



Evaluating Latino Voter Mobilization in LA County: June 2018

A Report by the Latino Policy & Politics Initiative at UCLA

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Los Angeles County has the largest population of any California jurisdiction and is also home to a substantial proportion of the state's Latino registered voters. According to the political data firm PDI, there are approximately 1.7 million Latino registered voters in the county. The June 5, 2018 California Primary Election provides an important frame to understand the voting patterns of Latino registered voters in Los Angeles County.

In this report we examine voting patterns across different regions within Los Angeles County to assess where Latino vote growth was the strongest, and where it might have been flat. In a [previous report](#) we noted that countywide, the Latino vote increased by about 75% in 2018 compared to 2014. Now, we take a closer look at the Latino vote in Los Angeles, and in particular we evaluate the non-partisan voter mobilization campaign conducted by AltaMed.

Methodology: LPPI researchers compared the number of ballots cast in the June 2014 primary to the number of ballots cast in the June 2018 primary to calculate a rate of change across the two comparable elections. In total we examined more than 3,600 precincts across the county and sorted each precinct by its geographical region within L.A. County as well as the percent of all voters who were Latino. We also focus in on the voter mobilization campaign by AltaMed. Overall, AltaMed contacted 65,090 low propensity voters and requested them to confirm their intent to vote, of which 16,363 did. Second and third contacts reached 9,247 low propensity voters in 5,329 households across 96 precincts the weekend prior to the election and then 4,952 people in 2,740 households across 45 precincts on Election Day. In full, the AltaMed study targeted 125 precincts including the Election Day, election weekend, and 3-week long voter contact project. The majority of these voters live in the South East and East Side regions of Los Angeles County. We leveraged the precinct location data to examine the effectiveness of AltaMed's Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts.

Background on AltaMed: AltaMed is the largest nonprofit Federally Qualified Health Center in California, and among the top five in the nation. Their mission statement professes that a community's health is indivisible from its prosperity. Understandably, there are many factors that affect the quality of life of and access to care. Despite the increases in access to health care in the Latino community as a result of the Affordable Care Act (Doty and Collins 2017), access to health care is still a major issue. AltaMed leaders have responded by launching a non-partisan Get-Out-The-Vote pilot campaign targeting low propensity Latino Voters in East Los Angeles, South East Los Angeles and Boyle Heights. This program aims to inform, empower and mobilize patients and employees to protect access to their health care through the power of their vote. A portion of this pilot program was funded by *Cívica Latino*, a non-partisan group whose purpose is to increase Latino community engagement and voter participation in California.

AltaMed carried out their GOTV program independent of UCLA researchers, and after the June 2018 primary was complete, researcher staff from LPPI learned of the AltaMed program and prepared a post-hoc evaluation of the Latino vote.

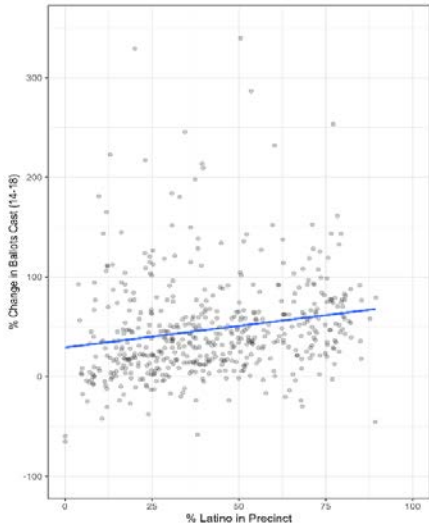
We begin our analysis with a presentation of change in votes cast from June 2014 to June 2018, broken out by 8 regions across Los Angeles. Within each region we sort precincts based on how many Latino voters they contain.

In the graphs shown on the next page, the x-axis or horizontal axis in each graph shows the percentage of Latinos in each precinct from 0 - 100. As you move along the x-axis from left to right, you are in areas that are more heavily Latino concentrated. The y-axis or vertical axis shows the % change in ballots cast between 2014 and 2018. The zero mark means that about the same number of ballots were cast in 2014 and 2018. Values below zero mean that more ballots were cast in 2014 than 2018 and values above zero indicate that more ballots were cast in 2018 compared to 2014. Each of the points (or dots) represent individual precincts and thus tell us two things: 1) the % increase in ballots cast between 2014 and 2018 and 2) the % Latino in that precinct. The **blue line** in each figure reports the overall average or best fit for turnout change. Lines with an upward slope mean that as the region has a higher percent of Latino voters, the percent change in ballots cast is greater than in precincts with fewer Latinos.

