

American Enterprise Institute

The Project on Fair Representation

Edward Blum
Visiting Fellow
American Enterprise Institute
1150 Seventeenth St. NW
Washington, DC 20036
202.862.5800

Executive Summary of Bullock-Gaddie Study Of Voting Rights Progress in Arizona

By Edward Blum

Latino electoral participation in Arizona has not increased appreciably over the last 25 years, either in terms of voter registration or voter participation. Latino voters are far less likely to register or vote than Arizona blacks or Anglo whites, and in more recent years registration and participation have lagged the national averages. However, Anglo white and black participation in Arizona also lags the rest of the nation, possibly a function of the ever-growing population of the state.

In 2004, 30.5 percent of Latinos were registered to vote, while 61.4 percent of whites were. However, citizen based data for Latino participation presents a more favorable picture of Latino voter progress in Arizona—in 2004, for example, 56.3 percent of the adult Latino citizens in Arizona registered compared with 57.9 percent of the Latino voting age citizens in the nation. This pattern is evident in turnout rates as well. In 2004, 47.06 percent of Arizona's Latino citizens voted, while nationwide, 47.16 percent of Latinos did.

Latino legislative representation still lags the proportion Hispanic in the population for the state legislature, though the congressional delegation has achieved proportionality with two of eight congressmen from the state being Latino candidates of choice who are Latinos. In statewide election, Latino-preferred Anglo candidates are highly competitive, winning statewide office.

An Assessment of Voting Rights Progress in Arizona

Prepared for the Project on Fair representation
American Enterprise Institute

Charles S. Bullock, III
Richard B. Russell Professor of Political Science
Department of Political Science
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602

Ronald Keith Gaddie
Professor of Political Science
Department of Political Science
The University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019

An Assessment of Voting Rights Progress in Arizona

Parts of Arizona were impacted by each of the three trigger mechanisms incorporated in the Voting Rights Act. One county, Yuma, ran afoul of the 1965 standards. That is, at the time of the 1964 presidential election, it employed a test or device as a prerequisite to voting and fewer than half of its voting age population had registered or turned out to vote. The 1970 Act extended the preclearance requirement to eight more counties because registration or turnout in these counties fell below 50 percent of the voting age population in the 1968 presidential election.

With the adoption of the 1975 Voting Rights Act, the entire state became subject to Section 5. The new trigger mechanism focused on language minorities. It defined the exclusive use of English for registration and voting materials as the equivalent of a discriminatory test or device as per the two earlier versions of the legislation. Arizona became subject to the new trigger because more than five percent of its voting age

citizens belonged to a single language minority group at the time of the 1972 presidential election. Moreover the election-related materials appeared only in English and fewer than half of the voting age citizens had registered or voted in the presidential election of 1972.

The predominant language minority in Arizona is the Spanish-speaking population although some counties have concentrations of Native Americans, another protected group identified in the 1975 legislation. As of the 2000 census, a quarter of the Arizona population was of Hispanic origin. Another 4.5 percent were Native Americans while African Americans constituted just under three percent of the population.

Minority Registration and Turnout

The U.S. Bureau of the Census conducts extensive surveys after each general election. These surveys gather self-reported information on the extent of registration and turnout. Since these are self-reported data, it is likely that they overestimate actual levels of participation. Although the participation rates are probably inflated, they are the best data available on participation in Arizona and can be used for comparative purposes across time and across states on the assumption that the inflation is of similar magnitude across time and space. Furthermore, these are the kinds of estimates that the Census Bureau used in determining whether low registration or turnout rates made jurisdictions subject to the trigger mechanisms included in the 1965, 1970 and 1975 versions of the Voting Rights Act.

The Census Bureau estimates for registration appear in Table 1. According to these figures, Latino registration peaked in 1992 at 44.7 percent. In the succeeding dozen

years, registration among Latinos never exceeded one-third of the voting age population. In the two most recent mid-term elections, Latino registration fell below 30 percent and barely eclipsed that threshold in 2004. In contrast, during the 1980s, from 36 to 40 percent of Arizona's Latinos reported being registered.

