

Delivering Democracy: Vote by Mail in 2020

Tammy Patrick, Democracy Fund

November 10, 2020





- National Landscape
- Application*
- Delivery & Return*
- Counting*



***2020:
Pandemic Safety,
Voting Security,
& Politics...**





***2020:
Primary Lessons Learned
November Changes
Turnout**



Will COVID-19 force a massive absentee vote in November election

ELECTIONS

PUBLIC HEALTH

CORONAVIRUS



Iowa election officials pushing vote by mail for June primary

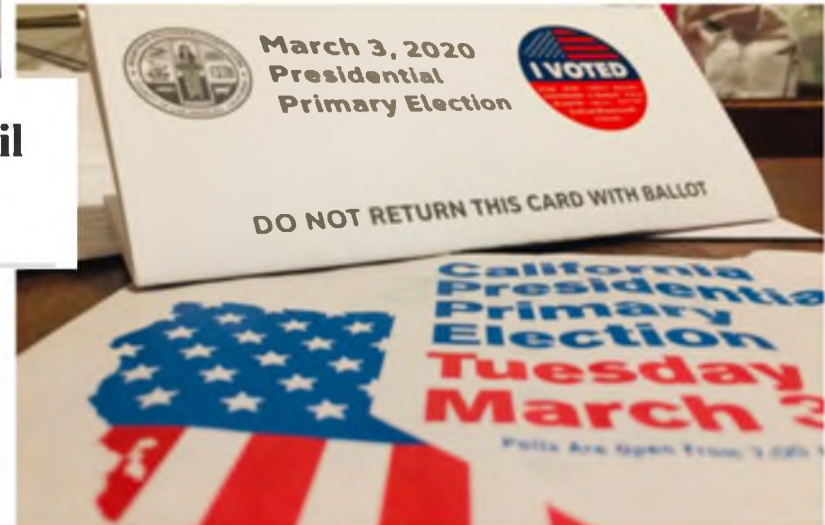
By Erin Murphy Special to the Globe Observer · 4 hrs ago

COVID-19 Crisis Makes Reformers All In for Vote-by-Mail



The Presidential Election In November May Be Held At Your Mailbox Thanks To COVID-19

BY LIBBY DENKMANN IN NEWS ON MARCH 24, 2020 1:40 PM



[illegible]



Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate ✓
@IowaSOS

Here's an official breakdown of the June 2nd primary election, by party. #BeAVoter



Official June 2nd Primary Election Turnout Report

Total voters
531,131

D - 282,754
(82.5% voted absentee)

R - 248,377
(71.6% voted absentee)



Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate ✓ @IowaSOS · Jun 2

We have surpassed the all-time turnout record for a June primary, with more than 487,000 ballots cast & more still coming in. The previous high in Iowa was 449,490 in 1994. My hats off to Iowa voters, poll workers and county auditors. Awesome job! #BeAVoter

GOOD JOB!

GIF



Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate
@IowaSOS



Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate @IowaSOS · Jun 2

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Results of Voter Education Campaign

- 98 percent of the ballots cast were voted by mail (either returned by mail or dropped off in person at a ballot drop-off location).
- Only 2 percent of the ballots were cast in person, either during the 14-day early voting period or on Election Day.
- Turnout was 480,855 (29.5 percent of active registered voters).
 - Most ballots ever cast for a primary election in Nevada.
 - As a percent of active registered voters, highest primary election turnout since 2010.
 - As a percent of active registered voters, highest presidential election year primary election turnout since 1996.



Wayne Thorley

Results of Voter Education Campaign

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- Only 2 percent of the ballot on Election Day.
- Turnout was 480,855 (29%)
 - Most ballots ever cast for
 - As a percent of active registered voters
 - As a percent of active registered voters since 1996.



cast by mail or dropped off in

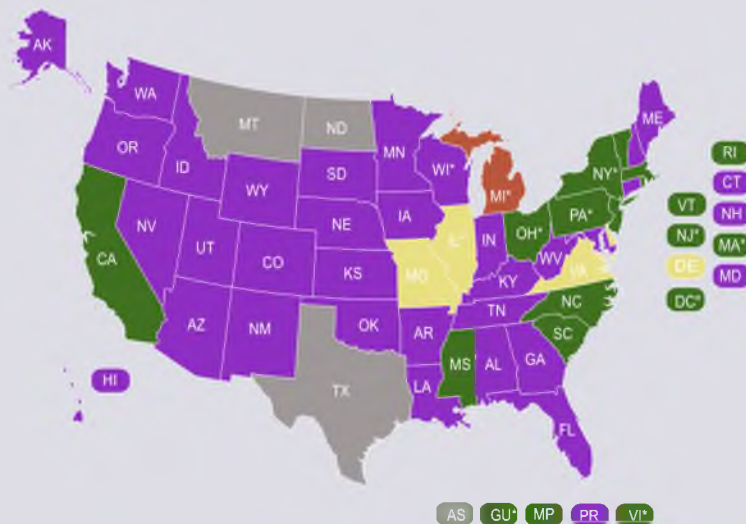
the 14-day early voting period or

turnout since 2010.

1 year primary election turnout

2020 State Legislative Session Calendar

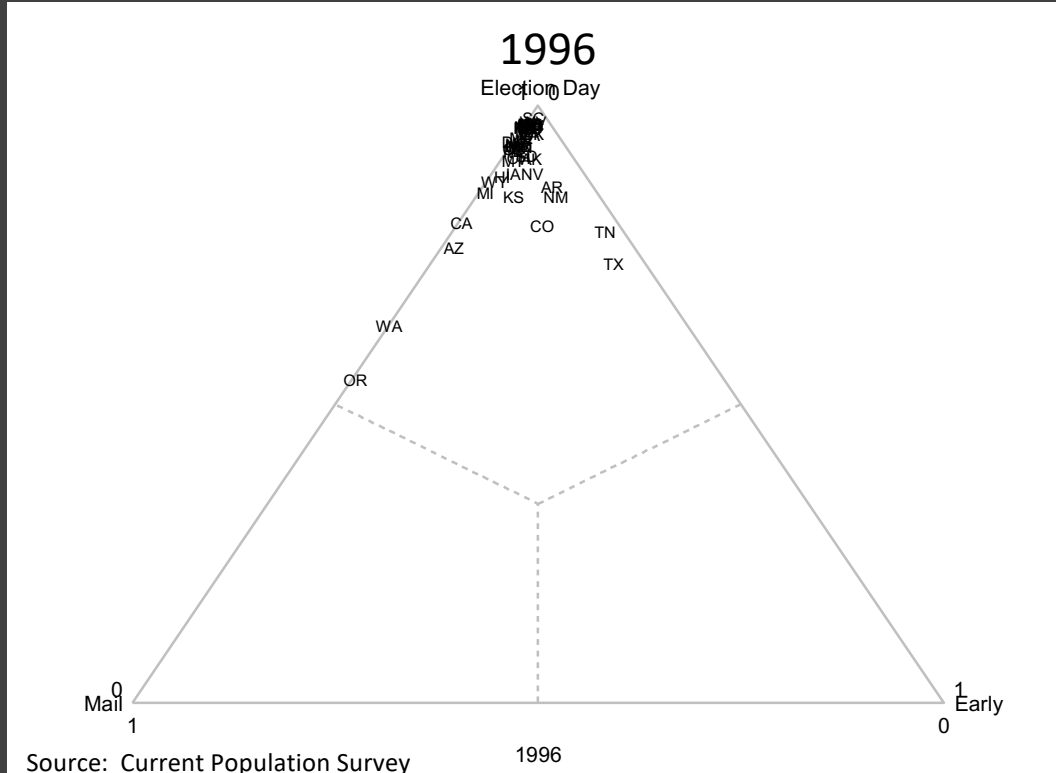
This map provides information on legislative sessions in each state, district and territory. You can also find information on regular session dates, and, if necessary, special session dates.