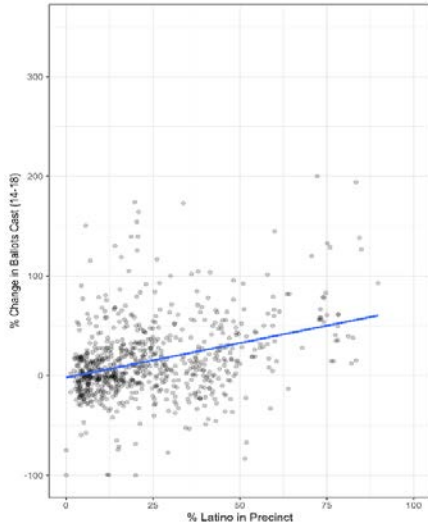
Examining the eight areas, across all regions in Los Angeles, there is a positive slope line. This means that across L.A. county, the number of ballots cast in 2018 compared to 2014 was higher, on average, in areas with more Latino voters. In particular, there are two regions which report some of the strongest results for increased ballots in 2018: South L.A. and South East L.A.

Increase in Vote June 2018: Regional Breakouts of LA County

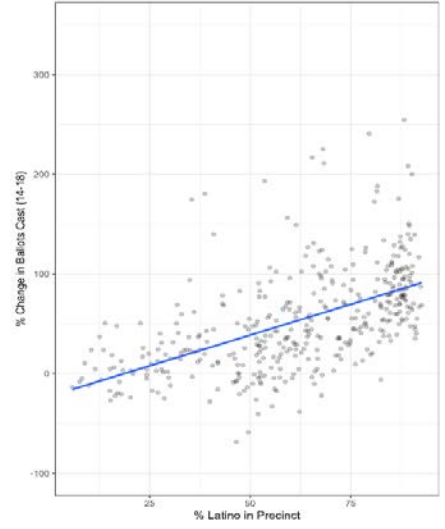
San Gabriel Valley



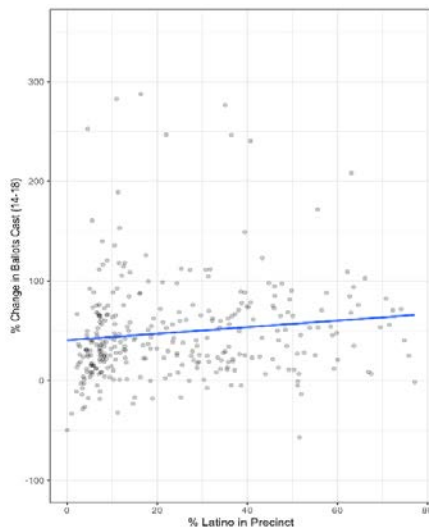
South Bay



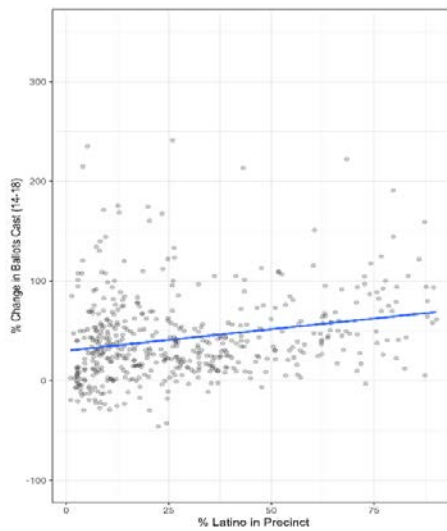
Southeast L.A.



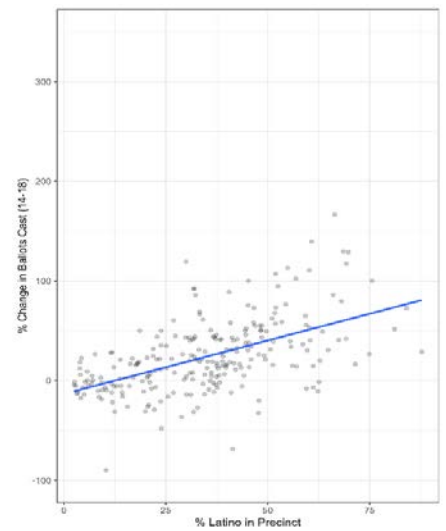
Central L.A.



