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New Data Show High Enthusiasm Among Asian American Voters; High Trump Disapproval, Health and Immigration Concerns

Washington, DC – Sponsored by [Civic Leadership USA](#), a [survey released today](#) by [Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote](#) (APIAVote) and [AAPI Data](#) reveals many insights into the fastest-growing racial group in the United States, including their voting plans for House and Senate races in 2018, and various issue priorities such as education, health care, and the state of the economy. In addition to election-related topics, the survey also contains key opinion data on affirmative action, labor protections, and immigration policy, including the administration's recently announced plans to revoke the legal status of immigrants with green cards who have used government assistance.

Conducted in partnership with [Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO \(APALA\)](#), and [Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC](#), the survey presents the results of interviews conducted by telephone and online from August 23 – October 4, 2018 of 1,316 Asian American registered voters.

As the Asian American electorate continues to grow, the group will continue to play a significant role in political races at the national, state, and local levels. Of importance is the increase in voter enthusiasm, with 48% polled indicating they are “more enthusiastic about voting this year” compared to only 28% in 2014.

Of note, the Democratic Party holds a sizable advantage on most issues, with the greatest gaps found on the environment, racial discrimination, health care, and gun control. At the same time, the Republican Party fares stronger on issues like taxes, jobs and the economy, and national security. The Republican Party's issue advantage among Asian American voters is stronger than in 2014, where it held an advantage only on issues of national security.

“These data show why it's vital to survey the Asian American community,” said Karthick Ramakrishnan, founder and director of AAPI Data, which conducts and publishes research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. “Not only is the Asian American community the fastest growing racial group in the country, it is also a politically dynamic population whose vote still remains up for grabs.”

With the mid-term elections only a few weeks away, candidates need to understand the diverse but increasingly invested Asian American electorate.

“We have seen great enthusiasm from Asian American voters increase as community organizations and college campuses participate in our regional trainings and organize voter registration and engagement programs,” said Christine Chen, Executive Director of Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote. “They are connecting the dots between their ability to advocate for their communities' interests and the power of their vote. At the same time, these findings

highlight that political parties and candidates are not investing in reaching out to this growing base of active voters, with more than half indicating that they have not been contacted by either party.”

Before the upcoming elections where immigration will weigh heavily on voters ready to cast their ballots, all eyes will be on another topic where Asian Americans play a pivotal role — affirmative action.

“We have always known that Asian Americans strongly support affirmative action and this new survey shows that Chinese Americans are in favor of affirmative action despite what the current lawsuit against Harvard may suggest,” said John C. Yang, President and Executive Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC. “In addition, throughout this survey we see Asian American voters are clearly rejecting this administration’s attacks on immigration and the handling of undocumented immigrants. Their support for undocumented immigrants to have a pathway to citizenship and to be able to access government assistance programs is very encouraging.”

The survey also found that overall, about 3 in 5 Asian American registered voters (58%) disapproved of Donald Trump’s job as president, while only about a third approved (36%). This is a significant contrast from our last midterm survey in 2014, where 50% of Asian American registered voters approved of Barack Obama’s job as president, while 36% disapproved. Asian American low approval of President Trump is in line with the low approval ratings of the American electorate in general during this period.

“From safer working conditions to fostering a work environment free from harassment and discrimination to issues of racial and immigrant justice, what’s clear from this data is that Asian Americans deeply care about issues that the labor movement has long championed,” said Alvina Yeh, Executive Director of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA). “Our communities will not stand for the extreme anti-immigrant, anti-worker agenda that has disproportionately impacted communities of color, including Asian American workers and families. With this electorate being uniquely positioned to be the margin of victory in key races across the country this November and in 2020, the opportunity now is to do long-term relationship building and outreach and make meaningful investments in programs that educate, organize, and activate Asian American workers in our labor unions, in our communities, and at the ballot box.”

Other notes of importance in the [survey](#) include:

Party Prospects in 2018 Midterms: Democratic Party candidates enjoy strong advantages among Asian American voters when compared to Republican candidates, both in U.S. Senate races (52%-28%) and in House races (50%-28%). Vietnamese American voters prefer Republican candidates in House races, and Filipino voters outside of California have a slight preference for Republican Senate candidates.

Party Favorability: Asian American registered voters hold a net unfavorable view of the Republican Party, with 52% viewing the party unfavorably and 34% viewing it favorably. At the same time, Asian American registered voters give the Democratic Party a large net favorable rating (58%-28%).

Government Services: Asian Americans continue to support bigger government providing more services, including health care access for undocumented immigrants, over smaller government providing fewer services (44% versus 24%, see Table 6). And this support is consistent across ethnic groups, including among groups like Vietnamese Americans who are Republican-leaning.

Pathway to Citizenship: 64% of Asian Americans support, and 20% oppose, a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. Support for this policy is consistent across the board, including among Asian American Republicans.

Affirmative Action: 58% of Asian Americans think affirmative action programs designed to increase the number of black and minority students on college campuses are a “good thing,” and an even larger 66% favor affirmative action programs designed to help African Americans, women, and other minorities get better access to higher education.

Gun Control: Gun control has strong and consistent support among Asian Americans. By a nearly a 7-to-1 ratio, Asian American registered voters favor stricter gun laws in the United States, with net support strongest among Chinese Americans and the foreign born. And, while Democrats show the strongest support, even Asian American Republicans favor stricter gun laws.

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