

THE★VOTER★PARTICIPATION★CENTER★

VPC Briefing

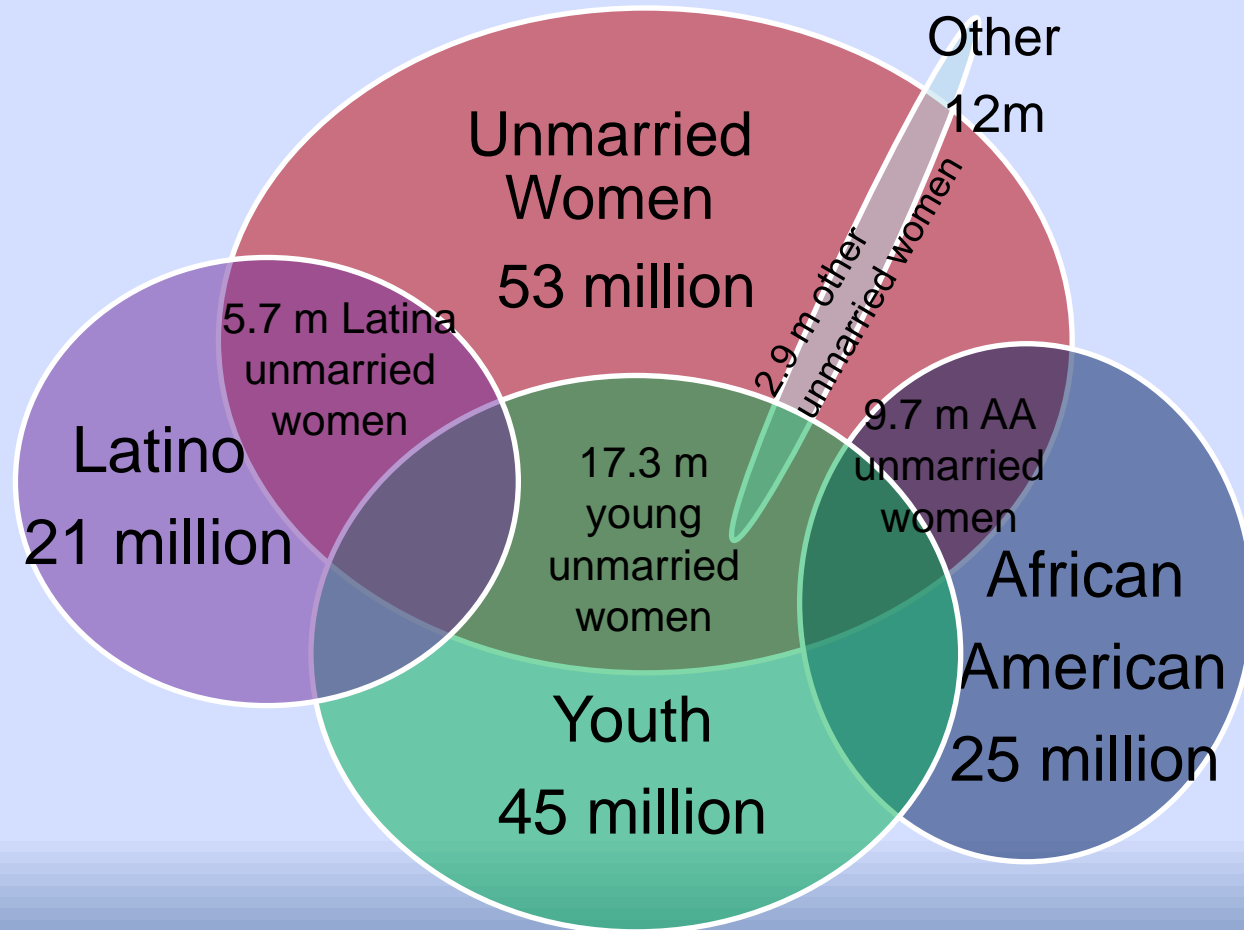
March 13, 2012

The Voter Participation Center's Focus

The **Rising American Electorate (RAE)** makes up **53%** of the population, and is composed of:
unmarried women,
people of color,
and **young people.**