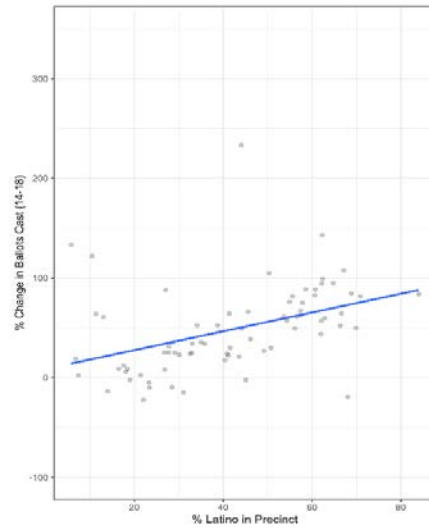
San Fernando



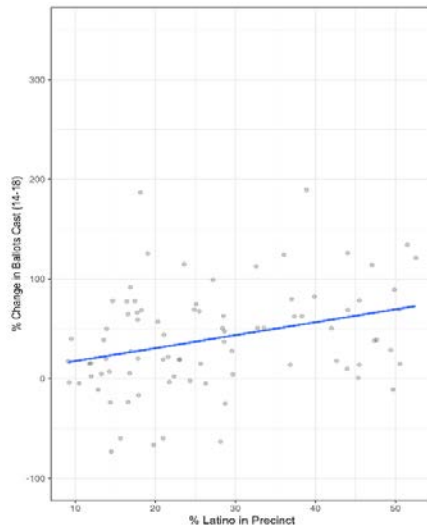
South L.A.

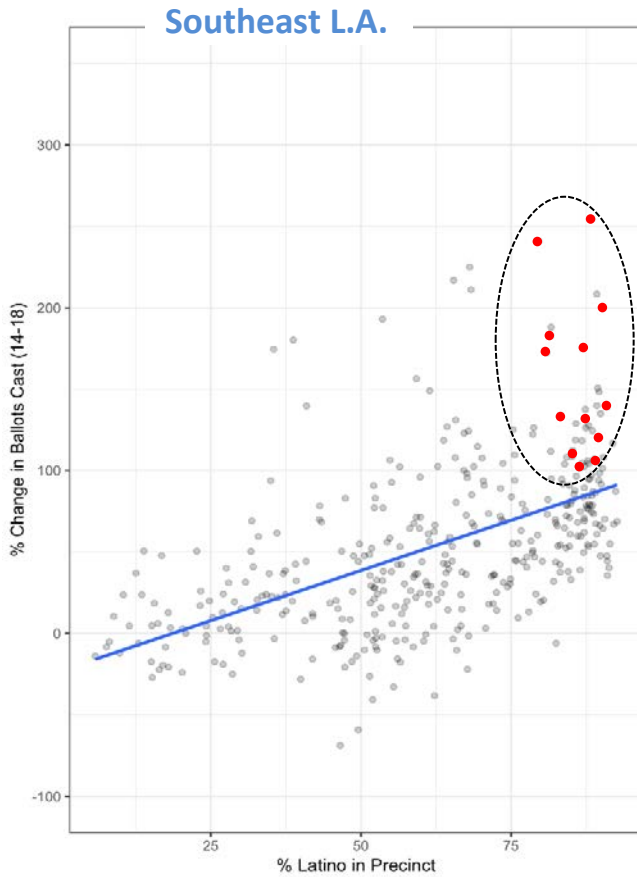


Antelope Valley



NE City of L.A.





The key takeaway across these graphs on the preceding page is the strong positive relationship between percent Latino in the precinct, and the increase in ballots cast between 2014 and 2018. This means that Latinos had the most active growth in 2018 relative to 2014 of any ethnic group in Los Angeles. The overall bump in Latino voting has been discussed widely in the press and by pundits, and is now confirmed here with strong evidence from the actual election results.

In particular, we can hone in on the precincts which had the highest increase in turnout from the 2014 to 2018 primary election. In this case, we have highlighted by **red dots**, a dozen precincts in the Southeast L.A. region which were a small part of the larger AltaMed voter mobilization program. These dozen precincts are all well above the average increase in ballots cast, suggesting the AltaMed program was quite successful in increasing voter turnout.