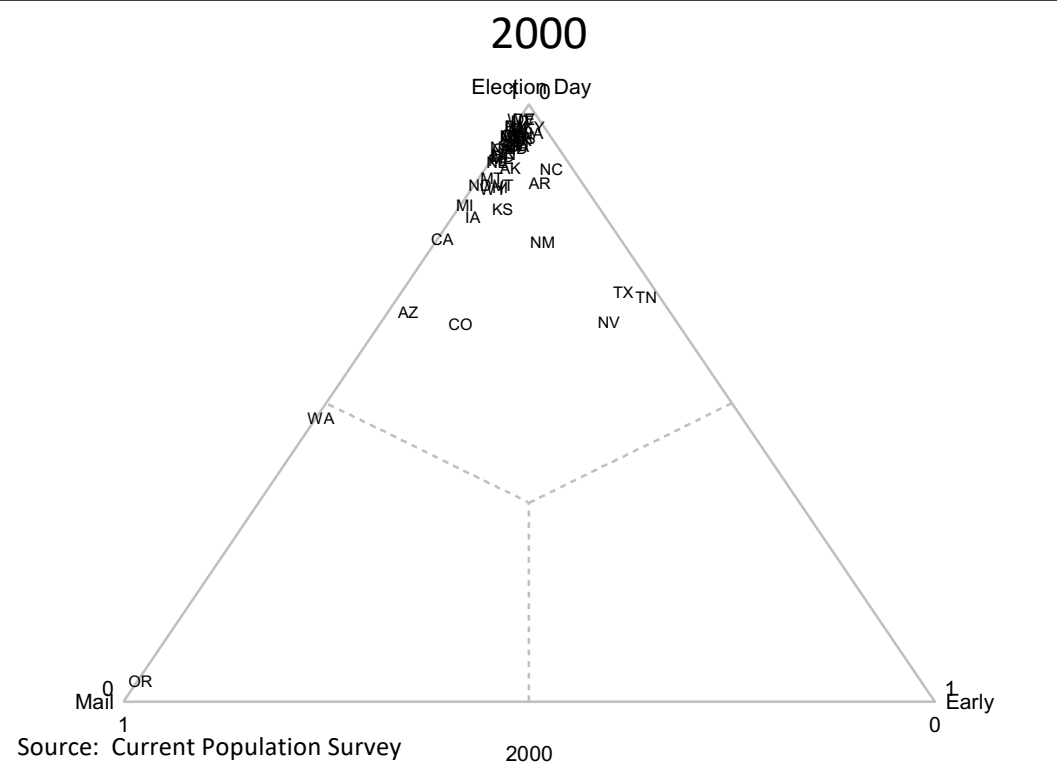


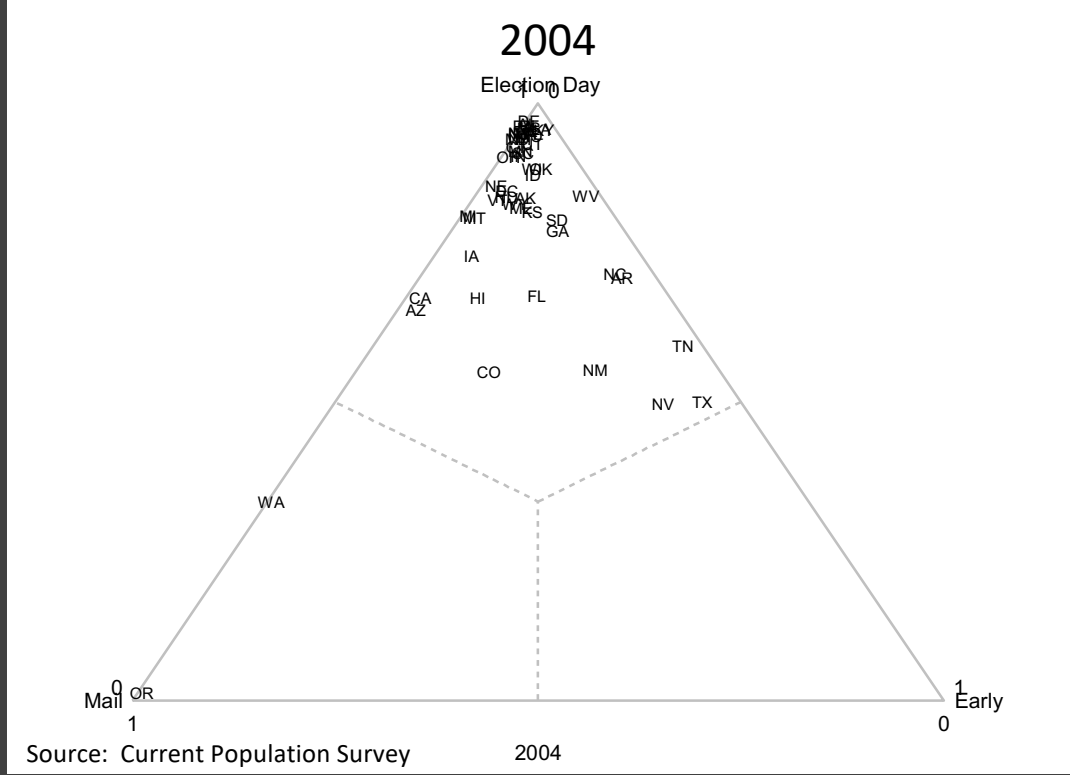


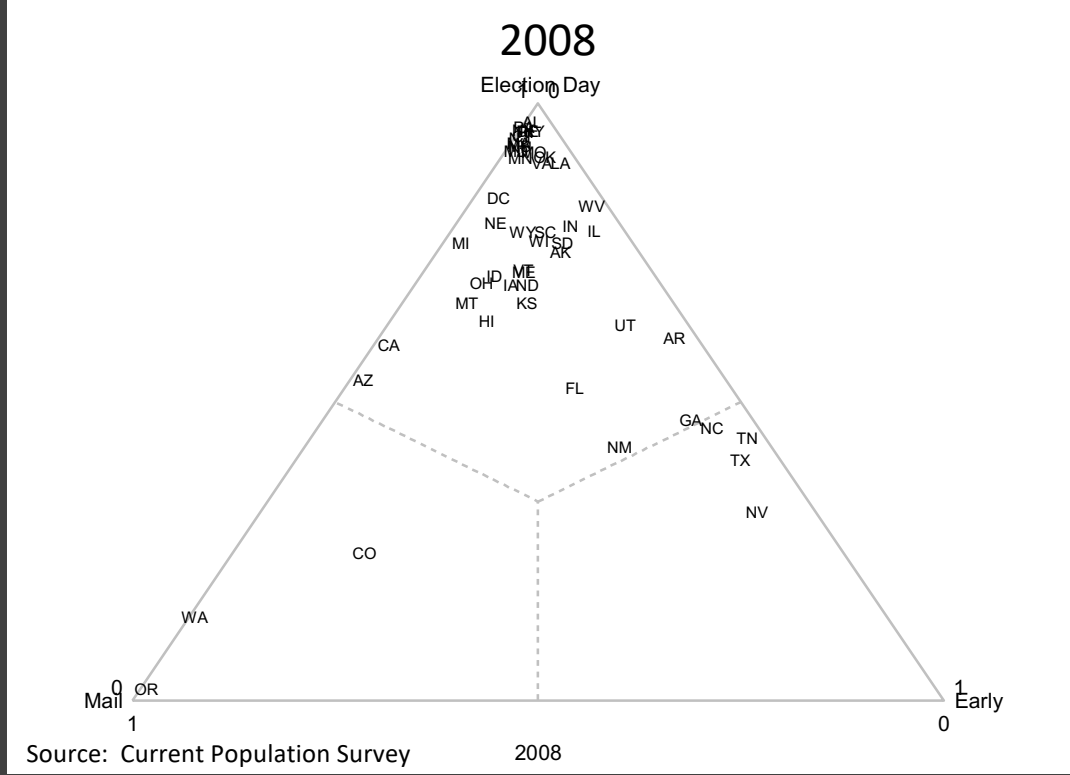
When given options in voting voters move away from Tuesday, Election Day as demonstrated by Charles Stewart, MIT--what I have named the “Snow Globe of Elections”.

