

# Polling Young Voters

An Analysis of Young Adults' Responses to Post-Election Opinion Polling

Volume II, December 2006



*Polling Young Voters* is a regular publication of **Young Voter Strategies**, a project of the Graduate School of Political Management at The George Washington University with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts. Young Voter Strategies is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides the public, parties, candidates, consultants, and nonprofits with polling and demographic research on the youth vote and tools to effectively mobilize this electorate for upcoming elections. We are committed to making the targeting of young voters a more permanent part of electoral strategies.

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## **Other publications from Young Voter Strategies**

### ***Polling Reports:***

*Young Voter Battleground Poll III, November 2006*, with The Tarrance Groups & Lake Research Partners

*Polling Young Voters Volume I*, September 2006

*Young Voter Battleground Poll II, September 2006*, with The Tarrance Groups & Lake Research Partners

*Young Voter Battleground Poll I, April 2006*, with The Tarrance Group & Lake Research Partners

### ***Best Practices and Tactical Guides:***

*Winning Young Voters: A Guide to Youth Vote Organizing*

*Young Voters and the Media*, with Professor Diana Owens of Georgetown University

*Young Voter Mobilization Tactics: A Compilation of Research on Voter Turnout Techniques*, with the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)

# Contents

## **I. A New Generation Arrives at the Polls.....**

Young Voter Turnout Up for Second Major Election in A Row

What Motivates Young Voters

## **II. An Analysis of Post-Election Political Polling.....**

Why Young Adults Voted and Who They Supported

*Iraq and the Pocketbook Spur A Vote for Change*

*Working the Youth Vote Works*

Who Are Young Voters? Looking at Key Demographic Groups

*Young Republicans*

*Young Democrats*

*Latinos*

*African-Americans*

*Born-Again Christians/Evangelicals*

*Young Women – Married and Unmarried*

## **III. What's Next? Winning Young Voters in 2008.....**

The Democratic Case for Targeting Young Voters

The Republican Case for Targeting Young Voters

# A New Generation Arrives at the Polls

## Election 2006: Young Voter Turnout Up for Second Major Election in a Row

On November 7, 2006, ten million 18-29 year olds cast ballots, an increase of two million voters over 2002 levels and perhaps the largest midterm turnout rate for this age group in twelve years, according to a preliminary analysis conducted by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at the University of Maryland (CIRCLE) of the Edison/Mitofsky National Election Pool Exit Poll.

Pre-election polls of young adults showing high levels of election engagement and strong dissatisfaction with the direction of the country indicated that 2006 may be a record turnout year. Indeed, on Election Day young voters turned out to the polls in big numbers, proving that their 2004 turnout increase was not a blip in the radar screen, but the start of a trend of growing youth voter participation. In 2004, turnout among 18-29 year olds increased by 4.3 million, or nine percentage points, over 2000 levels<sup>1</sup>; in 2006, early estimates show another multi-million voter increase, from 8 to 10 million voters cast, or a 24% increase over 2002.<sup>2</sup>

## What Motivates Young Voters

On November 8, young voters were a major part of the post-election news story – not just their increased turnout numbers, but their voting patterns and potential effects on both political parties in the coming years. The sheer size of potential Millennial Generation<sup>3</sup> voters – 42 million citizens strong today<sup>4</sup> and on track to be one-third of the electorate by 2015<sup>5</sup> – combined with the fact that both voting and partisanship are habits that solidify over time indicate that young voters will be a tremendous force in politics in future elections.

This volume of *Polling Young Voters* explores those factors, as well as key issue concerns of young voters and select demographic subgroups<sup>6</sup>, as derived from analyses of Young Voter Strategies' post-election *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, conducted by the bipartisan polling team of Celinda Lake and Ed Goetz, and from CIRCLE's analysis of the National Election Pool's Exit Polls.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>2</sup> CIRCLE, *Young Voters in the 2006 Elections*, analysis of the National Election Pool Exit Poll.

<sup>3</sup> Definitions of the Millennial Generation vary; the most common and that used in this paper is young people born 1977-1997.

<sup>4</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 42 million 18-29 year old citizens in the U.S. today.

<sup>5</sup> Millennials 18-38 years of age (or born between 1977 and 1997, see above) are on track to be one-third of the U.S. electorate by 2015, according to an YVS analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's population projections for 2000 to 2050.

