



# THE 2006 POLITICAL STUDY

## Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Beliefs and Behaviors


*Part of the Americanos Poll Series*

February 6, 2007

### Key Findings

- Approximately two-thirds (63%) of Hispanics who are not U.S. citizens intend to apply for U.S. citizenship, of whom 85% intend to register to vote
- Unlike non-Hispanics, the belief that citizens can influence government by voting differentiates registered and non-registered Hispanic U.S. citizens
- Hispanic and non-Hispanic views are similar with regard to the party that best represents their views on immigration
- Hispanics are less likely than non-Hispanics to believe that the Bush Administration uses terrorism and security to its political benefit and to agree that the U.S. made the right decision in using military force against Iraq
- Across a range of political activities, non-Hispanics are generally more politically involved than Hispanics
- Hispanics are less likely than non-Hispanics to consider a Republican candidate for President in 2008
- Both Hispanic and non-Hispanic likely voters mentioned Hillary Clinton most when asked impromptu for their 2008 presidential preference

### Introduction



Encuesta, Inc. undertook the 2006 Political Study to explore how U.S. Hispanics and non-Hispanics are alike and different with regard to political opinion, attitudes, and behavior at the time of the 2006 midterm election. Below we report findings that focus on the political beliefs and behavior of Hispanic and non-Hispanic registered voters, including party identification, confidence in elections and government, which political party does a better job on different issues, and types of political involvement, among others. Data tables with the study results are available under separate cover.

### Methodology

The study is based upon telephone interviews with a representative national sample of the U.S. adult population that reflects U.S. Census proportions for gender, age, U.S. citizenship, and voter registration status. The sample comprises n=300 Hispanics and n=300 non-Hispanics. Interviews were conducted from October 11<sup>th</sup> to October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The margin of error for the entire sample of n=300 is approximately +/- 4%, with a higher margin of error for subgroups. Statistically significant differences between the population groups at a 90% confidence level are noted in red.

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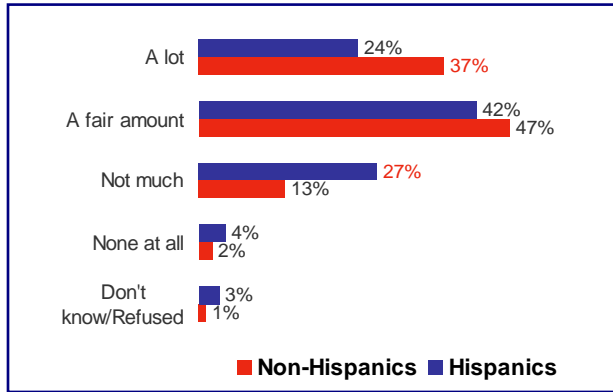


### Who are the Voters?

In general, Hispanics in the U.S. are younger and have less education and income than non-Hispanics. When comparing the registered voters of each population group, these gaps narrow but continue to be significant. On average, Hispanic registered voters are 50.7 years old, compared to the non-Hispanic average of 58.2 years. Their average annual household income, \$41,200, is about \$6,000 less per year than their non-Hispanic counterparts whose mean income is \$47,500. And when it comes to education, Hispanic registered voters have an average of 12.6 years of education compared to 13.8 among non-Hispanics. Unless otherwise specified, study results refer to registered voters.