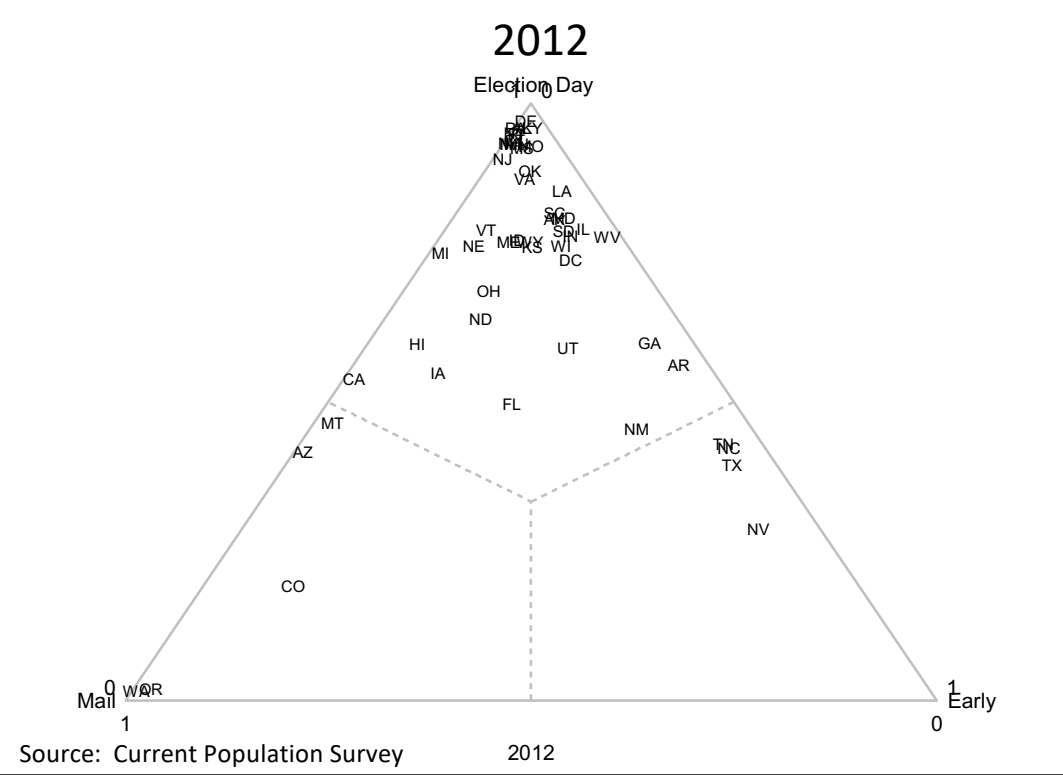






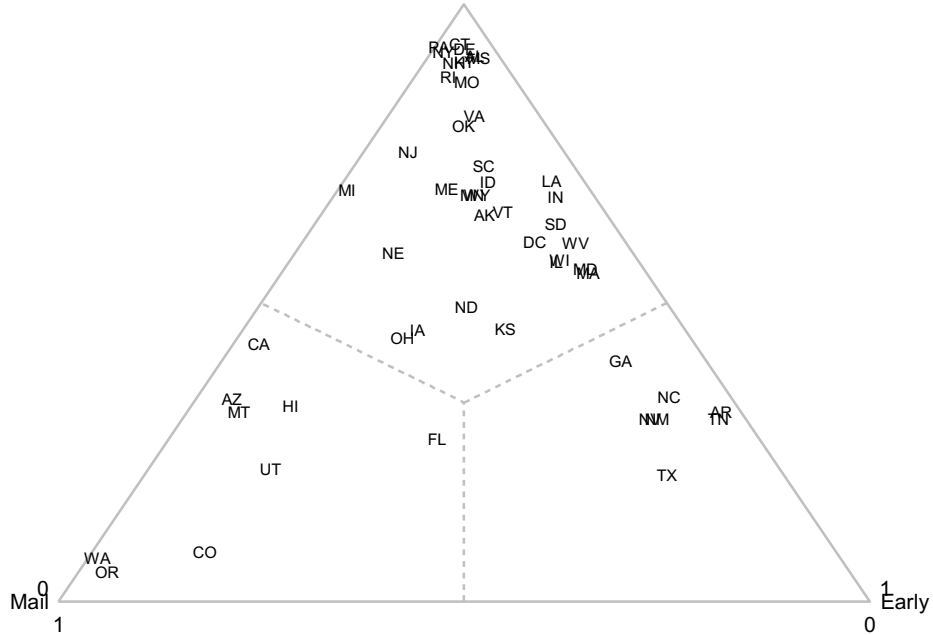






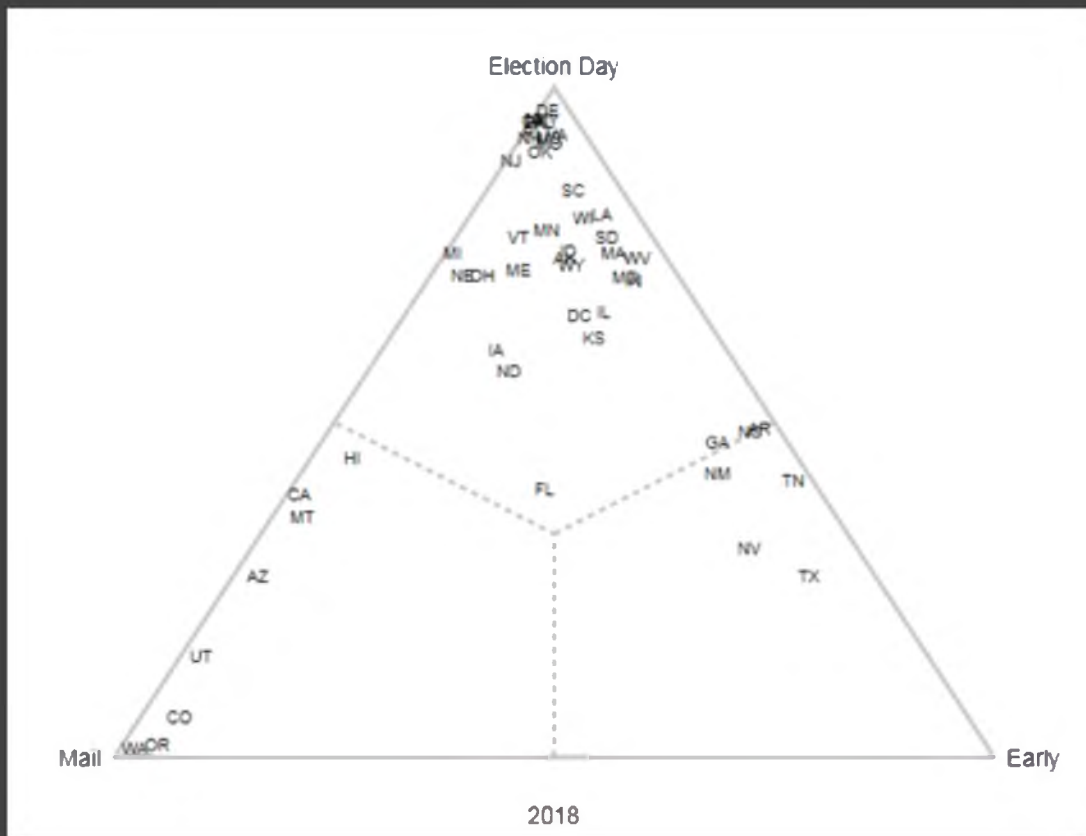
2016

Election Day



Source: SPAE

2016





Current Vote at Home Status by State – July 2019

States with blended policies in the Step 3 – 4 – 5 range.