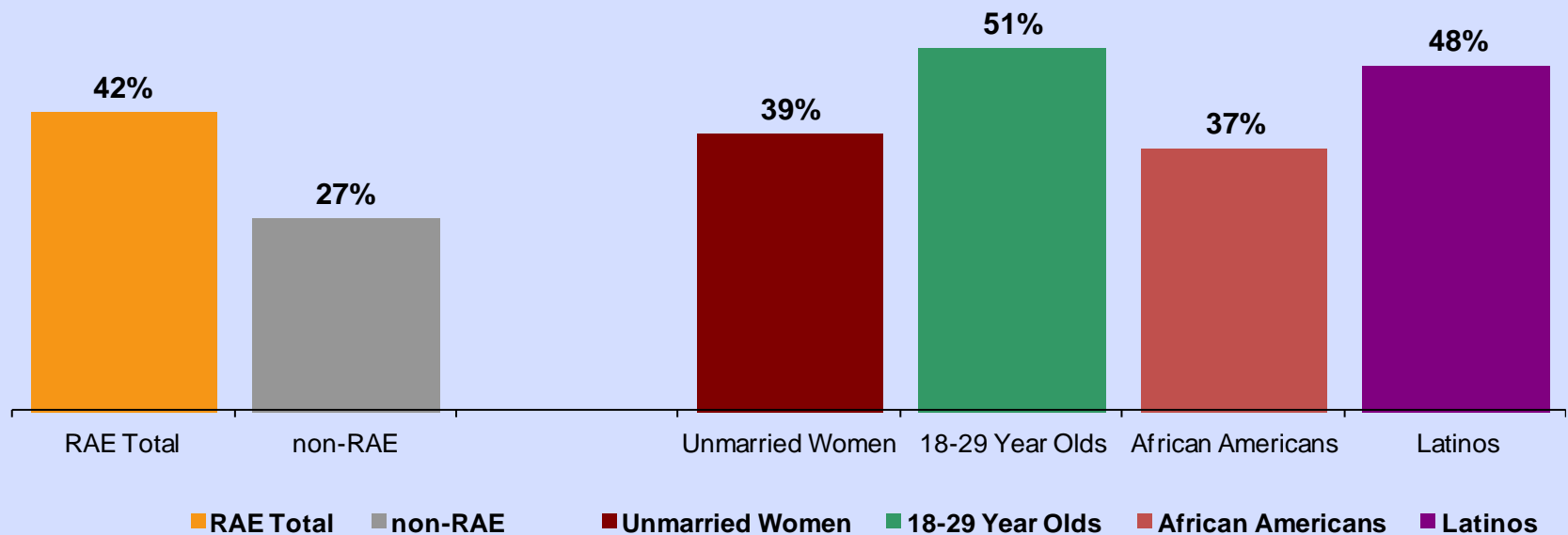
The Rising American Electorate (RAE) includes unmarried women, people of color and those under the age of 30. In total, they comprise the majority (53%), of the voting eligible population. Unmarried women are the largest segment of this group and drive its composition.

111 million eligible voters (52.8% of all eligible voters) are in the RAE



Currently, 47 million or 42% of the RAE is not registered to vote. That represents 63% of all unregistered Americans.

% Not Registered



% equals the number of that group who are NOT registered divided by the number in that group eligible to register and vote.

Quarterly Voter Registration Mailings: Importance & Findings

Why Quarterly Registration?

- **Birthday**: VPC experiments showed 17 year-olds about to turn 18 returned registration forms at **1.6x** the rate of 18 year-olds and **2.0x** the rate of 19 year-olds.
- **Movers**: The RAE is highly mobile, and recent movers are most likely to respond to a voter registration mailer.

VPC Registration Programs

- 1) Birthday Program: Mail registration amongst those who just turned 18 or are about to turn 18, unmarried women, people of color.
- 2) RAE Movers: Mail registration to those who were previously registered at an address in another state or county.
- 3) Voting Age Population (VAP): Mail registration to the voting age population of the RAE who are unregistered.

