EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NATIONAL TURNOUT

Voter turnout exceeded 2012 at a level consistent with the last three presidential elections.

- 60.2% of the nation’s 231 million eligible voters cast ballots, according to ballots counted and certified by state election boards, compared to 58.6% turnout in 2012.
- Four in ten eligible voters didn’t vote. Among the most common reasons voters cite for not voting are a lack of competition and meaningful choices on the ballot or problems with their voter registration or getting to the polls.

STATE TURNOUT RANKINGS

The two factors that consistently correlate with higher voter participation are the ability to fix a registration issue when you vote and living in a battleground state.

Same Day Voter Registration

- The six highest-ranking states offered same day voter registration (SDR), which allows voters to register or fix a registration problem when they vote (In order – Minnesota, Maine, New Hampshire, Colorado, Wisconsin and Iowa).
- Voter turnout in states with SDR was seven points higher than states without the option, consistent with every election since the policy was first introduced in the 1970s.
- The significant turnout advantage of SDR states has persisted even as four new states (Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois and Maryland) implemented the policy since the 2012 election.

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR)

- Oregon, the first state to implement AVR, saw the highest turnout increase of any state over 2012 – 4.1 percentage points. AVR pro-actively registers citizens at DMV transactions.
Battleground States

- Five of the six highest-turnout states, and 12 of the top 20, were battleground states.
- Voter turnout in contested battleground states has been five to eight percentage points higher than in non-battleground states in each of the last five presidential elections.
- The campaigns dedicated 95% of their ad spending and 99% of campaign visits to the 14 battleground states – well over half going to just four states – FL, NC, OH and PA.
- The voices of 65% of the electorate – 147 million voters – were left on the sidelines from determining the presidency – living in the 36 non-battleground states whose electoral votes were pre-ordained. That, in fact, is largely what happened.
- Latino (75%) and Asian American voters (81%) lived disproportionately outside swing states and, as a result, experienced 10-16 percentage points less contact than their swing state counterparts and a reduced voice in the election of the president.

Lowest Ranking States

- Hawaii, West Virginia, Texas, Tennessee, and Arkansas were at the bottom five for the third consecutive presidential election. None were battleground states. All five cut off the ability to register or update a registration three to four weeks before Election Day.
- National turnout was reduced by 1.5 percentage points, due to low turnout in three of the four most populous states – California, New York and Texas.

**RECORD LOW COMPETITION IN U.S. HOUSE RACES**

The lack of competition in Congressional races compounds the lack of competition in non-battleground states in the presidential race.

- In the end, even fewer House seats – 33 – ended up being competitive with a margin of victory between the top two candidates of 10% or less. 73% of House races were won by landslide margins of victory – over 20%.