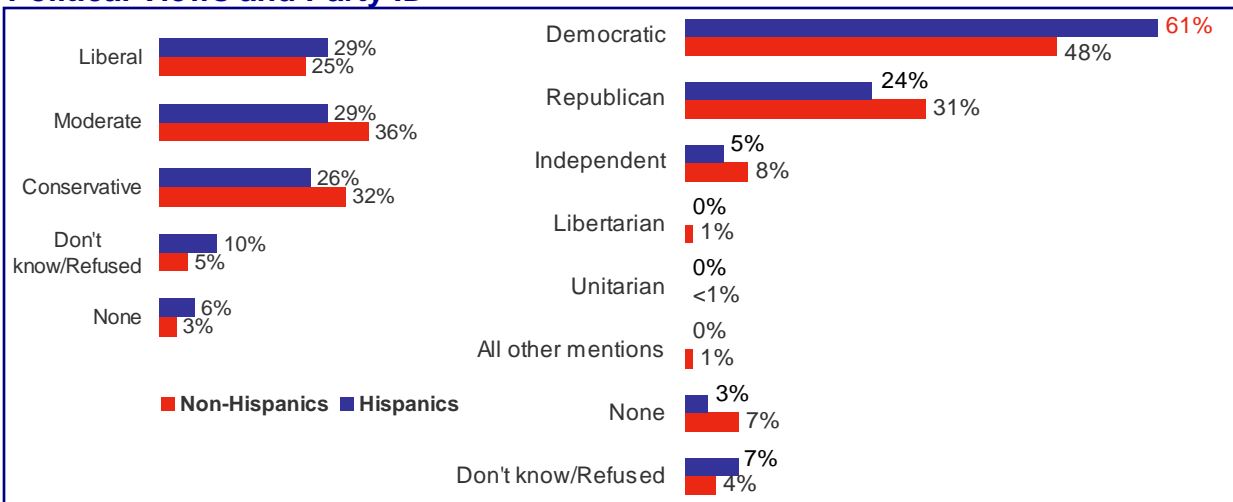
Interest in politics typically increases with age, income, and education, so it is not surprising that Hispanics are significantly less likely than non-Hispanics to report that they pay “a lot” of attention to politics and government – 24% versus 37%. Conversely, over one-quarter (27%) of Hispanics said the level of attention they pay to politics and government is “not much,” compared to only 13% of non-Hispanics. The

### Attention Paid to Politics and Government

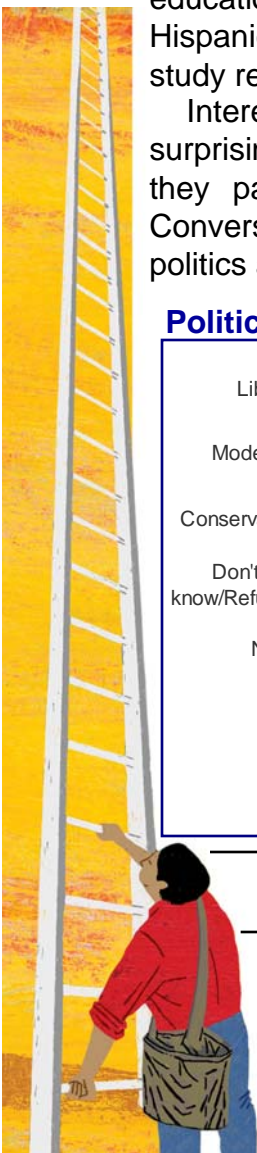


Q. Now I would like to ask about your opinion about topics related to politics and government. On a regular basis, how much attention do you pay to politics and government? Base: Registered voters, Hispanic n=103, non-Hispanic n=228

### Political Views and Party ID



Q. How would you describe your political views? Would you say you are...? Q. Which political party do you most identify with? Base: Registered voters, Hispanic n=103, non-Hispanic n=228





greatest share of both groups, 42% of Hispanics and 47% of non-Hispanics, reported paying “a fair amount” of attention to politics and government.

When it comes to their political views, Hispanics are somewhat evenly split among those who describe themselves as liberal, moderate, and conservative (29%, 29%, and 26%, respectively). Non-Hispanics, on the other hand, are significantly less likely to call themselves liberal (25%) than moderate (36%) or conservative (32%).

Party preference reflects these differences in political views, though the skew is dramatic toward the Democratic Party in the case of Hispanics. Well over half (61%) of Hispanics indicate this is the party with which they most identify. About one-quarter of Hispanics said they most identify with the Republican party, compared to closer to one-third of non-Hispanics.