UT 100% VAH in 2019
HI 100% in 2020
CA targeting 2022

NE has 11 counties on 100% VAH for 2020

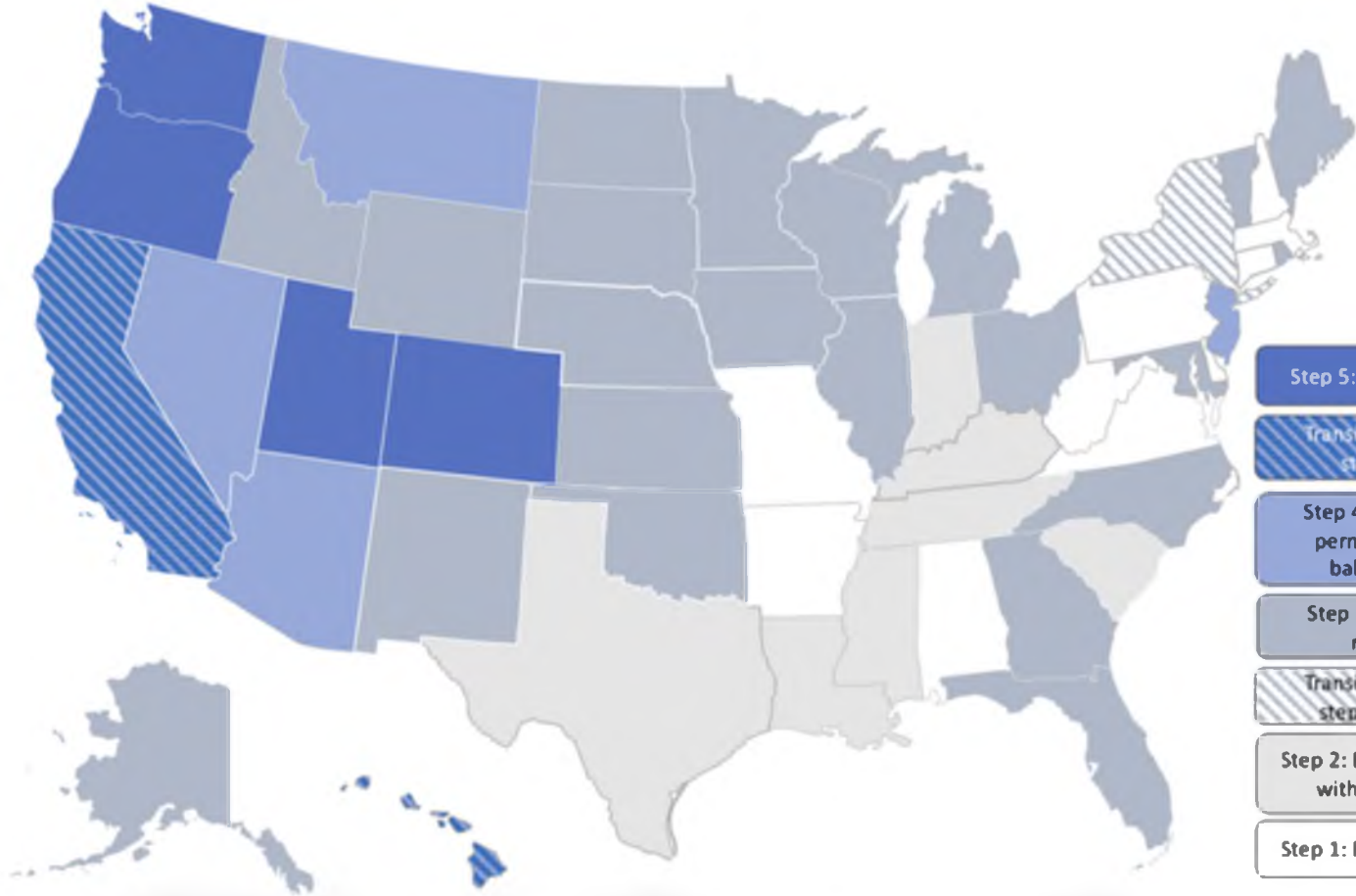
ND has 30 counties using 100% mailed-out ballot voting

OH sends absentee request forms to all 8M voters, every election

MI & MN have a permanent absentee list, but send request forms, not ballots, to voters

AL, KS, & WI offer permanent absentee status to voters with disabilities

DC offers Step 4 to its voters



Step 5: Vote at Home

Transitioning from
step 4 to 5

Step 4: No Excuse,
permanent mail
ballot option

Step 3: No excuse
required

Transitioning from
step 1 or 2 to 3

Step 2: Excuse required
with age waiver

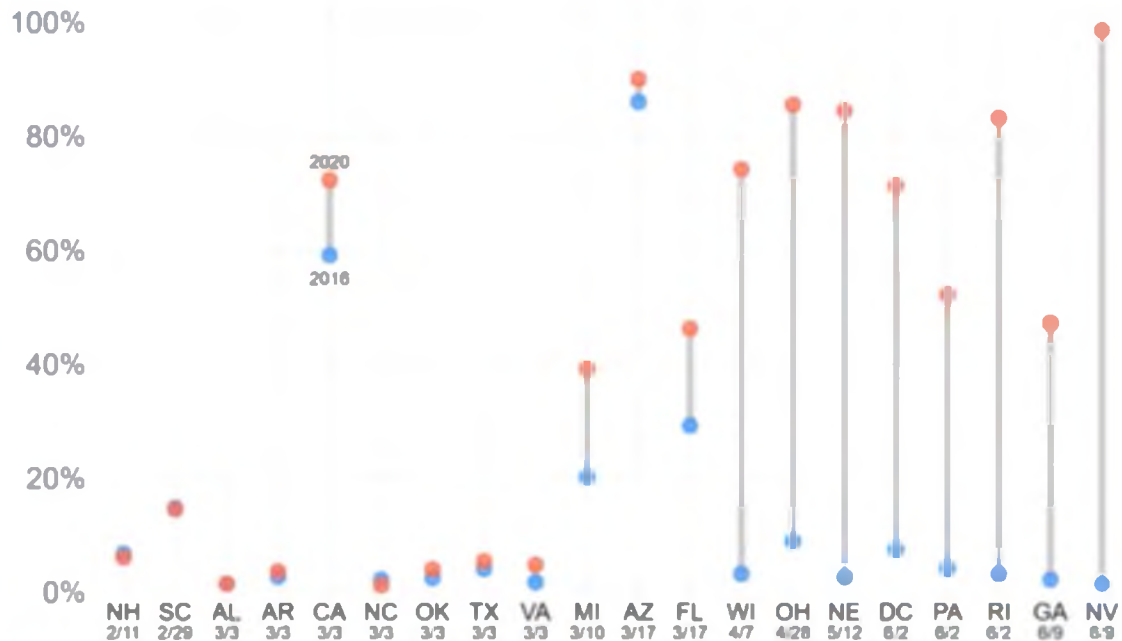
Step 1: Excuse required



Charles H Stewart

Mail Ballot Usage in 2016 and 2020 Primaries

Data as of 7/6/2020



Data graphed are the percentages of ballots cast by mail in the 2016 and 2020 primaries. Only states with primaries both years included. Data are incomplete and still being gathered.

Graph source: MIT Election Data and Science Lab



**To be clear:
Absentee voting is voting by mail!**

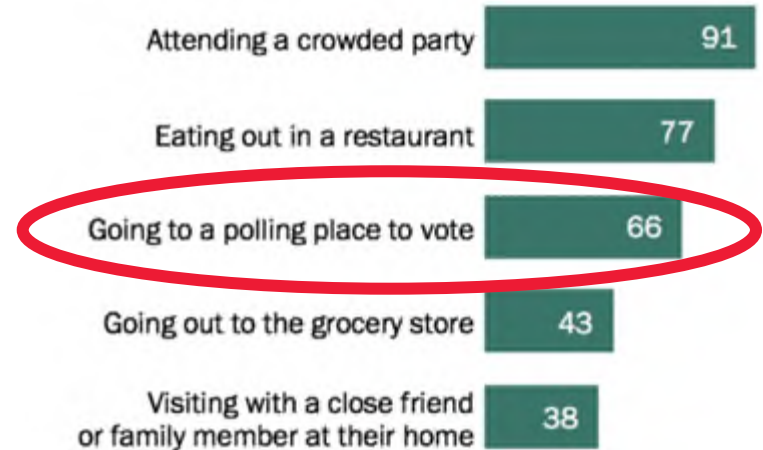
**Tens of millions of American
Voters have their ballots
handed to them by their USPS
Postal Carrier, not a
pollworker.**

**Make no assumptions.
Voters may behave
differently in 2020 (and
beyond).**



Amid coronavirus outbreak, most Americans uncomfortable going to a party, restaurant or polling place

*% saying that, given the current situation with the coronavirus outbreak, they would feel **uncomfortable** doing each of the following*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 19-24, 2020.
"Most Americans Say Coronavirus Outbreak Has Impacted Their Lives"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

CORONAVIRUS

Two-thirds of voters back vote-by-mail in November 2020

In a new NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll, 58 percent want election rules changed permanently.



Liberal Americans are more likely than conservative Americans to support voting by mail

Do you support or oppose voting by mail? This means that instead of going to the polls in-person on Election Day, voters would fill out their ballot at home and then mail it in (%)

Support Don't know Oppose



March 20 - 23, 2020

Source: YouGov • [Get the data](#) • Created with Datawrapper



Application



THIS
DOESN'T
WORK
WELL



Table 1. States with Ballot Request Deadlines Less Than Seven Days Before Election Day

Number of Days Before Election Day						
No Deadline	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days
NH	CT	—	OH	GA	AL	OK
ND	MA			LA	DE	WV
WA ¹¹	MN			MI	IL	
	MT			NM ✓	ME	
	SD			SC	OR	
	VT				WI	
	WY					

Source: [Vote.org](https://www.vote.org).

