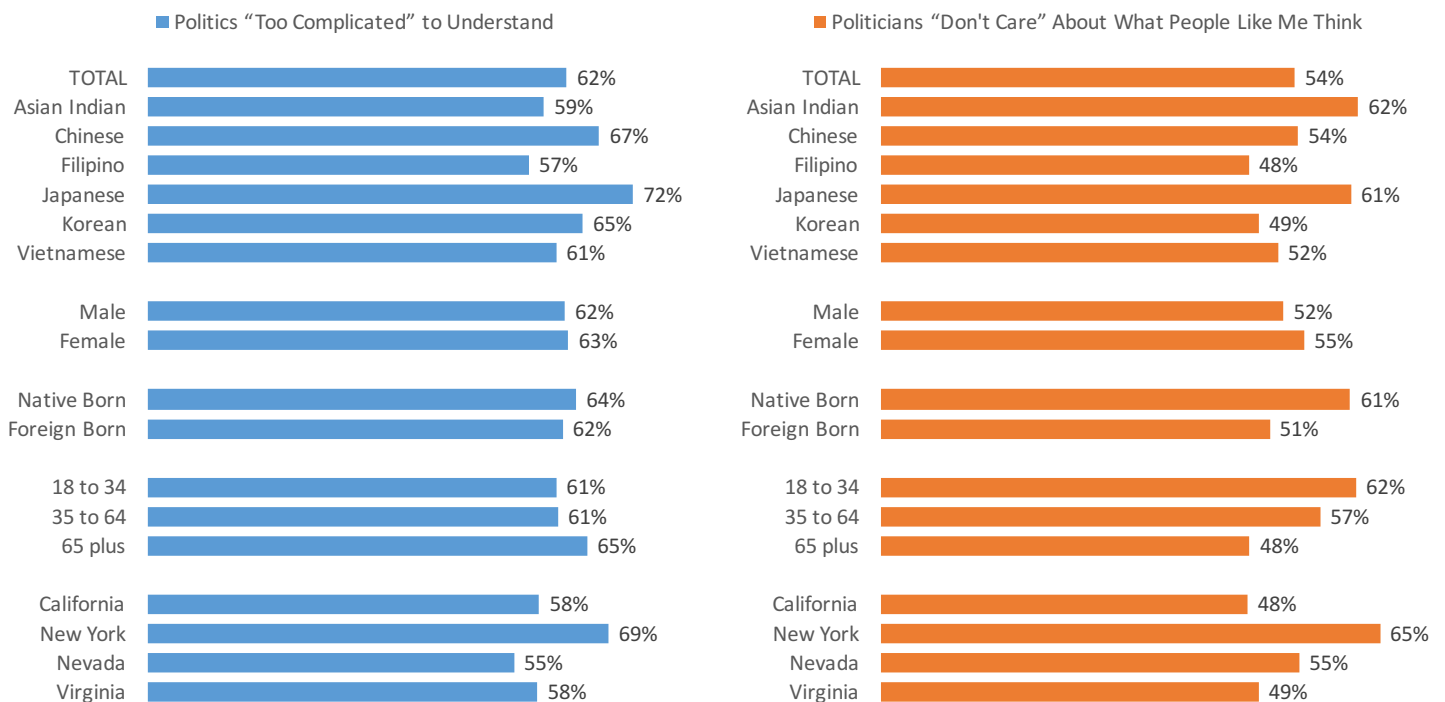
## VOTER (DIS)ENGAGEMENT

Studies of civic engagement often include questions of how efficacious respondents feel about their participation, either with respect to how well they feel that they understand the political process (internal efficacy), or how they feel about the responsiveness of government to their concerns (external efficacy). On internal efficacy, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement “Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on”. On external efficacy, they were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement: “Public officials don't care much what people like me think.”

Another way to interpret the question on internal efficacy (politics is too complicated) is that it shows the extent to which respondents may benefit from voter education, while the question on external efficacy (politicians don't care) shows the extent to which respondents may benefit from greater outreach and communication from elected officials.

As we see from Figure 6, a majority of Asian American registered voters feel disengaged from politics, either because it is too complicated (62%), or because they believe that politicians don't care much about what they think (54%). These numbers have decreased somewhat from our 2014 survey, where 67% of Asian American registered said that politics was “too complicated” for them to understand and 64% said that politicians don't care much about what people like them think.