<sup>6</sup> Please note that when the polling responses of demographic subgroups are broken out, the sample size for each group diminishes and the margin of error increases. However, the subgroup responses included in this report reinforce trends seen in previous poll analyses, including the May and September *Young Voter Battleground Polls* and those outlined in *Polling Young Voters Volume I*, September 2006, all available at [www.youngvoterstrategies.org](http://www.youngvoterstrategies.org).

# An Analysis of Post-Election Polling

## *Why Young Adults Voted & Who They Supported*

### **Iraq and the Pocketbook Spur A Vote for Change**

The 2006 elections will be remembered for the turnover of Congress from Republican control to Democratic control for the first time in twelve years. Young voter turnout, however, was as much a part of that overall story as it was a phenomenon in and of itself. By and large, young adults cast their ballots with a desire for change, according to the bipartisan post-election *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, a survey of 500 18-30 year olds conducted in November 2006 for Young Voter Strategies by Ed Goeas of the Tarrance Group and Celinda Lake of Lake Research Partners. And in 2006, that meant votes for Democrats and against the incumbent Republican congress.

According to the National Election Pool U.S. House of Representatives exit poll, voters 18-29 years old voted 60% to 38% for Democratic Congressional candidates in 2006, a 23 point advantage. By contrast, in 2004 18-29 year old voters leaned Democratic for the U.S. House by 11 percentage points (55-44) and for John F. Kerry (D) over George W. Bush (R) by nine points (54-45).<sup>7</sup>

A plurality of young voters (39%) cast ballots in order to support a candidate or political party with whom they agreed on the issues, according to the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, compared to 13% who reported voting to oppose a candidate or political party.

The war in Iraq, health care, homeland security, and the economy topped young voters' lists of concerns on Election Day 2006. Forty-three percent of those surveyed in the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III* named the war in Iraq as the most important issue when deciding for whom to vote in 2006, followed by health care (37%), creating jobs (36%), homeland security (36%), and college affordability (31%).

When asked what issues are most important for Congress to deal with, 18-30 year olds voters cited a similar set of concerns. Education and the cost of college topped the list at 15%, followed by jobs and the economy (13%), Iraq (12%), immigration (11%), and health care (10%).<sup>8</sup>

### **Working the Youth Vote Works**

Young voter turnout on Election Day and post-election analyses show that targeting and mobilizing young voters will increase their turnout. In 2006, turnout increased nationwide by an estimated 2 million voters, but increased even more substantially in specific precincts where groups or campaigns called young voters, went door-to-door, held registration blitzes on campus, or motivated young voters by appealing to their issue interests. An election night analysis from CIRCLE showed that average young voter turnout among college students in precincts targeted by the nonpartisan Student PIRGs' New Voters Project

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<sup>7</sup> National Election Poll Exit Poll 2004 & 2006

<sup>8</sup> Lake-Goeas *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

doubled over 2002 levels, with turnout in some targeted precincts up to five times higher than 2002 levels.<sup>9</sup> In Michigan, turnout at six University of Michigan precincts targeted by a nonpartisan student program increased by 111% over 2002 levels (from 1541 to 3245 votes cast).<sup>10</sup>

Specific campaigns also showed that investing resources in young voters increases turnout. As one example, in Montana, Jon Tester's campaign for the U.S. Senate included a targeted youth outreach component. On Election Day, young Montanans turned out in huge numbers, making up 17% of the electorate, compared to 12% nationwide, and voting for Tester 12 points over incumbent Senator Jim Talent (56% to 44%).<sup>11</sup> According to the Tester campaign's pollster Celinda Lake, young voters helped give Tester both the primary election and his victory on Election Day. Other similar case studies exist across the country; an upcoming publication from Young Voter Strategies will take a closer look at the tactics used by winning 2006 campaigns to work the youth vote.

Nationally, the nonpartisan community invested an estimated five million dollars in young voter registration and mobilization in 2006, far more than in any previous midterm election, a fact likely correlated with high turnout. The 15 organizations part of Young Voter Strategies' nonpartisan project registered more than 500,000 18-29 year olds and contacted thousands through Get-Out-the-Vote efforts. Further, the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III* found that 46% of respondents had been contacted by a campaign or organization about the elections, primarily via phone or by mail; these respondents were 10 points more likely to be "almost certain" they would vote or to have already voted compared to those with no contact. Given studies show that live telephone calls can increase youth turnout by up to 5 percentage points,<sup>12</sup> increased attention from campaigns likely played a role in 2006's high 18-29 year old turnout.