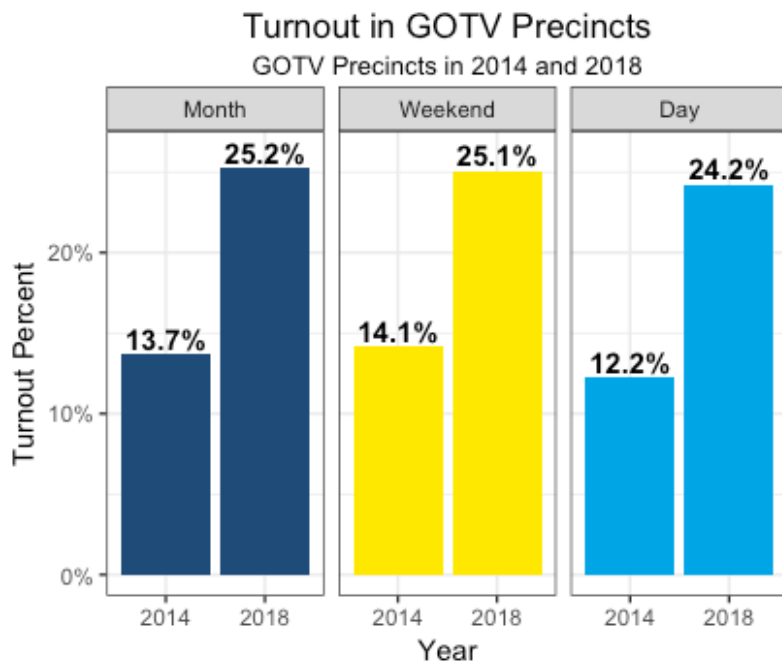
With that said, not all precincts are expected to have the exact same result in turnout change, and AltaMed was active in far more than the 12 precincts in red above – indeed they targeted 125 precincts and 65,090 voters in their program. Thus, we offer a complete analysis of all precincts covered by the AltaMed voter outreach campaign to examine the overall efficacy of the 2018 program.

Turnout in AltaMed Target Precincts

Methodology: Using the Month, Weekend, and Day of Election contact data provided by AltaMed, we were able to group the smaller precinct units up to the SRPREC level.¹ L.A. county reports their data at the SRPREC level so with this we were able to identify which precincts AltaMed targeted, and subsequently examine how turnout changed from the 2014 primary election. When examining turnout in non-contacted precincts, we selected precincts in the same geographic area, so only those voters who live in the same areas where AltaMed GOTV efforts were concentrated could be directly compared. In addition, we were careful to select precincts with similar demographics. Because the median percent of Latino registered voters in contacted precincts is 89, and the mean is 84, we compared the contacted precincts to non-contacted precincts that are predominantly Latino. This means the median percent Latino in these non-contacted precincts is 87.7 with a mean of 87.2 which ensures an apples-to-apples comparison.

Results: By identifying the precincts AltaMed targeted, we are able to compare them to the exact same precincts in 2014, when they were not targeted. Because the precincts are the same between 2014 and 2018, much of the change is likely due to AltaMed’s work in the area.

We begin by examining the overall turnout in the GOTV precincts. Here we see the three programs corresponding to AltaMed’s time based outreach. Some precincts were targeted 1 month before the election, some were targeted the weekend before the election, and some were targeted on Election Day. The first panel (in dark blue) shows that the turnout rate in 2014 was 13.7 % and in 2018 it was 25.2%. This corresponds to an 11.5 percentage point increase in turnout which accounts for an 84% increase over 2014, providing strong evidence that AltaMed’s targeting increased turnout when done a month before the election. The second panel (in yellow) shows the results for targeting that took place the weekend before Election Day. Here we see a 14.1% turnout rate in 2014 compared to a 25.1% turnout rate in 2018. This is an 11-percentage point increase, which corresponds to 78% increase in turnout. Again, this finding is supportive



that AltaMed’s targeting on the weekend before the Election Day was effective at increasing turnout. The last panel (in light blue) shows the results for those precincts that AltaMed targeted on Election Day. In 2014, the turnout rate was 12.2% and in 2018 is was 24.2%. The turnout rate increased by 12 percentage points, which corresponds to a 98% increase. AltaMed’s Election Day targeting was very effective and in this analysis, we suggest that it appears to be the most effective at increasing turnout between 2014 and 2018.