**Figure 6. Sense of Disengagement Among Asian American Registered Voters**



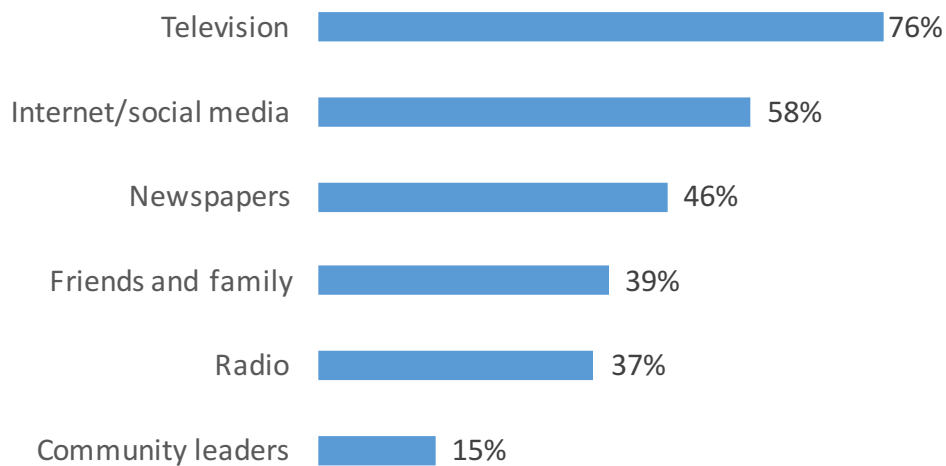


## IMPORTANCE OF ETHNIC MEDIA

Asian Americans have among the highest rates of limited English proficiency (35%) and languages other than English spoken at home (77%).<sup>35</sup> As a consequence, it is important to gauge the extent to which Asian American registered voters get their political news from mainstream or ethnic news sources. Respondents were asked: “Thinking about news, which of the following sources would you say you use to get news about politics in the United States?” Choices included “newspapers, radio, television, Internet and social media, friends and family, and community organizations and leaders in my community.”

As we can see from Figure 7, television is the most frequent sources of information, followed by Internet/social media, and newspapers. These figures are very similar to those we found in 2014.<sup>36</sup> Of note: Asian American youth, ages 18 to 34, are significantly less likely to rely on television (47%) and newspapers (25%), and more likely to rely on Internet/social media (88%).

**Figure 7. Sources of News About Politics, Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**

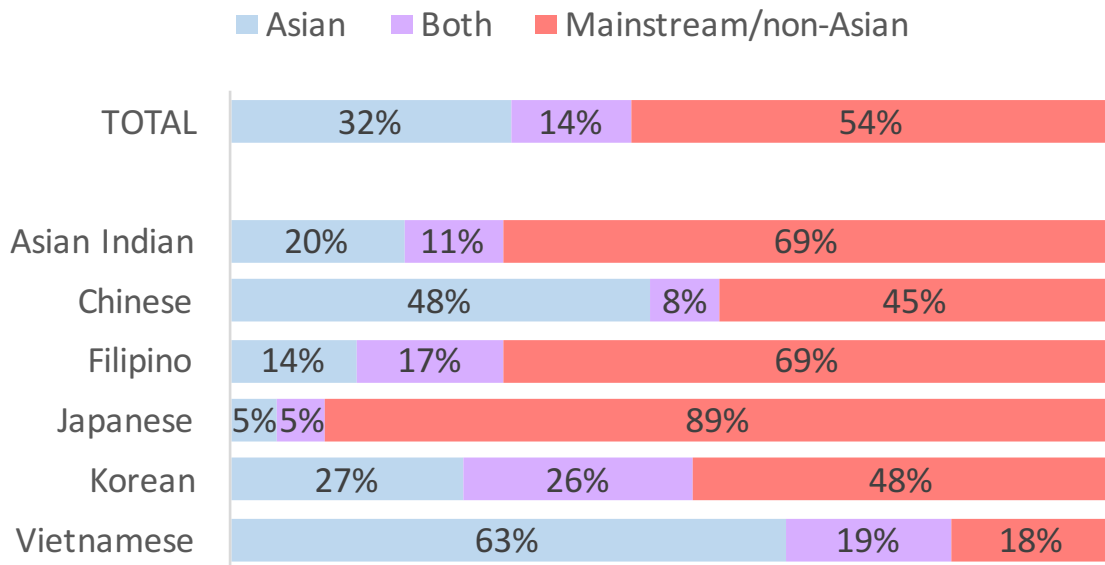


<sup>35</sup> Center for American Progress and AAPI Data, “State of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders” (2014), available at <http://ampr.gs/AAPIREports2014>.