(See Table 1)

The reported registration rate for whites in Arizona also reaches its maximum in 1992 at 71.8 percent. In the last half dozen elections, the highest rate of registration among whites has been 61.4 percent in 2004. In 1998 and 2002, only approximately 52 percent of the white Arizona population reported being registered. However a review of the entire quarter century in Table 1 does not provide us clear evidence of a general decline in registration rates among whites as among Latinos. In 1980, 59.4 percent of the whites reported being registered while in 2004 the figures stood at 61.4 percent. A see-saw pattern persists for whites with reported registration higher in presidential than in adjacent mid-term elections. Beginning with 1996, Latino registration rates have been only approximately half those for whites except for 2000 and even in that year, a difference of almost 22 percentage points exists.

The bottom half of Table 1 provides comparable data for the nation. The longitudinal perspective shows Latinos becoming less likely to register in Arizona than nationwide. During the 1980s, a higher proportion of Latinos registered in Arizona than nationwide except in 1984. Across the five most recent elections, the registration rate for Latinos nationwide exceeds that in Arizona. The greatest disparity comes in 1998 when the national figure is 8.5 points higher than for Arizona. In the most recent presidential

election, the difference is 3.8 percentage points while in the most recent mid-term election, the national figure is five points above that for Arizona.

Because Arizona shares a border with Mexico, it has a higher proportion of non-citizen Latinos than does the nation as a whole. When comparisons are made for registration rates among Latino citizens, the difference between Arizona and the nation is largely eliminated. In 2004, 56.3 percent of the adult Latino citizens in Arizona registered compared with 57.9 percent of the Latino voting age citizens in the nation. Once this adjustment is made then what seems to be a pattern in which Hispanic registration in Arizona shifts from being more prevalent than nationwide less prevalent largely disappears.

Turnout rates appear in Table 2. As with registration rates, Latinos report turning out to vote at lower rates in the last decade than in the first decade covered in the table. Since 1994, the high point for Latino voting has been 27.1 percent of the voting age population in 2000. During the 1980s, the figure for presidential year participation hovered around 30 percent. In the most recent presidential election, barely a quarter of the Latino voting-age population cast ballots. In 1998 and 2002, less than one-sixth of the Latino age-eligible population reported voting. Prior to 1994, the low point of 22.2 percent turnout came in 1990. As with the registration figures, reported participation reached its apex in 1992 when 35.3 percent of the Hispanics voted.

(See Table 2)

The voting rates for white Arizonans has also declined. In the last two mid-term elections, only about 35 percent of the whites report voting. In contrast, in the first three mid-term elections in Table 2, approximately 45 percent of the whites turned out. During

the 1980s, approximately 55 percent of white Arizonians reported voting in presidential elections. In the 1992 presidential election, white turnout reached 66.1 percent, dropped to just less than half in 1996 and 2000 before rising to 55.8 percent in 2004, a level achieved during the first three presidential elections in Table 2.

With participation rates declining among both Hispanics and whites, the disparity between the two groups has not narrowed. In all but one election (1982), whites voted at rates at least 20 percentage points higher than did Hispanics. In two presidential elections (1992 and 2004), the difference expands to 30 percentage points. The narrowest difference between Hispanic and white turnout came in 1982 when whites voted at a rate just ten percentage points above that for Latinos.

The figures at the bottom of Table 2 provide national data that can be compared against participation rates in Arizona. Up through 1994, Arizona's Latinos tended to vote at higher rates than did Latinos nationwide. The sole exception came in 1984 when 29 percent of Arizona Latinos compared with almost a third of Latinos nationwide went to the polls. For the five most recent elections, the Latino turnout nationally has exceeded that in Arizona. In 2000, the two figures were essentially the same while in 1998 the difference exceeded five percentage points. In the most recent election, 28 percent of Latinos nationwide compared with 25.5 percent in Arizona went to the polls.