February 2012 Quarterly Voter Registration Mailing

- 1 million voter registration forms mailed to members of the RAE in 27 states.
- 26,336 returns to date and 8.3% response expected (84,000 returns total)
 - New 18th Birthday: 11.2% projected response
 - New VAP: 6.0% projected response
 - September Non-Responders: 4.7% projected response

February 2012 Experiments

Creative Tests:

1. Modified “second notice” creatives to see if we can increase response rate for repeated mailings.
2. Postage paid vs. recipient affixes stamp to send directly to county.
3. General social norms language vs. age-specific social norms language.

Layering Tests:

1. Automated and Live Phone Reminders in Wisconsin

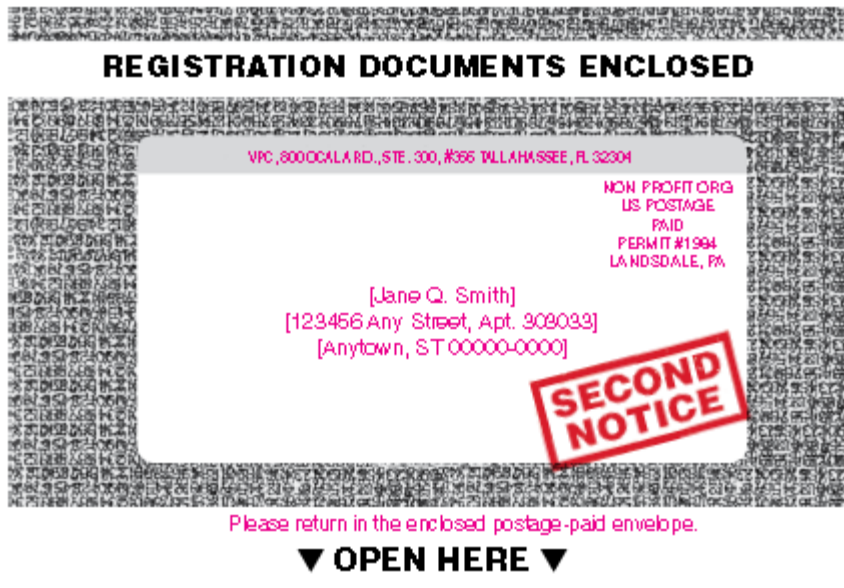
Early Results: Second Notice Improvements

Hypothesis: Does emphasizing repeated mailings improve response over re-sending the original mailer a second time? What about taking out “voting”-related language?

Original Form Design – 1.6% Returned

Test Version 1:

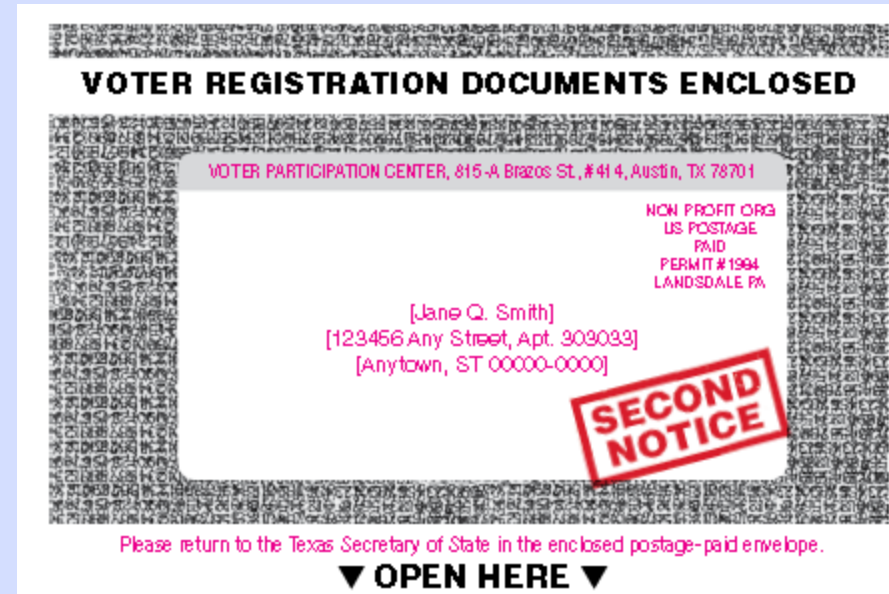
Second Notice, No Voting References



Good – 2.0% Returned

Test Version 2:

Second Notice, With Voting References



Best – 2.4% Returned
(50% Improvement!)