In thousands of election offices across the country THIS is how those applications are processed and fulfilled:



Travis Weipert 
@jcauditor

Thank you to all of the incredible temporary workers who helped us process a record number of absentee requests for the 6/2 Primary Election! You all understand the importance of having [#JohnsonCounty](#) vote safely at their homes, and we couldn't have done it without you!



Whereas jurisdictions with a lot of VBM tend to leverage technology to economize the process and gain efficiencies.



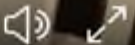
Jason Kravarik
@jasonkCNN


Cool behind-the-scenes look at [@kcelections](#) scanning machine as thousands of Washington State ballots make their way in on [#ElectionDay](#) [@CNN](#)




King County, WA

0:03 / 0:31





Ballot Delivery & Return



 **Justin Roebuck** @JustinRoebuck

Polls are now
have already
any time befo
<https://pbs.tv>

 Twitter Mar



Contra Costa Elections  @cocoelections · Mar 4

On Election Day we received ballots from 26 other counties--almost half the state. [#cocovote](#) [#CAvotes](#) 

All ballots are forwarded to their respective counties for processing.



smcvote @smcvote · Mar 4

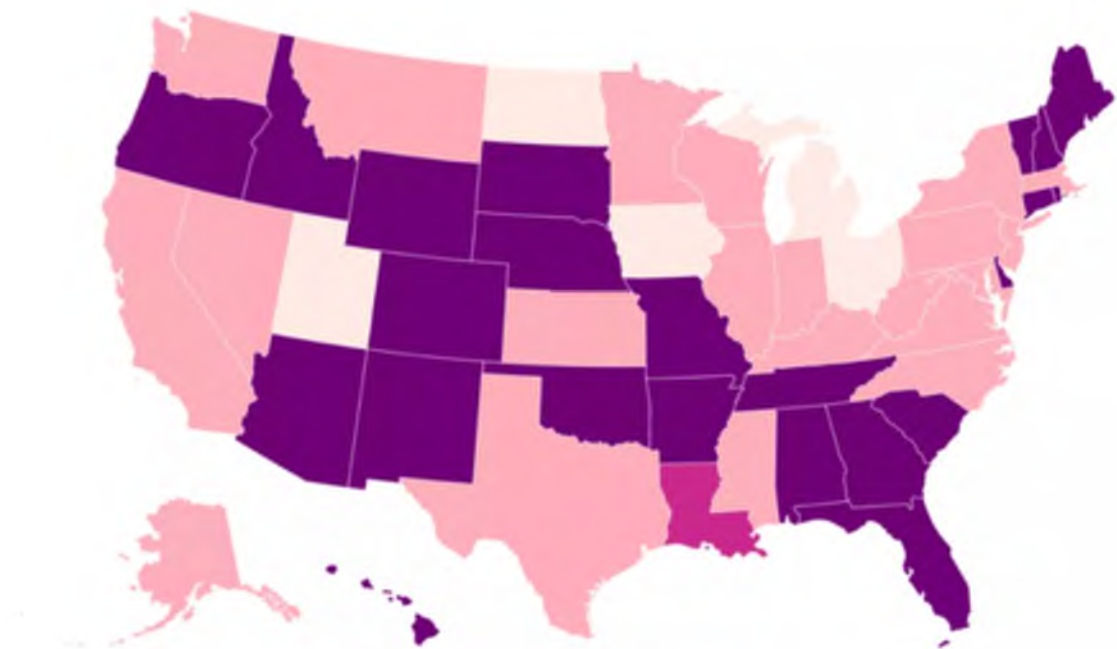
Look at all these beautiful ballots meant for other counties we received! Don't worry if you put yours in the wrong Drop Box - California counties work together to ensure your ballot ends up in the right place.

[#RainbowConnection](#)