Beginning with 1998, the Census Bureau has provided estimates of the total voting age population as well as for the share of the age-eligible who are citizens. A state like Arizona, which shares an extended border with Mexico, has a high proportion of its Latinos who are not citizens of the United States. Table 3 presents estimates of registration and turnout as gathered by the Census Bureau for those Latinos who are

American citizens. These figures show that between 40 and 57 percent of the Latinos in the state who are eligible to register have indeed registered. The share of the Latino citizens who have signed up to vote has increased from 41.5 percent in 1998 to almost 56.3 percent six years later. A comparison of the registration percentage in Table 3 with that in Table 1 for comparable years indicates a growing gap between the citizenship registration and that for the voting age population. In the first two years, the difference is approximately 16 percentage points with a quarter of the voting-age Latino population registered in 1998 which translates into 41.5 percent of the voting-age Latino citizens who had registered. For the most recent election, the difference has grown to more than 25 percentage points as 30.5 percent of the voting age Latino population registered but 56.3 of the age-eligible Latinos who were citizens who had signed up to vote.

The table also provides separate estimates for non-Hispanic whites. The figures for whites in Table 3 differ from those in Table 1 in that the Table 1 figures include white Latinos. As indicated in Table 3, the figures are for non-Hispanic whites and consequently the figures in Table 3 are higher than in Table 1. Table 3 shows that the difference between Latino citizens and non-Hispanic whites is as small as 13 percentage points in 2002, down from more than 20 percentage points in 1998. In 2004 non-Hispanic whites reported registering at a rate 16.5 percentage points above that for Latino citizens.

(See Table 3)

The turnout among Latinos who are citizens has grown over time. Comparing the two mid-term elections, the participation rate has grown by five percentage points to 29.1 in 2002. The growth in turnout in presidential years is even greater rising by six points to

47.1 percent in 2004. While Latino voting turnout has increased, it has done little to narrow the gap with the turnout rates for non-Hispanic whites who go to the polls at rates 17 to 19 percentage points more than do Latinos.

The lower half of Table 3 provides national figures. The short timeframe suggests that Arizona Latinos are increasingly participating at rates similar to Latinos nationwide. In 1998, the national figures show Latino citizens registering and voting at rates substantially greater than in Arizona. For the 2004 election cycle, this registration disparity had been reduced from almost 14 percentage points to only 1.6 percentage points although Latinos registered at a slightly higher rate nationally than in Arizona.

The difference in turnout rates has also become even less. In 1998 Latino citizens turned out at 32.8 percent nationwide compared with 24.2 percent in Arizona. In 2004, the disparity had essentially been wiped out. The significance of Table 3 is that once the presence of non-citizens has been controlled for, the participation rates for Latinos in Arizona are seen to be very similar to the national figures.

Election of Latinos

Table 4 reports the number of Latino elected officials in Arizona from 1984 through 2000. The data come from periodic editions of the *National Directory of Latino Elected Officials*. The data through 2000 indicate marked stability in Latino officeholding in Arizona local elections with tremendous oscillations in school board seats accounting most of the observed variations.

(See Table 4)

Latinos in Congress

In 1970, 19 percent of Arizona's population was of Hispanic-origin. A decade later, the Hispanic share of the population had fallen to 16 percent. By the 1990 census, however, the share of the population of Hispanic origin had returned to almost 19 percent.

In the Second congressional district, represented by liberal Democrat Mo Udall, the Latino population grew from 30 percent in 1980 to 45.1 percent a decade later. When Udall resigned after suffering a fall as a result of advanced Parkinson's disease, a Latino, Ed Pastor won the special election. After redistricting, Pastor's district became majority Hispanic as it united Latino concentrations in Phoenix and Tucson. Pastor continues in Congress although after the 2001 redistricting, his district shrank dramatically to include southern portions of Phoenix. This new district is 58 percent Hispanic origin.