Change in Total Ballots Cast

Another way to examine the efficacy of AltaMed’s targeting is to examine the change in total ballots cast from June 2014 to June 2018. The analysis above accounts for the turnout rate, which also includes the total number of registered voters (as the denominator). Here we assess what candidates and campaigns are often most interested in – did the total number of votes increase or decrease?

Overall, AltaMed reached 4,952 voters across 45² precincts in their Election Day program, and they reached 9,247 voters in their weekend before election program. In the Election Day program, looking at the 45 precincts which were contacted, a total of 4,983 votes were cast by these precincts in June 2014, and in June 2018 the total votes grew to 11,878. This increase of 6,895 represents 138% growth over the 2014 baseline. The weekend program was similarly effective across the 96 precincts

canvassed. In the 2014 primary, a total of 10,699 ballots were counted which grew to 25,321 ballots in the 2018 primary. This increase of 14,622 represents 137% growth over the June 2014 totals.

GOTV type	Voters	HHs	Prec	2014 votes	2018 votes	14-18 Chg	Pct
Elec Day	4,952	2,740	45	4,983	11,878	6,895	138%
Weekend	9,247	5,329	96	10,699	25,321	14,622	137%

Beyond the aggregate trends which show positive increases in the votes cast, we also identified 10 top-performing precincts where the AltaMed voter mobilization campaign was extremely successful. These 10 precincts experienced growth in votes cast from 2014 to 2018 from 188% to 432%. In terms of raw numbers, in June 2018 these precincts added between 160 and 307 *additional* voters over their 2014 turnout numbers. At the very top of this list were two precincts which stood out, starting with precinct #6550016 which recorded 71 ballots cast in June 2014 and 378 ballots case in 2018, a remarkable increase of 432%. Second was precinct #9000275 which had 93 ballots in 2014 and 400 ballots in 2018, an increase of 330%. While other heavily Latino precincts across Los Angeles also experienced noticeable growth in ballots cast in 2018, the AltaMed targeted precincts clearly stand out as areas where the vote grew even more strongly, far outpacing the countywide average for Latinos.

Precinct	City	2014 ballots	2018 ballots	Increase	% Chg
6550016	South Gate	71	378	+307	432%
9000275	Boyle Heights	93	400	+307	330%
6550047	South Gate	93	348	+255	274%
6550003	South Gate	64	236	+172	269%
2850001	Huntington Park	85	282	+197	232%
6550052	South Gate	84	260	+176	210%
4450003	Montebello	90	270	+180	200%
7650005	Huntington Park	82	242	+160	195%
6550001	South Gate	127	374	+247	194%
2000002	East Los Angeles	113	325	+212	188%

Conclusion

In an effort to mobilize low propensity Latino voters for the California Primary Election, AltaMed had nearly 80 employees and volunteers canvassing densely Latino areas of Los Angeles County. Prior research suggests that these neighborhoods are often ignored, or receive less investment by political campaigns. However in 2018, the AltaMed team distributed bilingual voter guides, registered legal residents to vote, and answered questions about ballot initiatives.

Within their community clinics, they played voting commercials in all of their waiting rooms, phone messages when patients were placed on hold and also provided transportation assistance on Election Day to ensure that those who wanted to participate in the primaries had the opportunity to cast their vote.

Following the election, UCLA researchers debriefed with AltaMed staff who participated in the GOTV program, and they reported that many of the voters they contacted during this pilot project were not even aware of the coming primary election. Despite low levels of traditional campaign contact, the AltaMed program demonstrated a remarkable success, increasing the Latino vote by the largest margins anywhere in Los Angeles County.

According to an interview we conducted with Jennie Carreón, AltaMed campaign manager for the 2018 election program, the cycle of non-participation can end with an organized well-funded campaign. Carreón summarized “Latino political disengagement is a product of our history, our politics and how we run campaigns. This pilot program tested the assertions that Latinos are not civically involved, and showed that when given the proper resources, education and tools by a trusted messenger; Latinos do vote.”

Notes

¹ We followed the precinct consolidation guide by the Statewide Database at UC Berkeley. SRPREC is a consolidated precinct that allows for comparison across election years, given potential changes by the local county registrar in any given year. More details here: <http://statewidedatabase.org/diagrams.html>

² To match the 2018 precincts to 2014 precincts, we had to group together some precincts which had been consolidated, so that we could directly compare turnout numbers from one election to the next. Precincts that changed or could not be matched directly to 2014 were not included in the analysis for purposes of consistency