The lesson here is a reiteration of what we learned in 2004: if you ask them, they will vote. Outreach to young voters by community groups, campus organizations, friends, family, campaigns, and candidates is a key factor in increasing young voter turnout. In 2004, the nonpartisan community invested \$40 million in youth registration and mobilization, and turnout increased more than between any two elections since 18-20 year olds won the right to vote in 1972 (from about 16 to 20 million 18-29 year old voters<sup>13</sup>). In 2006, another year with unprecedented youth-targeted mobilization, turnout also increased nationwide and, as noted above, increased even more in specific precincts with active youth registration and Get-Out-the-Vote campaigns.

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<sup>9</sup> The 2006 analysis focused on a set of 36 student-dense precincts in Ohio, Connecticut, Iowa, Colorado and Michigan. Average turnout in those precincts increased 157% over 2002, about six times the national percent increase (25%, from 8 to 10 million).

<sup>10</sup> Figures gathered by Young Voter Strategies from election officials working these precincts on November 7, 2006.

<sup>11</sup> National Election Pool Exit Poll 2006, Montana Senate

<sup>12</sup> Nickerson, David. 2006. "Volunteer Phone Calls Can Increase Turnout." *American Politics Research*. Vol 34(3): 271-292.

Nickerson, Friedrichs, King. 2006. "Partisan Mobilization Campaigns in the Field: Results from a Statewide Turnout Experiment in Michigan." *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 59 (1). See *Young Voter Mobilization Tactics*, from YVS, for more information.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

## **Who Are Young Voters? Looking at Key Emerging Demographic Groups<sup>14</sup>**

This generation of youth is large, very large, and in the reality of close elections, they are a bloc that will play an important role in deciding elections in the next decade. In 2006, there are approximately 42 million 18-29 year old citizens in the U.S., according to the U.S. Census Bureau; by 2015, potential Millennial Generation voters ages 18-38 years old will be one-third of the U.S. electorate.<sup>15</sup>

Within this huge cohort, however, are distinct, politically crucial demographic groups. Millennials are the most diverse in U.S. history: 61 percent of Millennial adults identify as white, 18 percent as Hispanic, 14 percent as African-American, and 5 percent as Asian. In comparison, 81 percent of Americans over 65 years of age identify as white.<sup>16</sup> According to CIRCLE's analysis of 2006 exit polls, the 2006 youth electorate was more racially and ethnically diverse than older voters. Eleven percent classified themselves as Hispanic/Latino, larger than the proportion in the electorate as a whole (6%). Thirteen percent of young voters self-identified as Black, compared to 10% of all voters.<sup>17</sup>

Particular subgroups are key to the political parties' futures due to their partisan leanings, electoral participation rates, fast-growing populations, or a combination of the three. Several of these key demographic groups are broken out below:

### **Young Republicans**

On November 7, 2006, 36% of 18-29 year olds voted for Republican candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives.<sup>18</sup> While turnout figures are not yet available for subgroups, polling indicates that this group was more energized and loyal to the Republican Party

than their Democratic counterparts and likely voted at a higher rate. Self-identified Republicans polled by Lake-Goeas in November were ten percentage points more likely than young Democrats to say they were "almost certain" to vote on November 7<sup>th</sup> or had already voted early, and were strongly supportive of President Bush (83% approval, compared to 38% overall) and of the Republican Party.<sup>19</sup>

#### **18-30 Year Old Republicans' Top Issues**

Homeland Security & Terrorism (42%)

Moral and Values-Based Issues (40%)

War in Iraq (34%)

Creating Jobs (28%)

Young Republicans, according to the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, listed homeland security and terrorism, moral and value-based issues, and the war in Iraq as the most important issues in deciding for whom to vote. Unlike their Democratic and Independent counterparts, economic issues were further

<sup>14</sup> Figures in this section are derived from CIRCLE's analysis of the 2006 National Election Pool Exit Poll or from the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*. All tables contain figures from the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III* of 500 18-30 year olds. Note that sample sizes are smaller for demographic subgroups. Turnout figures and partisan ballot choice on Election Day 2006 are currently only available for 18-29 year olds overall, not for subgroups. These figures will be available when the U.S. Census Bureau November 2006 supplement is published, likely in May 2007.