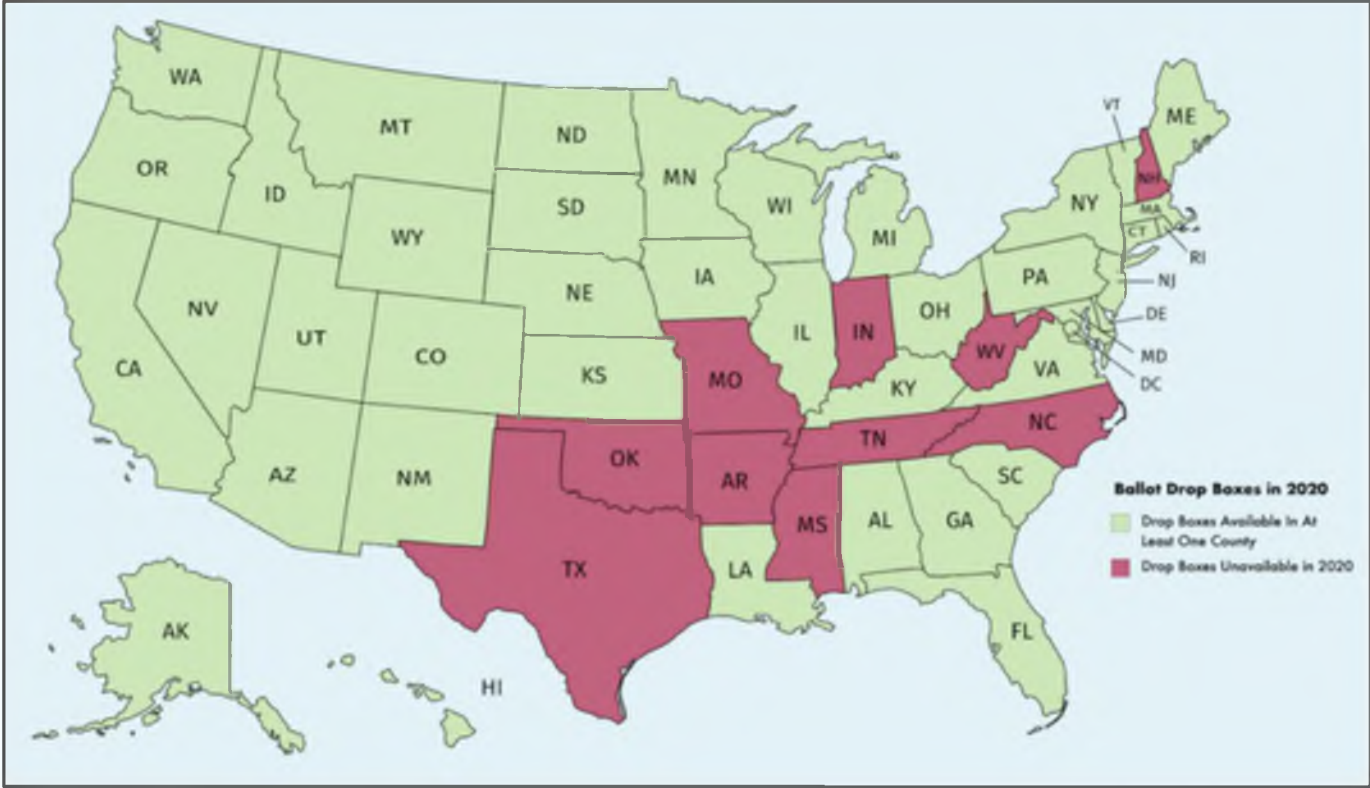
 **democracy
fund**

Strict mail ballot deadlines could be a problem this fall

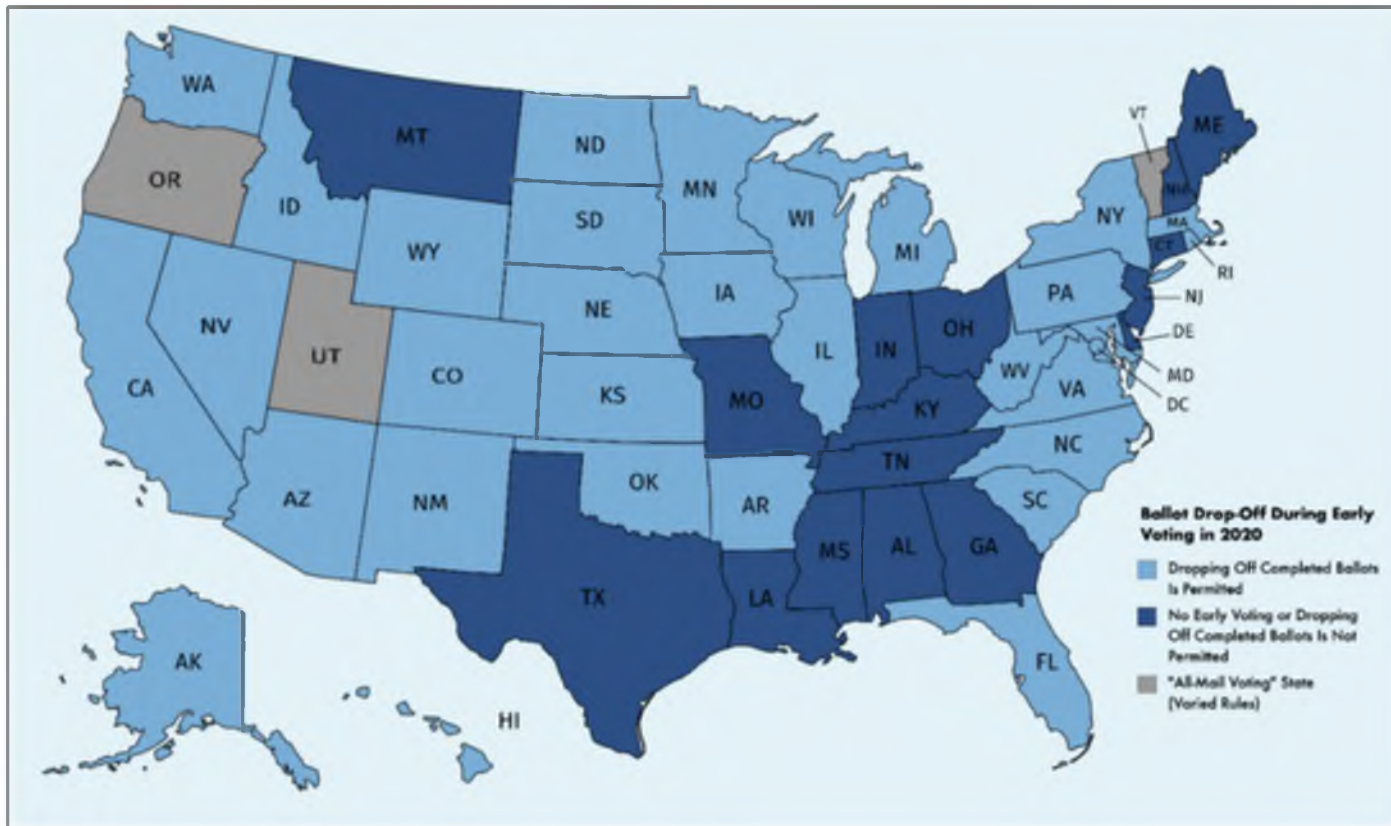


■ Receipt by Nov. 3 ■ Receipt by Nov. 2 ■ Postmark by Nov. 3
■ Postmark by Nov. 2

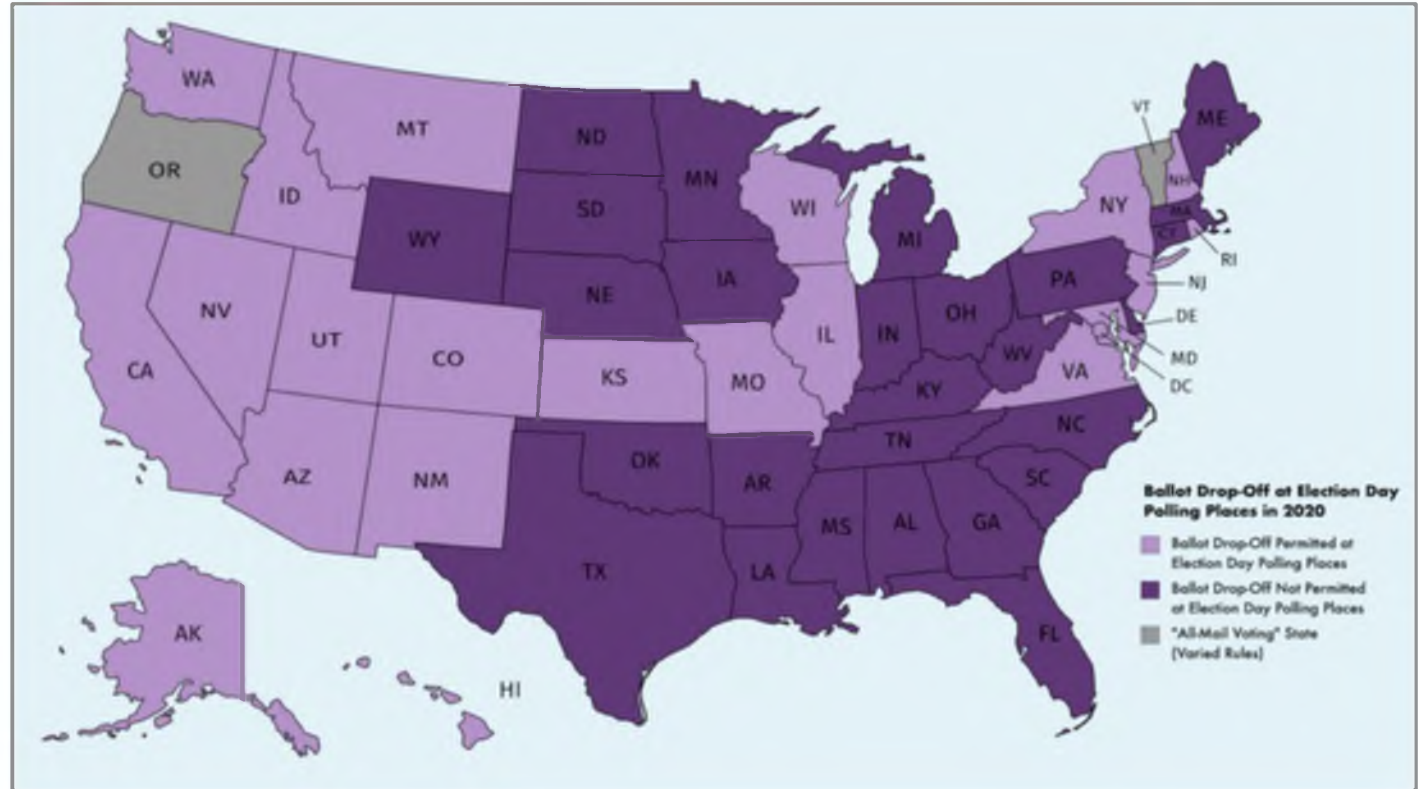
II. Ballot Drop Box Availability



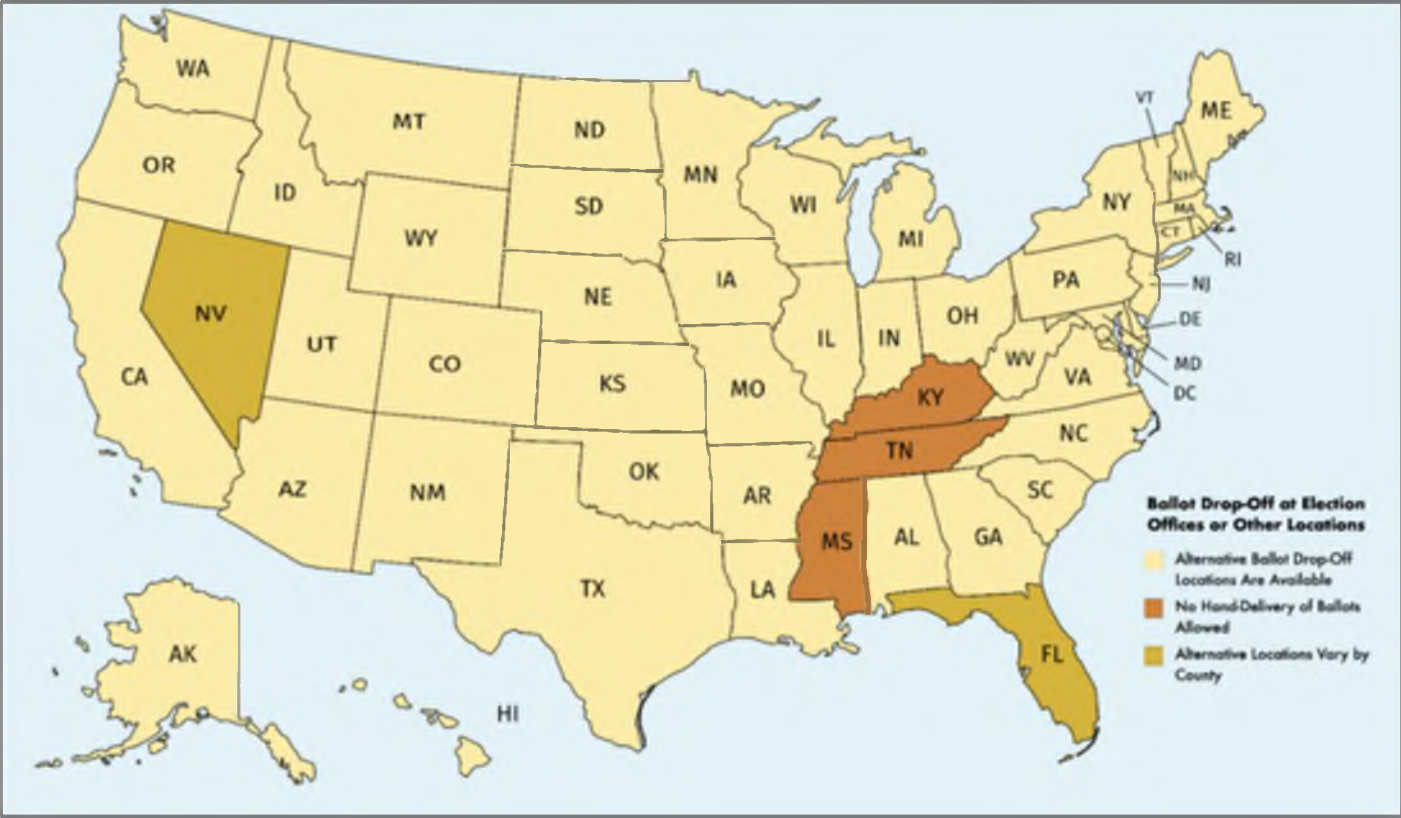
III. Ballot Drop-Off During Early Voting