Early Results: Impact of Free Postage

Goal: To better understand how postage-paid reply envelopes increase response, and to see if a local county return address could provide a similar boost without the substantial costs of free postage (administrative, legal, and financial).

Current Return Rates:

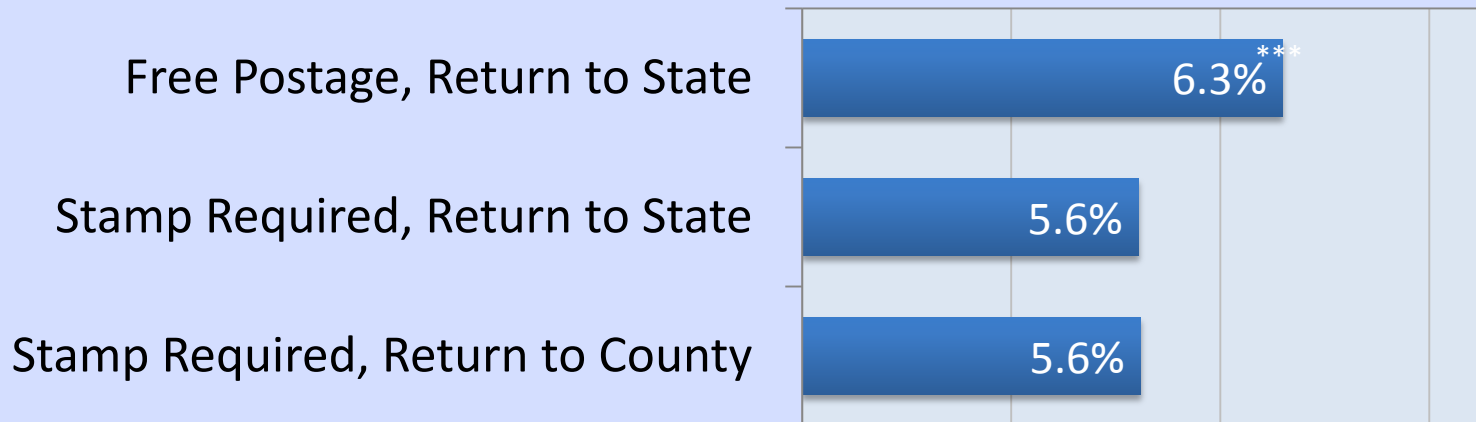
(n=98,758)

4.0%

5.0%

6.0%

7.0%



Conclusion: Free postage increases response by +0.7%, or a 12 percentage point gain. This corresponds to \$6-\$7 for an additional returned application.

Early Results: Impact of Social Norms

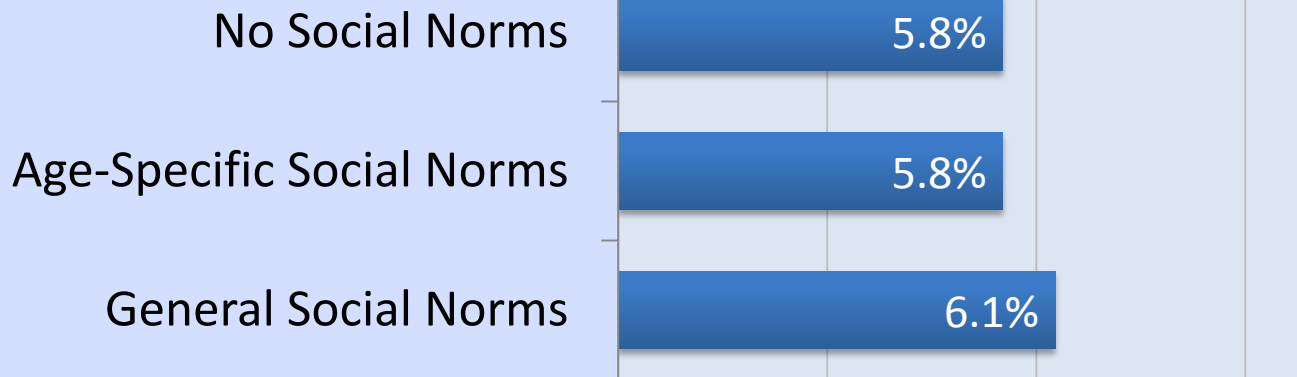
Goal: Building on Sept. 2011 results, re-test social normative language that is either general or customized to a target demographic (18th birthday).