<sup>15</sup> YVS analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's population projections for 2000 to 2050.

<sup>16</sup> CIRCLE's tabulations from the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, March Supplement, 2006

<sup>17</sup> CIRCLE, *Young Voters in the 2006 Elections*

<sup>18</sup> CIRCLE, *Young Voters in the 2006 Elections*

<sup>19</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

down on the priority list, although creating jobs and health care both were tapped by more than one-quarter as the most important issue (28% and 27%, respectively) and college affordability by 22%.

Party Preference of 18-30 Subgroups	Party ID - R	Party ID - D	Generic Ballot-R	Generic Ballot-D
Born-Again Christians	46%	30%	54%	37%
Married	40%	29%	47%	37%
White Men	39%	34%	38%	46%

Born-Again Christians, married young adults (both men and women), and white men are more likely to be Republicans than to be Democrats. Nearly half (46%) of Born-Again Christians, 40% of married

18-30 year olds (44% of married men and 38% of married women), and 39% of white men identify as Republican, compared to 30% of 18-30 year olds overall.<sup>20</sup> Crucial to note, however, is that while both Born-Again Christians and married youth voted Republican at rates higher than their party identification, white men voted for Democrats by eight points (see table). While this subgroup currently identifies as Republican, they may be lost to the GOP if not courted by the party in upcoming elections.

### Young Democrats

On Election Day 2006, a large majority of 18-29 year olds (59%) voted for Democratic congressional candidates.<sup>21</sup>

Polling indicates that young Democrats were primarily spurred to cast ballots for Democratic candidates by economic concerns and the desire for a course change in Iraq. Young Democrats cited Iraq, followed by a number of “pocketbook” issues—creating jobs, health care, college costs and education—as both top issues in deciding for whom to vote in 2006 and issues on which Congress ought to take action. One-quarter of young Democrats also listed moral and values-based issues and global warming as top election issues.<sup>22</sup>

#### 18-30 Year Old Democrats' Top Issues

- War in Iraq (48%)
- Creating Jobs (39%)
- Health Care (37%)
- College Affordability (34%)

Party Preference of 18-30 Subgroups	Party ID - D	Party ID - R	Generic Ballot-D	Generic Ballot-R
African-Americans	62%	10%	74%	16%
Latinos	48%	21%	69%	28%
Women	42%	27%	52%	34%

When asked for whom they would vote, the subgroups with the strongest Democratic leanings were young African-Americans (74% Democratic, 16% Republican), young Latinos (69% Democratic, 28% Republican), non-

white women (80% Democratic, 12% Republican), and the very youngest voters (18-22 year olds gave Democrats a 28 point advantage, compared to a 7 point advantage from 23-30 year olds).<sup>23</sup> Young Independents also leaned heavily Democratic in 2006. Forty-five percent of 18-30 year old Independents intended to vote for Democrats and 19% for Republicans, a 26 point Democratic advantage.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>21</sup> CIRCLE, *Young Voters in the 2006 Elections*, from the 2006 National Election Pool Exit Poll

<sup>22</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>23</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>24</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

## Young African-Americans

According to the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, young African-Americans were more likely to say they were “almost certain” to vote (61%) than either white (56%) or Hispanic (42%) youth. Given that young African-Americans helped drive drove young voters’ 2004 turnout increase (50% of African-Americans under 30 voted in 2004, a seven point jump over 2000<sup>25</sup>), it is likely that African-Americans again helped spur the big 2006 turnout among young voters.

18-30 Year Old African-Americans’ Party Preference		
	Party Identification	Generic Congressional Ballot
Democrat	62%	74%
Independent	25%	---
Republican	10%	16%

### 18-30 Year Old African-Americans’ Top Issues

Health Care (52%)  
 Creating Jobs (51%)  
 Homeland Security & Terrorism (47%)  
 War in Iraq (46%)

Similar to their older counterparts, young African-Americans lean strongly Democratic, giving Democrats a 52 point party identification advantage and 68 point generic ballot advantage.<sup>26</sup> However, Democrats should note that they cannot take young African-Americans’ vote for granted: 89% of African-Americans of all ages voted for Democratic House

candidates in 2006 and 10% for Republicans, a 79 point advantage, compared to young African-Americans’ 68 point advantage. This group of young voters is a potential stronghold for Democrats, but needs to be courted and turned out by the party.