Following the 2001 redistricting, Pastor was joined by a second Latino, Raul Grijalva who represents a district that extends along most of Arizona's border with Mexico and includes a portion of Tucson. This district had a very narrow Latino majority in the 2000 census. Arizona's other six districts are between 14 and 20 percent Latino and in 2000 the state's population was one-quarter Latino. Thus Latinos have a share of Arizona's congressional seat that is proportionate to their share of the state's population. The two Latino members of Congress are also the only Democrats in the delegation.

Minorities in the Legislature

The Arizona legislature is, like many western legislatures, composed of two relatively small bodies. The Senate is composed of 30 members elected from single-member districts, while the 60 representatives of the lower chamber are elected from 30 two-seat districts that they share with the Senate, using a pure multimember district system. As indicated in Table 5, the level of Latino representation in the legislature has remained relatively unchanged. Arizona had the same number of Latino senators in 2003 as 15 – 20 years earlier having recovered from a drop in the early 1990s. Latino state representatives have increased by a net of three since the early 1980s, to hold 15 percent of all seats, which is still shy of the Latino share of the state’s population.

(See Table 5)

Statewide Officials

Before the adoption of the language-minority provisions for the Voting Rights Act, Arizona elected Raul Castro governor. Castro won the Democratic nomination for governor in 1970 but lost in the general election by just over 7,000 votes. Four years later, Castro, a native of Sonora, Mexico, won the governorship by an even smaller margin of 4,700 votes. Castro, who had served as U.S. Ambassador first to El Salvador and later to Bolivia before becoming governor, resigned as chief executive to accept an appointment by President Jimmy Carter to become Ambassador to Argentina. There have been no major statewide Latinos since then, as Anglo whites have dominated the nominations of both major parties.

Ethnic Voting Patterns

There is limited evidence available of Anglo and minority voting patterns in Arizona. In this section we rely on two sources of data – exit poll data from Arizona, provided by the VNS, and ecological regression estimates of white and Hispanic voting at the precinct level for Congress and the state Senate for the 2000 election, from data provided by David Lublin and D. Stephen Voss.¹

Results of the exit poll data appear in Table 6. Hispanic votes generally break for the Democrats in major statewide contests, although Senator John McCain increased his Hispanic vote share with each subsequent election in the time series. No Democrat commanded a majority of the white, Anglo vote in any statewide election, although it is not uncommon for Democrats to attract at least 40 percent of the Anglo vote. Democrats can usually attract 60 – 70 percent of the Hispanic vote unless running against McCain.

(See Table 6)

The ecological regression estimates of Anglo and Hispanic voter support in 2000 also have ethnic differences. In the congressional and state Senate elections, Democrats get substantially larger shares of the Hispanic vote than did Democrats competing statewide. Most of the Democrats for whom a share of the Hispanic vote could be estimated in Table 7 got at least 80 percent of the Latino vote. With a few exceptions, Republicans in Table 7 ran as strongly with white voters as did the statewide Republicans in Table 6. The ecological regression estimate of white support for Al Gore in Table 7 is two points higher than the exit poll results, as both place the Democrat's Anglo support in the high 30s.

(See Table 7)

¹ David Lublin and D. Stephen Voss. 2001. "Federal Elections Project." American University, Washington, DC and the University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY.

The congressional contests for 2000 show effects of incumbency, and, to a lesser extent candidate ethnicity. No Democrat commanded majority-white support, though Hispanic incumbent Ed Pastor (D-2) attracted the largest share of white support. The only Hispanic challenger, David Mendoza, (AZ-1) had the highest Anglo vote share of any Democratic challenger, at 38.4 percent.