Party preference is largely undefined among potential Hispanic registered voters. Just under two-thirds (63%) of Hispanics who are not U.S.

citizens say they intend to apply for U.S. citizenship. Of those, 85% report that they intend to register to vote. When they register, 13% say it will be with the Republican Party, 25% with the Democratic Party, 5% with another party, and 6% intend to remain independent. That leaves over 40% of potential future Hispanic voters (by naturalization) open to being swayed toward a specific party affiliation.

### Confidence in Elections and Government

Among Hispanic U.S. citizens, those who are registered to vote tend to be more confident than those who are not, that citizens can influence government by voting. Non-Hispanic U.S. citizens, on the other hand, have a similar view of the ability to make a difference at the polls regardless of whether they are registered to vote. With regard to the federal level of government, in elections for President, 69% of Hispanic registered voters versus 51% of non-registered U.S. citizens said they strongly or somewhat agreed that citizens can influence government. On the other hand, 72% of registered and 68% of non-registered non-Hispanics said the same.

The finding suggests that the belief they cannot make a difference – possibly a result of experience in their home country – is one reason Hispanics do not register to vote, while this does not appear to explain why non-Hispanic citizens do not register.

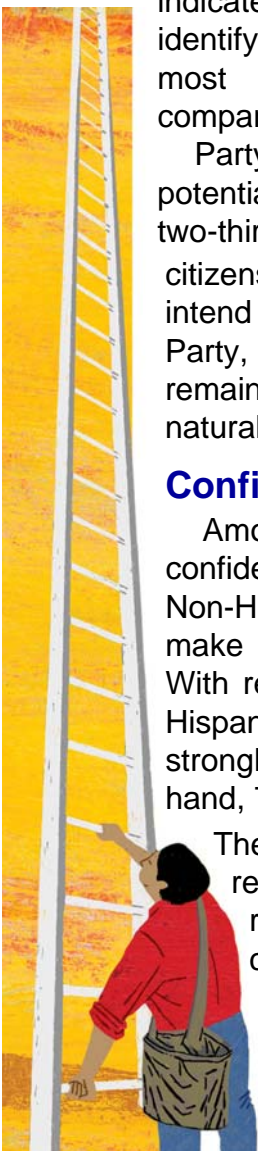
### Demographics of Registered Voters

	Hispanics Mean	Non-Hispanics Mean
AGE	50.7	58.2
INCOME	41.2	47.5
EDUCATION	12.6	13.8

Q. How old were you in your last birthday? Base: Registered voters, Hispanic n=103, non-Hispanic n=228

Q. Would you please tell me which of the following income groups I will now read best describes your household's total annual income before taxes for 2005? Base: Registered voters except for the ones who answered as don't know/refused, Hispanic n=77, non-Hispanic n=170

Q. What is the highest level of education you have completed? Base: Registered voters except for the ones who answered as don't know/refused, Hispanic n=103, non-Hispanic n=228



### Concerns About Voting

#### Voting Inaccuracies



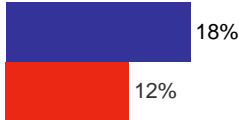
#### Not at All Concerned



#### Voting Fraud



#### Not at All Concerned



■ Non-Hispanics ■ Hispanics

*Q. I would like to know how concerned you are, if at all, with voting count inaccuracies/fraud in the United States. Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means “not at all concerned” and 10 means “extremely concerned”, please tell me how concerned you are about voting count inaccuracies/fraud in the United States. Base: Registered voters, Hispanic n=103, non-Hispanic n=228*

Also among both Hispanic and non-Hispanic registered voters, the belief that citizens make a difference by voting increases slightly as the level of government in question becomes more local. Up from the 69% of Hispanic and 72% of non-Hispanic registered voters noted previously who believe citizens have an influence through their vote in federal elections for President, at the federal level in elections for Congress, 74% and 73% respectively feel the same. At the state level, including elections for governor, the proportions increase slightly to 76% and 79%, and at the local level, including elections for mayor, the numbers rise to 76% of Hispanic and 82% of non-Hispanic registered voters.