<sup>36</sup> See the 2014 survey at <http://aapidata.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/APV-AAJC-LeftRightCenter-oct7.pdf>

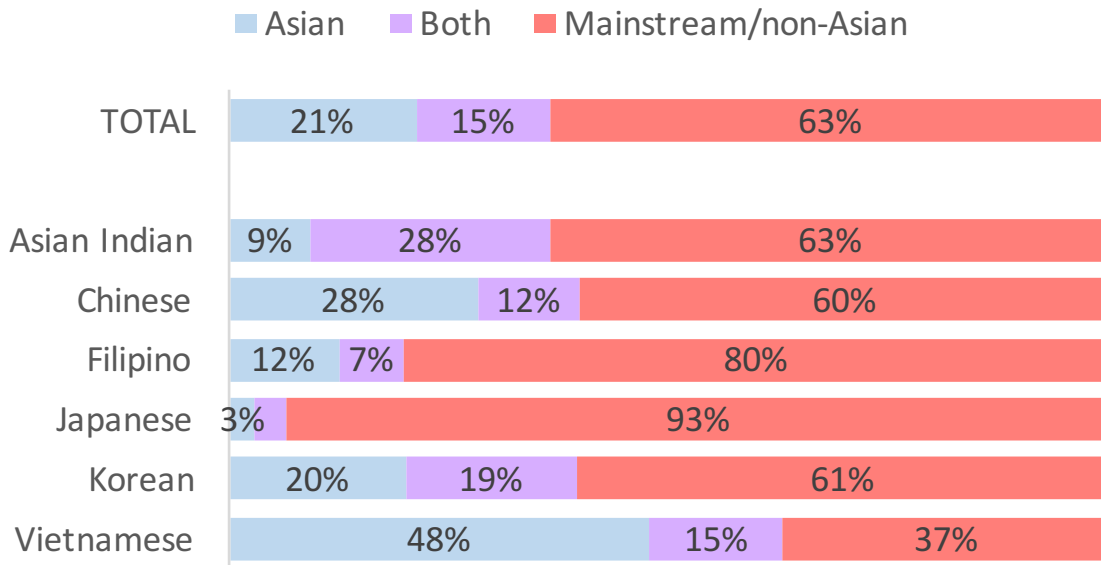
Next, for every media source selected, we asked respondents if the sources were Asian or ethnic-oriented (we also allowed them to say that they consumed both mainstream and ethnic news from that particular type of source). In Figures 8a through 8d, we present the findings on ethnic media utilization across source types. There are important differences that emerge by national origin, as Chinese Americans and Vietnamese Americans are those most likely to be exclusive consumers of Asian media, regardless of the type of source. Those consuming news from Internet and social media were least likely to rely on ethnic sources, although the proportions were still relatively high for Chinese Americans and Vietnamese Americans.

**Figure 8a. Reliance on Ethnic Media (Television), Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**



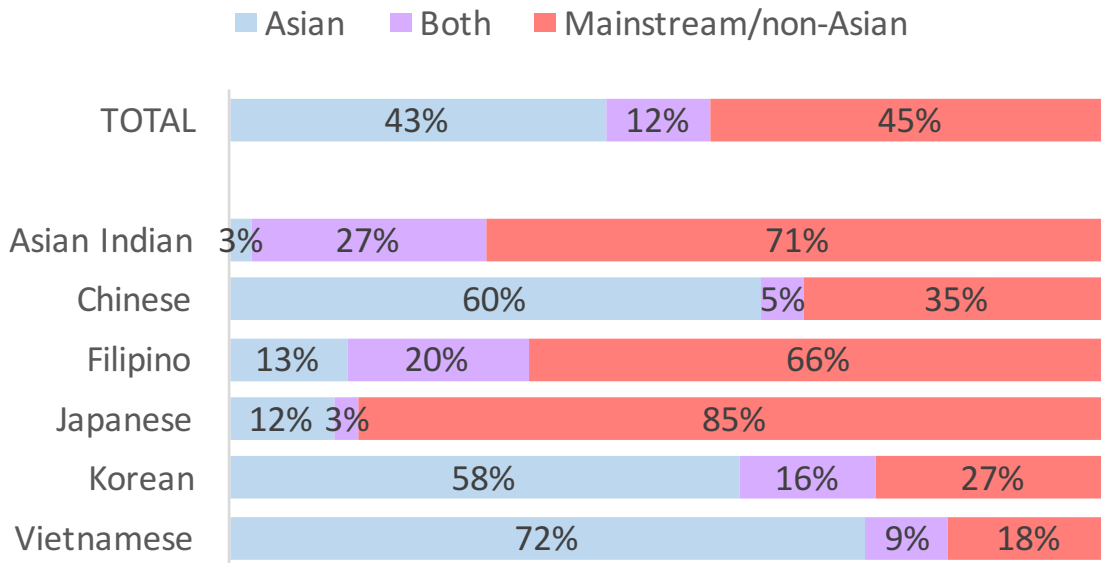
*Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding*