Economic issues are a priority for this demographic: health care and creating jobs rated highest when asked for whom they would vote in 2006, while education and the economy led their list of issues important for Congress to address. Homeland security and Iraq played a big role also; nearly half of African-American respondents listed these as top election issues.

## Young Latinos

Young Latinos are the fastest-growing portion of the U.S. population and a significant portion of the Latino electorate. Today there are 5.5 million 18-29 year old Latinos citizens in the U.S.,<sup>27</sup> and approximately 50,000 more turn 18 years old every month.<sup>28</sup>

### 18-30 Year Old Latinos’ Top Issues

War in Iraq (43%)  
 College Affordability (41%)  
 Creating Jobs (40%)  
 Health Care (40%)

In 2006, young Latinos supported Democrats by a 41 point margin<sup>29</sup>, substantially larger than the 18 point margin they gave John F. Kerry over George W. Bush in 2004.<sup>30</sup> Similar to the overall electorate, young Latinos prioritized the war in Iraq and core economic issues—education and jobs—

<sup>25</sup> CIRCLE, *The 2004 Youth Vote*, page 5. Tabulations from the CPS November Voting and Registration Supplements, 1972-2004.

<sup>26</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>27</sup> CIRCLE’s tabulations from the CPS, March Supplement, 2006.

<sup>28</sup> According to an analysis by Professor Leobardo Estrada at the University of California Los Angeles.

<sup>29</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>30</sup> CIRCLE, *The 2004 Youth Vote*, page 6. Tabulations from the CPS November Voting and Registration Supplements, 1972-2004.

<b>18-30 Year Old Latinos' Party Preference</b>		
	Party Identification	Generic Congressional Ballot
Democrat	48%	69%
Independent	17%	---
Republican	21%	28%

when deciding for whom to vote, and also cited homeland security (39%), global warming (38%), and moral issues (36%) as top priorities.<sup>31</sup> Immigration ranked higher among Latinos as a decisive 2006 issue—26% said it was a most important issue in deciding for whom to vote, compared to 21% of youth overall.<sup>32</sup>

### **Born-Again Christians**

Born-Again Christian youth reported higher approval of President Bush (52%) than young voters overall (38%) and gave Republicans a 17-point advantage when asked for whom they would vote in 2006,<sup>33</sup> a breakdown similar to that of votes cast by Evangelicals of all ages (58% Republican, 41% Democratic).<sup>34</sup>

<b>18-30 Year Old Born-Again Christians' Party Preference</b>		
	Party Identification	Generic Congressional Ballot
Democrat	30%	37%
Independent	18%	---
Republican	46%	54%

#### **18-30 Year Old Born-Again Christians' Top Issues**

- War in Iraq (43%)
- Moral & Values-Based Issues (43%)
- Homeland Security & Terrorism (42%)
- Creating Jobs (39%)

Young Born-Again Christians cited national security issues—terrorism and the war in Iraq—and moral and values-based issues as the most important factors in their 2006 vote. Forty-six percent of are self-identified Republicans and their issues priorities mirror those of the young Republican subgroup.<sup>35</sup>

### **Young Women**

Young women are historically are more likely to vote than their male peers and overall lean more Democratic. Although exit poll figures are not yet available to determine young women's 2006 turnout, in 2004, young women drove the young voter turnout increase, jumping 12 points over 2000 levels.<sup>36</sup> In 2006, 42% of 18-30 year old women identified as Democratic and 27% as Republican, according to the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, compared to young men who identify 38% Democratic and 34% Republican.

<b>18-30 Year Old Women's Party Preference</b>		
	Party Identification	Generic Congressional Ballot
Democrat	42%	52%
Independent	23%	---
Republican	27%	34%

<sup>31</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>32</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>33</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>34</sup> National Election Pool Exit Poll 2006

<sup>35</sup> *Young Voter Battleground Poll III*, November 2006

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, November 2004 supplemental

When looking at the marital status of young women, however, a sharp divide appears. Single young women are far more likely to be Democrats, while married young women more likely to be Republicans. Sixty percent of women identifying as Republican in the *Young Voter Battleground Poll III* were married, compared to 30% of Democratic women and 43% of Independents. Of single 18-30 year old women polled, 63% planned to vote for Democrats and 24% for Republicans, a 39 point advantage and half (50%) of young single women self-identify as Democrats, while just 13% identify as Republicans. Conversely, married women give Republicans an eight-point party identification advantage (38-30) and an 11 point advantage when asked for whom they would vote (48-37).