When it comes to voting fraud and voting count inaccuracies, Hispanic and non-Hispanic registered voters have similar views. About 30% of Hispanics and 25% of non-Hispanics are “extremely concerned” about each of these issues. Fewer feel entirely comfortable about how honestly votes are cast and how correctly they are tallied – 16% to 18% of Hispanics and 12% to 15% of non-Hispanics. On average, concern about voting count inaccuracies scored a 6.4 among Hispanics and 6.1 among non-Hispanics (on a scale from 1, “not at all concerned,” to 10, “extremely concerned”). With regard to voting fraud, the average scores were 6.3 and 6.1 respectively.

When asked if they trust government to do what is right, Hispanics were more likely than non-Hispanics to express an extreme view, stating either that they “trust completely” or “do not trust at all.” With regard to government in general, 12% of Hispanics completely trust government to do what is right, compared to 4% of non-Hispanics. One-quarter of Hispanics said they do not trust government in general at all, versus 15% of non-Hispanics who said the same. The question was asked using a scale from 1, “do not trust at all,” to 10, “trust completely.” The Hispanic average was 4.7, and the non-Hispanic average was 4.5.



At the presidential level, however, a similar proportion of each population group expressed a total lack of trust in government to do what is right. One-third of Hispanics stated they do not at all trust the President (33%) or the President's administration (32%). Among non-Hispanics, 32% and 27% said they do not at all trust the President or the President's administration, respectively.

In the same way that the belief increases slightly that citizens make a difference by voting as the level of government at issue becomes more local, so too does trust that government will do what is right. Among both Hispanics and non-Hispanics, the average score for trust at the federal levels of government was between 4.3 and 4.4. At the state level, the averages increase to 4.8 among Hispanics and 5.0 among non-Hispanics. With regard to local government, the averages rise again, to 5.2 among Hispanics and 5.7 among non-Hispanics.

### Trust in Government To Do What Is Right

	Hispanics Mean	Non-Hispanics Mean
Government in general	4.7	4.5
The President	4.4	4.3
The President's administration	4.4	4.3
The federal Congress	4.4	4.3
Your state Government	4.8	5.0
Your local Government	5.2	5.7

Q: When it comes to how much you trust government to do what is right, how much would you say you trust ...? Base: Registered voters, Hispanic n=103, non-Hispanic n=228

### Questions of Political Philosophy

On a more philosophical level, the opinions of Hispanics and non-Hispanics were gathered with respect to such issues as the loyalty of a politician to his or her political party and whether religion is a private or public matter. On the first topic, Hispanic registered voters are significantly less likely than non-Hispanics to take a moderate

#### Party Loyalty

	Hispanics %	Non-Hispanics %
A politician should always be loyal to his or her political party	27	21
A politician who is following his or her convictions is justified in not being loyal to his or her political party	40	59
A politician should do what is in his or her best interest, regardless of whether it is also in the interest of his or her political party	18	11
Don't know/ Refused	16	9

Q. Occasionally a politician acts or speaks against his or her political party, for example, by switching parties or disagreeing with a position on an issue. When it comes to a politician's loyalty to a political party, with which of the following statements do you most agree? Base: Registered voters, Hispanics=103, non-Hispanics=228



approach. Only 40% of Hispanics believe a politician who is following his or her convictions is justified in not being loyal to his or her political party, compared to 59% of non-Hispanics. Hispanics and non-Hispanics alike are more likely to agree that a politician should always be loyal to his or her political party than to say that a politician should do what is in his or her best interest regardless of whether it is in the interest of his or her political party.

When it comes to religion and government, the majority of both Hispanics (63%) and non-Hispanics (58%) strongly agree that religion is a private matter that should be kept out of public debates over social and political issues. About three-fourths of each population group, 73% and 78%, respectively, either strongly or somewhat agree that religion is a private matter.