IV. Ballot Drop-Off at Election Day Polling Places



V. Ballot Drop-Off at Election Offices or Other Locations





Early Action

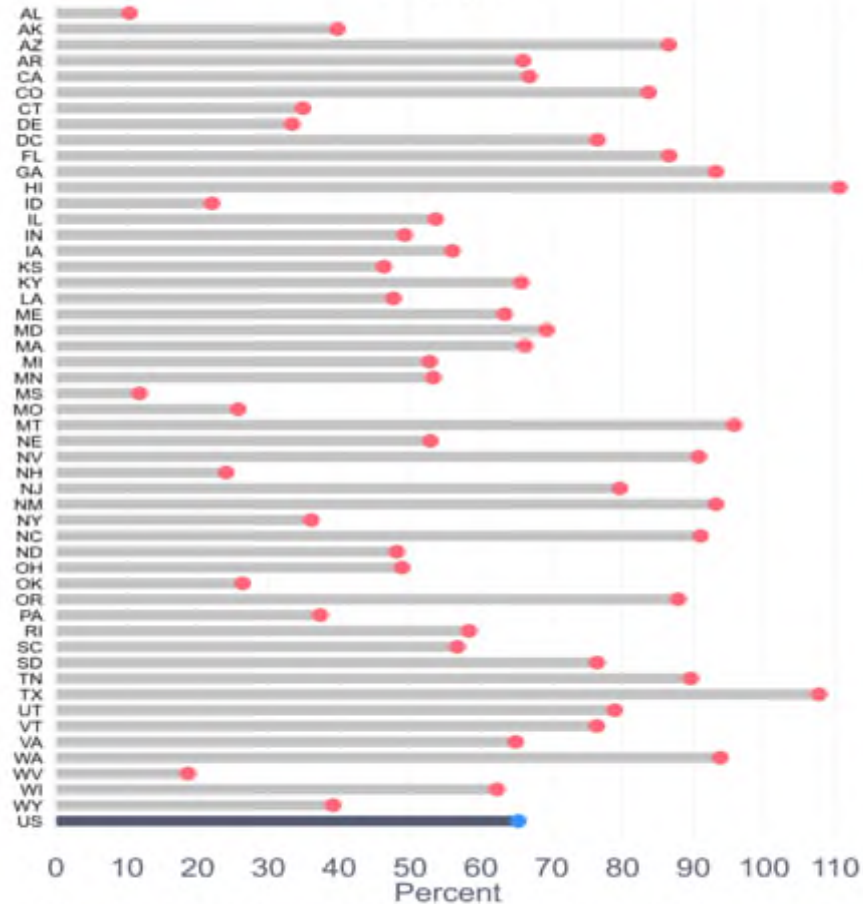


100M
VOTERS
BEFORE
NOVEMBER 3RD!



Advance Vote in 2020 as Percentage of Turnout in 2016

As of 10/31



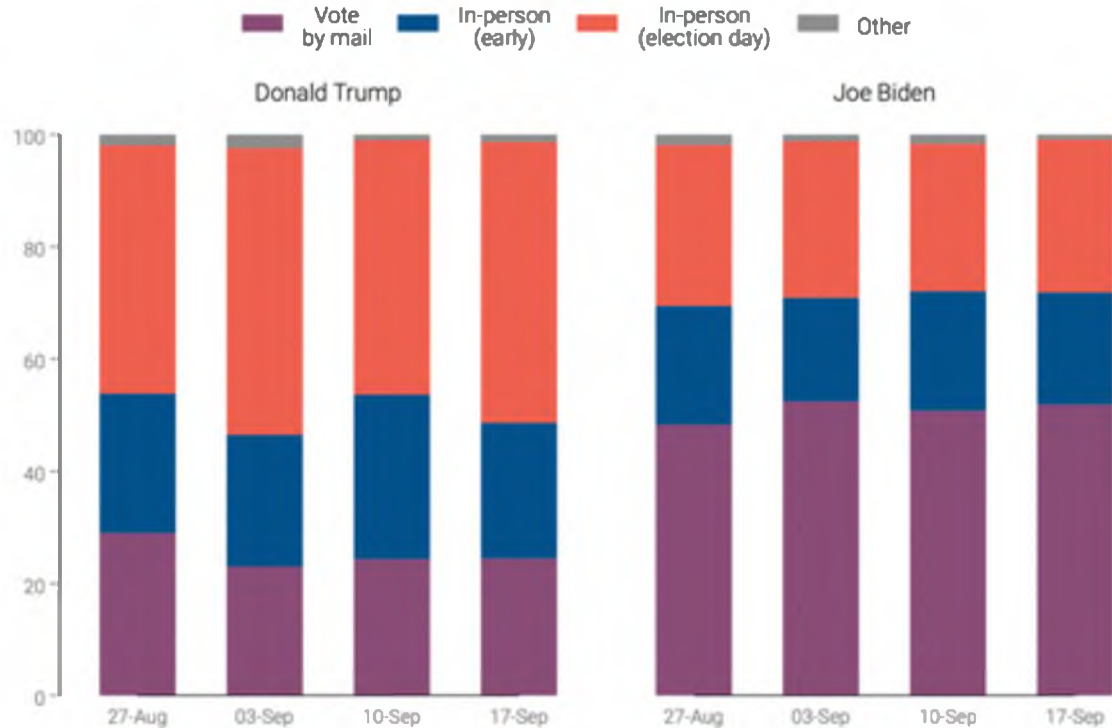
Note: Advance voting is in-person early voting plus mail ballots.

Data source: United States Elections Project

Graph source: MIT Election Data and Science Lab

How are Trump and Biden supporters planning to cast their ballots?

Voting method among registered voters who intend to vote



Source: Democracy Fund and UCLA Nationscape Survey. Data collected between August 27 and [date], 2020.