**Figure 8b. Reliance on Ethnic Media (Internet/Social Media), Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**



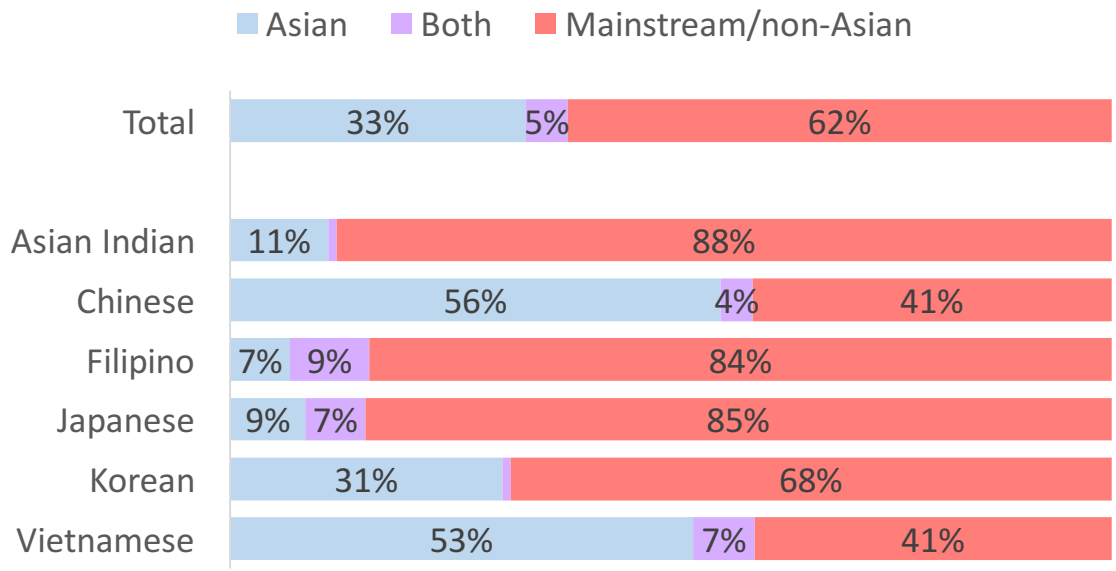
*Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding*

**Figure 8c. Reliance on Ethnic Media (Newspapers), Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**



*Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding*

**Figure 8d. Reliance on Ethnic Media (Radio), Asian American Registered Voters, 2016**



*Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding*

## Methodology

This report is based on telephone interviews conducted from April 11 to May 17, 2016, of 1,212 registered voters who identify as Asian American. Sampling was targeted towards the six largest national origin groups that together account for more than 75% of the Asian American adult citizen population. We oversampled in Nevada and Virginia to achieve targets of at least 100 respondents (we got 102 and 105 in NV and VA, respectively).

Interviews were conducted in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, and Vietnamese, and included landlines and mobile phones. 45 percent of the interviews were conducted in an Asian language.

The sample sizes by ethnicity are as follows, along with an estimation of the maximum margin of error associated with each sample size (in parentheses):

Total: 1,212 (+/- 3%)

Asian Indian: 202 (+/- 6.9%)

Chinese: 231 (+/- 6.5%)

Filipino: 175 (+/- 7.4%)

Japanese: 161 (+/- 7.7%)

Korean: 226 (+/- 6.5%)

Vietnamese: 217 (+/- 6.5%)

Sampling error from the size of our sample is only one type of error possible in surveys like the Spring 2016 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS). Findings may also be subject to variation from question wording, question order, and the time and date when the survey was conducted. The findings in this report are weighted statistically to account for any demographic differences of interest between the sample and population parameters for analyses of the national Asian American population, as well as for subgroups of the population, on the following dimensions: size of group within a state, educational attainment, gender and nativity.

## Contact information

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