### Parties and Issues

Across the issues tested, Democrats fared better than Republicans in the eyes of Hispanics with regard to which party does a better job. On issues for which there are notable differences between Hispanic and non-Hispanic perceptions of the strengths of the Republican and Democratic parties, they reflect the greater affinity that exists between non-Hispanics and the Republican party than between the G.O.P. and Hispanics.

The population groups' views are quite similar when it comes to job creation, improving education, and making healthcare more accessible, issues on which a substantially greater percentage of each group believes the Democrats do a better job. Hispanics and non-Hispanics also feel remarkably similar about which party best represents their views on immigration. There was not even a significant difference between the proportion of Hispanics and non-Hispanics who indicated the Republican

#### Party that Does Better Job

	Democrats		Republicans		Both equally		Neither		Don't know/Refused	
	Hispanics	Non-Hispanics	Hispanics	Non-Hispanics	Hispanics	Non-Hispanics	Hispanics	Non-Hispanics	Hispanics	Non-Hispanics
Creating jobs	48	40	15	28	13	11	15	13	11	7
Lowering taxes for everyone	40	33	16	32	9	11	23	19	13	6
Improving education	50	48	13	16	14	16	13	15	12	9
Making healthcare more accessible	52	55	12	11	10	12	12	15	15	6
Representing your views on immigration	39	39	15	20	11	11	21	21	15	10
Protecting the country	42	30	18	30	15	25	15	12	12	4
Handling the situation in Iraq	35	31	18	27	4	12	27	20	16	10
Making public policy that is moral and ethical	41	34	18	26	12	12	13	20	17	9
Spending tax dollars wisely	47	35	18	22	9	11	17	25	11	7
Representing Hispanic/Latino interests	55	-	9	-	9	-	13	-	15	-

Q. Which party does a better job when it comes to each of the following issues, the [Republican Party or Democratic Party]? (Presentation order of parties rotated). Base: Registered voters, Hispanics n=103, non-Hispanics n=228



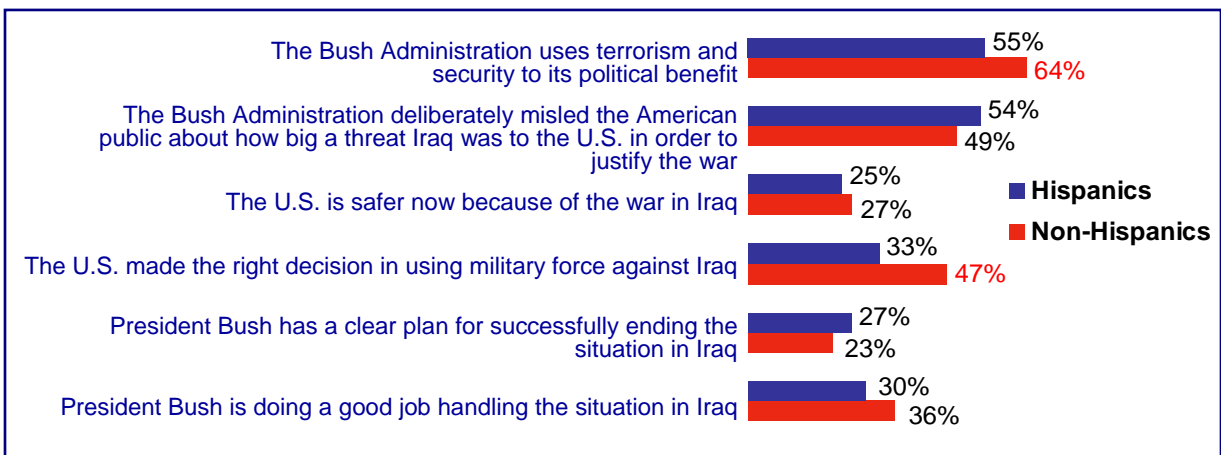
party best represents their views on immigration, despite the harder-line approaches on this topic associated with the Republican party that one might have expected non-Hispanics to favor much more than Hispanics. Some 39% of both Hispanics and non-Hispanics said the Democratic party better represents their views on immigration, compared to 15% of Hispanics and 20% of non-Hispanics who named the Republicans. In each population group, 11% said both parties equally represent their views, and 21% said neither party does.