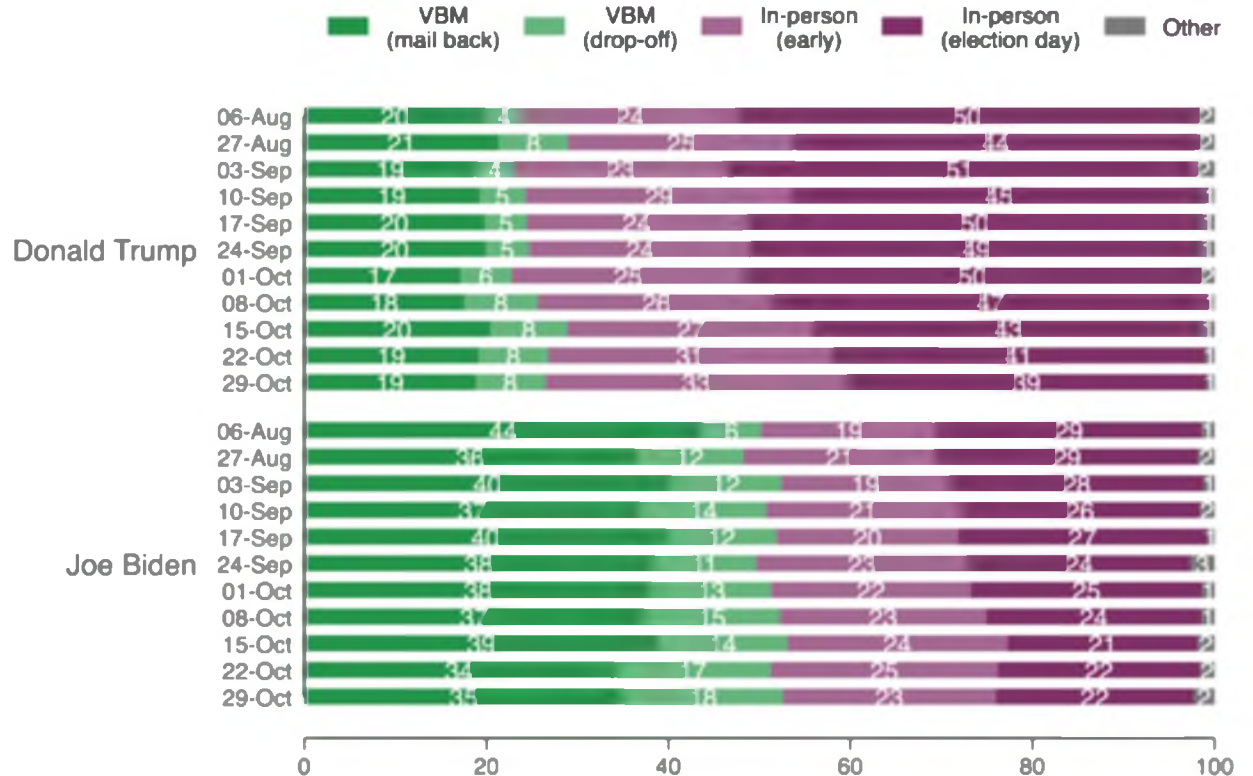
Question text: In the general election this November, how are you likely to cast your ballot? (1) vote before Election Day in-person; (2) vote on Election Day in-person; (3) receive my ballot through the mail and return it by mail; (4) receive my ballot through the mail and return it in-person; (5) Other; (6) I will not vote in this election. Those who reported that they already voted were asked a past tense version of the question.

Question #1:

In the general election this November, how are you likely to cast your ballot?

Question #2:

If the election for president were going to be held now and the Democratic nominee was Joe Biden and the Republican nominee was Donald Trump, would you vote for...





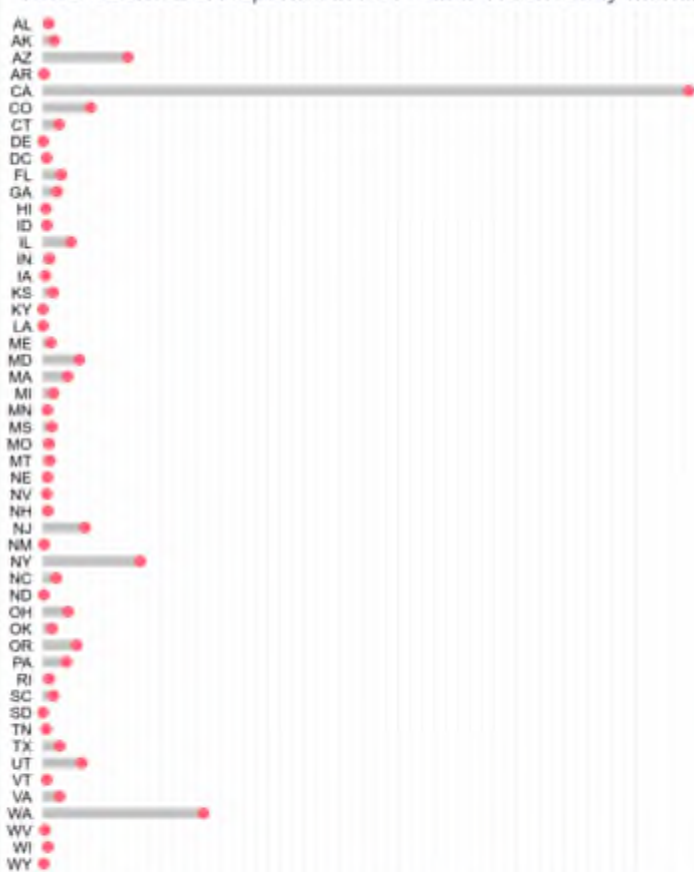
Results & Post Election



BALLOTS
COUNTED
AFTER
ELECTION
DAY 2016



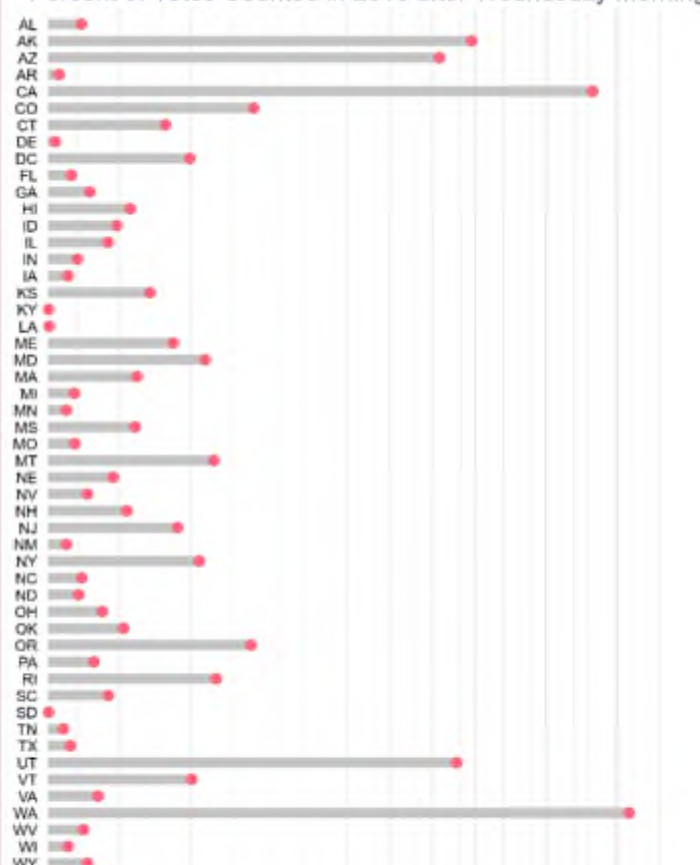
Votes Counted & Reported in 2016 after Wednesday Morning



0 1,000,000 2,000,000 3,000,000 4,000,000 5,000,000
Votes Counted after Wednesday Morning

Data sources: New York Times (Wednesday morning); Dave Leip's Presidential Atlas (Certified Results)
Graph source: MIT Election Data and Science Lab / Stanford-MIT Healthy Elections Project
Note: The data displayed is the raw difference in votes counted and reported for all candidates as of Wednesday morning following Election Day in 2016 and the numbers of votes counted and reported in final state certified totals.

Percent of Votes Counted in 2016 after Wednesday Morning



0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45
Percent

Data sources: New York Times (Wednesday morning); Dave Leip's Presidential Atlas (Certified Results)
Graph source: MIT Election Data and Science Lab / Stanford-MIT Healthy Elections Project
Note: The data displayed is the percentage of all votes in the final certified total that were counted and reported after Wednesday morning following Election Day in 2016.

**Elections*:
Fast
Cheap
Accurate**

***pick two.**



Montgomery County, MD

**900
workers in
Detroit,
Started
Nov 2**



Knowing It's Right, Part One

A Practical Guide to Risk-Limiting Audits

by Jonathan Blum



Knowing It's Right, Part Two

Risk-Limiting Audit Implementation Workbook

by Jonathan Blum



Knowing It's Right, Part Three

Planning and Conducting a Risk-Limiting Audit Pilot

by Jonathan Blum



“An audit is only as good as the paper trail”



**Happy State of Alaska
Ballot Counting Day!**



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