Social Norms = “We are tracking the level of voter registration in your neighborhood...”

Current Return Rates:

(n=39,901)

4.0% 5.0% 6.0% 7.0%



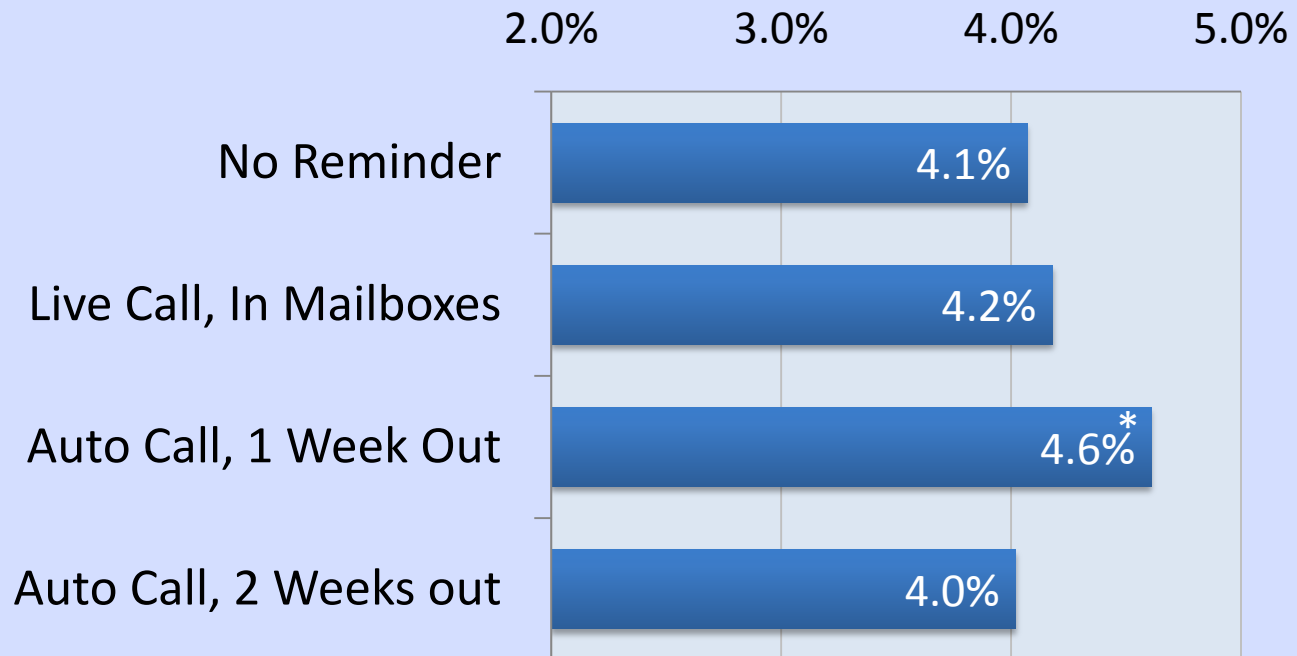
Conclusion: While not statistically significant, the results suggest that the general social norms is slightly more effective than the age-specific language or removing social norms entirely.

Early Results: Phone Reminders for Voter Registration

Goal: Continue to examine the impact of live and automated phone reminders to individuals who are sent voter reg. mailings.

Current Return Rates:

(n=51,257)



Conclusion: Automated reminders one week after receipt may be the sweet spot for motivating procrastinators to send in the form.

* $p < 0.05$

Where we go from here...

2012 Mailings Timeline

- **June-** Quarterly Registration Mailing
Goal: 7 million pieces mailed; 406k voters registered
- **August-** Quarterly Registration Mailing
Goal: 9 million pieces mailed; 522k voters registered