On the fiscal issue of lowering taxes for everyone, Democrats do a better a job according to 40% of Hispanics, and Republicans according to 16%, while non-Hispanics are evenly split (33% and 32%, respectively). When it comes to spending the tax money wisely, a greater part of each population group thinks Democrats do a better job than Republicans, with significantly more Hispanics (47%) than non-Hispanics (35%) indicating this view. Non-Hispanics are more likely than Hispanics to say Republicans are more adept at creating jobs, 28% compared to 15%.

When asked about the nation's security, 42% of Hispanics said the Democratic party better handles the country's protection, compared to 18% who favor the Republican party. Among non-Hispanics, 30% named each of the parties as doing a better job, significantly less than Hispanics when it comes to the Democrats and significantly more when it comes to the Republicans. Similar proportions of Hispanics (35%) and non-Hispanics (31%) believe Democrats do the better job of handling the situation in Iraq, whereas over one-quarter of non-Hispanics (27%) compared to less than one-fifth of Hispanics (18%) would prefer to leave the handling of Iraq in the hands of the Republicans.

Hispanics and non-Hispanics have similar, largely negative, views regarding the President's handling of the war in Iraq, with about one-quarter indicating they "strongly"

### Iraq and the President



Q. Now I have some questions about the United States' involvement in Iraq. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Base: Registered voters, Hispanic n=103, non-Hispanic n=228. Percent who answered "strongly" or "somewhat agree" on a 5-point scale.



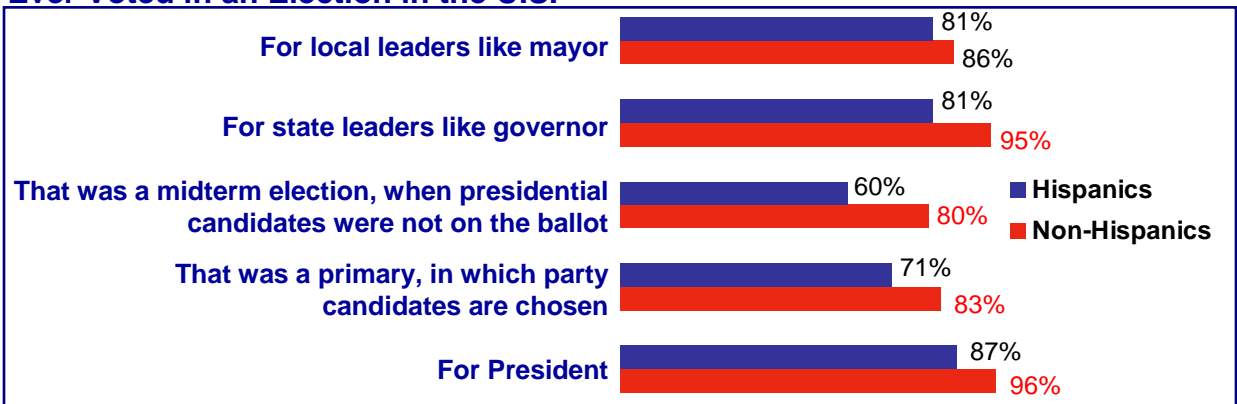
or “somewhat” agree that the President has a clear plan for successfully ending the situation in Iraq and about one-third that he is doing a good job handling that situation. A minority – approximately one-quarter – of both Hispanics and non-Hispanics believe the U.S. is now safer because of the war.

About half of each population, 54% of Hispanics and 49% of non-Hispanics, considers that the Bush Administration deliberately misled the American public about how big a threat Iraq was to the U.S. in order to justify the war. On a related question, however, slightly more Hispanics give the executive branch the benefit of the doubt. When asked if the Bush Administration uses terrorism and security to its political benefit, 55% of Hispanics “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed compared to 64% of non-Hispanics. Ultimately, Hispanics are significantly less likely than non-Hispanics to agree that the U.S. made the right decision in using military force against Iraq (33% versus 47% of non-Hispanics).