In addition to the congressional races, regression estimates of fifteen contested state Senate races conform to the pattern observed for Congress and in the exit polls. Four of the fifteen Democrats running in these districts, including three incumbents, captured a majority of the Anglo votes. Little real difference in Democratic candidate support among whites was evident between the open seats and contests featuring Republican incumbents. The lowest Anglo vote for a Democratic candidate came in Senate District 9, where a Hispanic candidate pulled just 27.2 percent. Democrats only won five of the fifteen contested seats.

Conclusion

Latino electoral participation in Arizona has not increased appreciably over the last 25 years, either in terms of voter registration or voter participation. Latino voters are far less likely to register or vote than Arizona blacks or whites, and in more recent years registration and participation have lagged the national averages. However, Anglo white and black participation in Arizona also lags the rest of the nation, possibly a function of the ever-growing population of the state. Citizen based data for Latino participation presents a more favorable picture of Latino voter progress in Arizona.

Latino legislative representation still lags the proportion Hispanic in the population for the state legislature, though the congressional delegation has achieved proportionality with two of eight members of Congress from the state being Latino candidates of choice who are Latinos. In statewide elections, Latino-preferred Anglo candidates are highly competitive, often winning statewide office.

REPORTED REGISTRATION BY RACE IN ARIZONA, 1980-2004

	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
ARIZONA													
Latino	37.8	38.8	36.4	37.6	39.6	28.9	44.7	31.2	32.4	25.2	33.4	27.5	30.5
White	59.4	55.3	63.9	57.6	64	57.1	71.8	58.5	60.5	52.5	55.3	51.6	61.4
Black	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	47.7	60.3	34.2	46.2	51.8	55.3
NATIONAL													
Latino	36.3	35.3	40.1	35.9	35.5	32.3	35	31.3	35.7	33.7	34.9	32.6	34.3
White	68.4	65.6	69.6	65.3	67.9	63.8	70.1	64.6	67.7	63.9	65.6	63.1	67.9
Black	60	59.1	66.3	64	64.5	58.8	63.9	58.5	63.5	60.2	63.6	58.5	64.3

Source: Various post-election reports of the U. S. Bureau of the Census

TABLE 2

REPORTED TURNOUT BY RACE IN ARIZONA, 1980-2004

	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
ARIZONA													
Latino	32.3	33.8	29	24.9	32.5	22.2	35.3	21.9	23	14.7	27.1	16.4	25.5
White	54.3	44.1	54.8	46.3	55.4	46.9	66.1	43.6	49.1	34.7	48.7	37.6	55.8
Black	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	39.2	45	26.1	32.1	40.1	45.6
NATIONAL													
Latino	29.9	25.3	32.6	24.2	28.8	21	28.9	20.2	26.7	20	27.5	18.9	28
White	60.9	49.9	61.4	47	59.1	46.7	63.6	47.3	56	43.3	56.4	44.1	60.3
Black	50.5	43	55.8	43.2	51.5	39.2	54	37.1	50.6	39.6	53.5	39.7	56.1

Source: Various post-election report of the U. S. Bureau of the Census

TABLE 3

REPORTED REGISTRATION AND TURNOUT BY RACE FOR CITIZENS IN ARIZONA, 1980-2004

ARIZONA	Latinos					Non-Hispanic Whites				
	Citizen VAP	Registered	% Regis.	Turnout	% Turnout	Citizen VAP	Registered	% Regis.	Turnout	% Turnout
1998	496	206	41.53	120	24.19	2261	1422	62.89	956	42.28
2000	616	304	49.35	247	40.10	2280	1477	64.78	1319	57.85
2002	532	259	48.68	155	29.14	2498	1535	61.45	1155	46.24
2004	629	354	56.28	296	47.06	3168	2305	72.76	2094	66.10
NATIONWIDE										
1998	12,395	6,843	55.21	4,068	32.82	143,651	99,510	69.27	68,068	47.38
2000	13,159	7,546	57.34	5,634	42.81	144,731	103,588	71.57	89,469	61.82
2002	15,601	8,196	52.54	4,747	30.43	147,171	102,154	69.41	72,259	49.10
2004	16,088	9,306	57.84	7,587	47.16	148,159	111,318	75.13	99,567	67.20

