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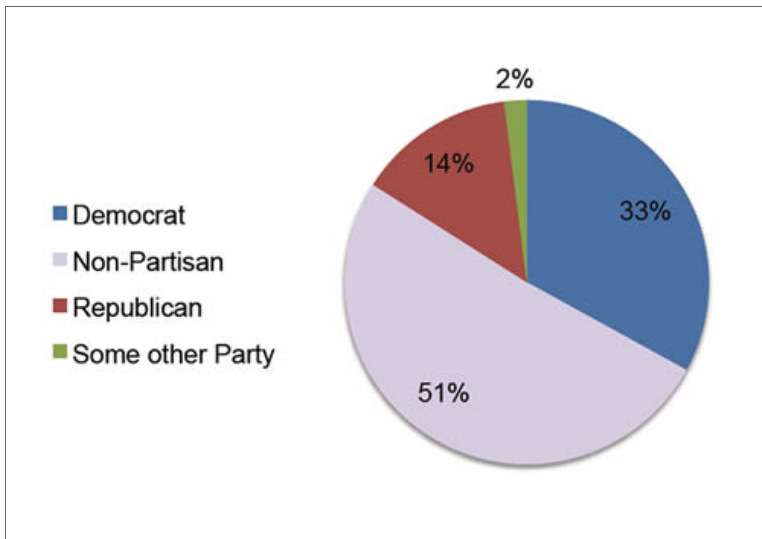
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Surveys Offer Close-up Look at the Asian American Voter

By Dottie Tiejun Li

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Results of a comprehensive new survey show likely Asian Americans voters preferring Barack Obama over Mitt Romney 43% to 24%, but nearly one-third remain undecided and could play a crucial role in the battleground state of Virginia.

"When compared to the general electorate, and even the Latino electorate, the Asian American vote is very much up for grabs at this late stage in the presidential campaign," states Karthick Ramakrishnan, director of the newly released 2012 National Asian American Survey (NAAS).

Drawn from more than 3,300 interviews, the report provides a comprehensive view of Asian American political views.

AAPIs By the Numbers:

- Democrats have a generic 33% to 14% advantage over Republicans among Asian Americans, but a majority of Asian Americans (51%) are Independent or do not identify with the U.S. party system.

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do not identify with the U.S. party system.

- Indian Americans show the strongest support for Obama (68%), and Samoans and Filipinos show strongest support for Romney (39% and 38%, respectively).
- Only 23% of Asian Americans say they have been contacted for voter registration or get-out-the-vote purposes by the Democratic party in the past two years, while 17% have been reached by the Republican party. Most respondents say even that contact was minimal.
- Hmong, Indian and Korean Americans most strongly identify with the Democratic Party. In a significant shift, Filipino Americans now have the strongest identification with the Republican Party, a designation that has previously consistently belonged to Vietnamese Americans.
- The issues most important to Asian American and Pacific Islanders are mainstream: the economy and jobs, followed by health care and education.
- Asian Americans largely support both health care reform and affirmative action. On health care reform, support remains high regardless of whether the law is referred to as the Affordable Care Act or "Obamacare."

Survey partners include National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF) and Asian American Justice Center (AAJC).

The second comprehensive look at Asian American voters which was just released carries an almost identical name. The National Asian American Survey is a product of the nonpartisan APIAVote, Asian American Justice Center, and Asian American Institute, and it was conducted by prominent DC polling firm Lake Research Partners.

An interesting fact emerging from their data explains much of the reason why Asian American voters in Virginia are much less party-affiliated than the general population, even as they prefer President Obama over challenger Mitt Romney. Virginia's Asian American voters are a heavily immigrant population, with nearly 7 in 10 born outside the U.S. Thus, they have much less of a family or personal history of partisan attachment.

AAPIs Optimistic

- Virginia's AAPI voters are more optimistic overall about the country than other Americans, and even Asian Americans in other states. 52% say we are heading in the right direction.
- On the generic congressional ballot, nearly one-third of Asian American voters in Virginia are undecided, while just over half (51%) favor the generic Democrat and 18% prefer the generic Republican.
- Asian American voters in Virginia favor the Democratic Party on pocketbook issues (the economy, education, health care) and values (treating all Americans fairly) but are more divided on national security and the budget deficit. A significant number of Asian American voters in Virginia say there is no difference between the parties on these issues, however.

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