Young women overall chose issues similar to 18-30 year olds in general when asked about what would impact their vote. Iraq topped the list, with nearly half indicating it was the most important issue when deciding for whom to vote, followed by homeland security. Pocketbook issues following, with 39% and 37% indicating the economy and jobs as most important.

<b>18-30 Year Old Women's Top Issues</b>
War in Iraq (47%)
Homeland Security & Terrorism (40%)
Health Care (39%)
Creating Jobs (37%)

However, similar to partisan affiliation, married and unmarried women had somewhat different issue priorities. Single young women cited Iraq (54%), health care (44%), and creating jobs (39%) as their top issues in deciding for whom to vote. Married women cited homeland security and terrorism (46%), Iraq (38%), and creating jobs (34%) as their top issues. Thirty-seven percent of unmarried women cited college affordability as a top issue, but only 22% of married women.

# What's Next? Winning Young Voters in 2008

In 2006, young voter turnout increased substantially for the second major election in a row, proving that a new generation has arrived as a force in politics. Just as importantly, young voters' turnout in 2006 reiterated that when community and campus organizations, political parties, or campaigns work to get out the youth vote, it works. A knock on the door, a volunteer on campus, a phone call, or an informative email can get young voters registered and to the polls.<sup>37</sup>

For campaigns looking to 2008, this is an important lesson. As noted above, young adult citizens are 42 million strong and growing. Given that both voting and partisanship are habits that develop young, it is in the interest of both Republicans and Democrats to register and mobilize their young supporters – both to win close elections now and build power for the future.

Ed Goetas of The Tarrance Group and Celinda Lake of Lake Research Partners analyzed the post-election *Young Voter Battleground Poll III* from their respective partisan positions:

## **From Democrat Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners, November 2006**

“Democrats were victorious in 2006 in part because they have begun to reach out to young voters...this age cohort show[ed] up at the polls in increased numbers and vote[ed] overwhelmingly Democratic, their desire for change helped drive the Democratic victories yesterday. This is now the second major election in a row that the Democrats won the youth vote. Studies show that if a young person votes for a party in three elections in a row, they tend to vote with that party for life.”

“Young voters solidly voted for Democrats this November...[they] turned out in record numbers and did their part; they rewarded our party for the second consecutive election because our candidates are right on the issues important to young people. Now is the time to keep up the pressure and make this age group a part of our permanent majority party.

“Looking ahead, there are reasons to be cautious...self-identified Republican voters were more likely to vote this year than self-identified Democrats; if our voters were as likely as their voters to participate this could be worth another two to three percentage points in favor of progressives. Again, we can win with young voters but as they become part of our base we need to maximize their support and turnout...Our leaders need to demonstrate over the next two years that they can govern and can lead on the issues important to young people.”

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<sup>37</sup> For more on how to effectively and cost-efficiently mobilize young voters, see *Young Voter Mobilization Tactics* and *Winning Young Voters*, both from YVS, and keep an eye out for future best practices publications.

**From Republican Ed Goeas, The Tarrance Group, November 2006**

“The 2006 elections show that Republican campaigns must mobilize their base of young voters to win. Yesterday proved that young voters can and will be a force in elections...The increase in youth turnout certainly came into play yesterday. As the Republicans look ahead to 2008 in an environment where many of the incoming Democrats won with less than 55% of the vote, they should look seriously at continuing to engage and energize GOP voters under 30. There are cost-effective methods to do so and our survey shows that young Republicans are very party-loyal and willing to be turned-out.”

“Continuing a trend seen on previous studies, young Republican voters are as intense and loyal as GOP voters in any age cohort... it is clear that young Republican voters remain a valuable target for GOP candidates and campaigns.”

“...It is clear that many campaigns missed the opportunity to reach out to this internet-dependent cohort...This is certainly an area on which Republicans can look to improve contact methods with these voters.”

For both parties, the message is clear: young voters are huge in number and growing, and made up of a diverse range of subgroups that can be supporters for both parties. Today, young voters are of the size and increasing propensity to vote that they can make the difference in close elections; ten years from now, they will be the base for the political parties and the difference between holding power or not.



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