Sources: Various post-election reports of the U. S. Census Bureau

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF LATINO ELECTED OFFICIALS
IN ARIZONA, 1984-2000

Year	Total	County	Municipal	School Board
1984	241	13	107	84
1986	248	9	112	77
1989	268	13	105	92
1991	283	13	110	100
1992	222	14	121	36
1999	264	14	101	100
2000	268	14	102	112

Source: Various volumes of *The National Directory of Latino Elected Officials* (Los Angeles: NALEO Educational Fund).

TABLE 5
NUMBER OF LATINO STATE LEGISLATORS
IN ARIZONA, 1985-2003

Year	Upper Chamber		Lower Chamber	
1985	5	16.7%	6	10.0%
1987	5	16.7%	5	8.4%
1989	5	16.7%	5	8.4%
1991	5	16.7%	6	10.0%
1993	3	10.0%	7	11.7%
1999	4	14.3%	7	11.7%
2003	5	16.7%	9	15.0%
N	30		60	

Source: Various volumes of *The National Directory of Latino Elected Officials* (Los Angeles: NALEO Educational Fund).

TABLE 6

EXIT POLL DATA ON ANGLO WHITE AND HISPANIC VOTER PREFERENCES,
1992-2004

Year/Office	Party	White	Hispanic
1992			
President	Dem	33.1	67.9
	Rep	37.2	14.8
US Senate	Dem	29.6	43.8
	Rep	53.1	48.8
1994			
Senate	Dem	37.6	66.4
	Rep	57.1	28.6
Governor	Dem	43.3	77.0
	Rep	54.2	20.5
1996			
President	Dem	42.9	80.0
	Rep	45.5	15.5
1998			
Senate	Dem	24.6	42.3
	Rep	72.1	51.9
Governor	Dem	34.8	58.3
	Rep	63.2	37.9
2000			
President	Dem	37.6	64.7
	Rep	56.9	34.5
2004			
President	Dem	42.3	58.7
	Rep	56.9	39.6
US Senate	Dem	18.2	23.9
	Rep	77.5	70.2

TABLE 7

OLS ESTIMATES OF WHITE ANGLO AND HISPANIC SUPPORT FOR
DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT, US HOUSE, AND STATE
SENATE IN ARIZONA, 2000 ELECTION

Office	Inc/Race	%White	%Hispanic	%Total
President	Open	39.6	94.9	44.7
US House, Dist. 1	Rep (D-H)	38.4	---	42.4
US House, Dist. 2	Dem (D-H)	43.3	94.9	68.5
US House, Dist. 3	Rep	31.2	92.6	31.4
US House, Dist. 4	Rep	27.6	53.8	32.7
US House, Dist. 5	Rep	28.9	78.7	35.3
US House, Dist. 6	Rep	35.8	91.5	35.6
State Senate, Dist. 1	Rep	38.6	---	41.4
State Senate, Dist. 2	Open	43.8	---	47.1
State Senate, Dist. 6	Open	40.5	81.7	42.9
State Senate, Dist. 8	Open	45.5	82.7	53.9
State Senate, Dist. 9	Open (D-H)	27.2	89.4	40.6
State Senate, Dist. 16	Rep	43.6	>100.0	46.2
State Senate, Dist. 19	Rep	36.7	---	37.0
State Senate, Dist. 20	Dem	92.7	>100.0	61.9
State Senate, Dist. 21	Rep	44.0	---	43.9
State Senate, Dist. 24	Open	35.1	---	36.5
State Senate, Dist. 25	Dem	65.6	>100.0	66.4
State Senate, Dist. 26	Rep	35.1	>100.0	43.2
State Senate, Dist. 27	Dem	73.1	---	55.5
State Senate, Dist. 29	Rep	26.6	>100.0	36.6
State Senate, Dist. 30	Open	70.6	<0.0	66.4