

MEDIA RELEASE: Asian American Voters Backed Clinton Over Trump 75% to 19%, Election Eve Poll Shows
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WASHINGTON, DC – Despite the results of last night’s presidential election, the 2016 national Asian American Election Eve poll reveals that Asian Americans overwhelmingly voted for Hillary Clinton over Donald Trump, 75% to 19% – a significantly higher margin than was suggested by the exit polls. The survey also showed that 56% of Asian Americans now identify as Democrats, a marked jump from 49% in the same poll four years ago.

The full results of the 2016 Asian American Election Eve Poll are available [here](#), or view an infographic summarizing the topline results [here](#).

“At a time when many are looking for answers in the election outcome, the voting patterns of Asian Americans indicate that it is a community that has solidified itself as a staunchly progressive vote,” said **EunSook Lee, Director of the AAPI Civic Engagement Fund**. “2012 was not an anomaly. In 2016, they voted similarly to the Latino electorate and are not afraid to call themselves Democrats.”

This unique non-partisan poll surveyed 2,391 respondents from diverse Asian ethnic groups: Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Korean, Vietnamese, and Japanese American voters. Interviews were conducted in six languages, with all interviews completed in the language of preference of the respondents. The survey was sponsored by the AAPI Civic Engagement Fund, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the National Education Association (NEA).

“The whole purpose of a poll like this is to have credible, best-in-class data on how Asian Americans have voted,” said **Taeku Lee of Asian American Decisions**, the lead researcher for the survey. “2016 is another example of why we need these data, because once again, the national media exit poll numbers for Latinos and Asian Americans didn’t do it right and didn’t get it right. These exit polls show only 65% of Asian Americans voting for Clinton. Our poll — using representative sampling, multiple interview languages, and proper weighting — shows a more believable estimate of 76%.”

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are a growing electorate that is increasingly influential yet often ignored. AAPIs are the fastest-growing racial group in the U.S., with a population of more than 21 million. By 2040, one in every ten Americans will be AAPI, and the number of voters will double to 12 million. The voting-age population of AAPIs already exceeds 10% in seven states, including California.

The poll highlights the pressing need for more Asian American voter outreach and civic engagement, as the community is too often overlooked by campaigns, political parties, and civic organizations alike. The survey found that an incredible 57% of Asian American voters were not asked by any campaign, political party or organization to vote or to register to vote – and 84% of those who were reached were contacted in English.

In addition to revealing how Asian Americans voted in races for President, Senate, and Congress, the survey also revealed the issue priorities that influenced their voting decisions.

“The election eve poll showed that education remains a high priority for Asian American voters, who overwhelmingly backed more federal support for our public schools – including when it comes to raising teacher pay, reducing class sizes, and repairing crumbling schools,” said **Carrie Pugh, National Political Director of the National Education Association**. “In California, Asian Americans also formed a key part of the coalition that passed Proposition 55, which extended tax increases on the rich to fund education and healthcare.”

In California, the poll shows 79% of Asian Americans supporting Clinton, even higher than the national average of 75%, with high numbers of Asian Americans in the state reporting that Trump made them angry (72%) and afraid (64%).

“Roughly one out of every three Asian American voters nationwide lives in California – that’s 1.8 million Asian American voters in California alone,” said **Dan Ichinose, Director of the Demographic Research Project at Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles**. “This poll showed that Asian American voters in our state were particularly angry at Trump and afraid of the consequences of him being elected.”

Asian Americans still face significant barriers at the polls. 67% of Asian Americans are immigrants born outside of the U.S., many of whom are first-time voters with limited English proficiency. Many are asked for additional voter identification, are segregated from other voters, and have to use polling locations without any available language assistance.

“Despite attempts by several states to restrict the right to vote, we are glad that Asian American voter turnout was high in the 2016 elections,” said **Margaret Fung, Executive Director of the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)**, a New York-based national organization. “AALDEF has conducted nonpartisan exit polls of Asian American voters since 1988, and we surveyed close to 14,500 Asian American voters in 14 states on Election Day in 2016. We hope that in addition to the Asian American Election Eve Poll results, more detailed information about Asian American voting patterns and preferences is reported out by media outlets this year.”

“Despite the results of last night’s election, this poll shows that the Asian American electorate is quickly becoming a significant factor in national elections, and only underscores the need for progressives to invest in more research on AAPI voters,” said **Jill Hanauer, President of Project New America**. “Like Latinos, AAPI voters are not monolithic, and both parties will need to better understand the community if they want to tap into the unrealized potential of this growing electorate moving forward.”

AAPI Civic Engagement Fund

The American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Civic Engagement Fund is a national initiative established in 2014 to instill a culture of year-round civic engagement in local AAPI communities across the country. We were formed in response to a longstanding need to increase the participation and influence of AAPIs, as a part of the New American Majority, in all facets of American civic life.