### Political Behavior

Hispanics have voted significantly less than non-Hispanics across a variety of different types of elections, from primary and midterm to state and presidential. The difference is least marked in local elections, in which 81% of registered Hispanics and 86% of registered non-Hispanics report to have ever participated.

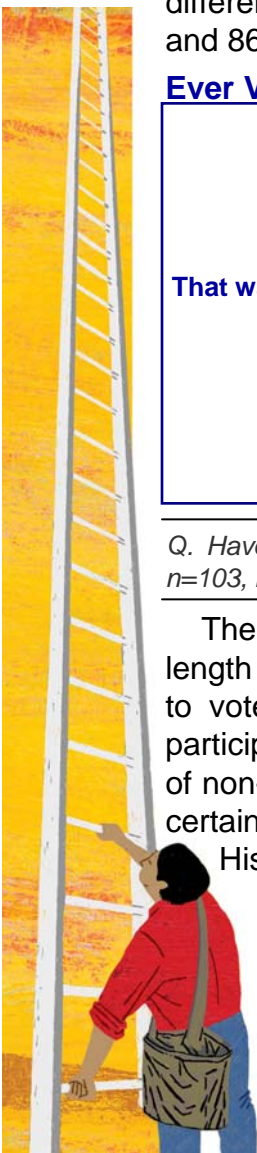
#### Ever Voted in an Election in the U.S.



Q. Have you ever voted in an election in the United States...? Base: Registered voters, Hispanic n=103, non-Hispanic n=228

The disparities are not explained by differences in eligibility to vote due to age or length of U.S. residency. Furthermore, registered Hispanic voters display less intent to vote in different elections in the future. Only 68% indicated they planned to participate in all elections, including primaries and local elections, compared to 83% of non-Hispanics. A significantly higher 11% of Hispanics plans to participate only in certain elections in the future, such as presidential races, compared to 3% of non-Hispanics who said this best described their intent to vote in the future.

Hispanic voter turnout might be greater in 2008 if any minorities make it onto the presidential ballot. Over one-third of Hispanics (39%) stated they would be more likely to go out and vote if a Hispanic were running for office, 30% if an African-American were running, and 36% if a woman were running.



**Intent to Vote**

	Hispanics %	Non-Hispanics %
You plan to participate in all elections in the future, including primaries and local elections	68	83
You plan to participate in most elections in the future, but maybe not in primaries or local elections	12	11
You plan to participate only in certain elections in the future, such as presidential races	11	3
You do not plan to participate in elections in the future	2	1
Don't know/Refused	8	2

*Q. When it comes to voting, please tell me which of the following best describes you. Base: Registered voters, Hispanics n=103, non-Hispanics n=228*

submitted an opinion to a political web site or blog (8% each), called in to a radio program (6% H, 9% NH), and worked as a volunteer or for pay for a political candidate (3% H, 8% NH). The disparities are greater when it comes to having signed a petition (21% H, 28% NH), contacted an elected official (9% H, 21% NH), submitted an opinion letter for publication (2% H, 8% NH), contributed money to a political candidate or PAC (7% H, 18% NH).

The political leaning of a candidate might also encourage a Hispanic to participate in an election, 26% of whom said they would be more likely to go out and vote if a very conservative candidate and 31% if a very liberal candidate were running for office. Non-Hispanics were significantly less likely to say their inclination to vote would be influenced by the characteristics of the candidates on the ballot: 12% would be more likely to go out and vote if a Hispanic were running for office, 16% if it were an African-American, 20% a woman, 22% a very conservative candidate, and 18% a very liberal candidate.

As with participation in elections, reported political action in the past 12 months across a range of activities tested was statistically on par or lower among Hispanics compared to non-Hispanics. The two groups are most similar when it comes to having participated in a demonstration or a march (3% H, 4% NH),

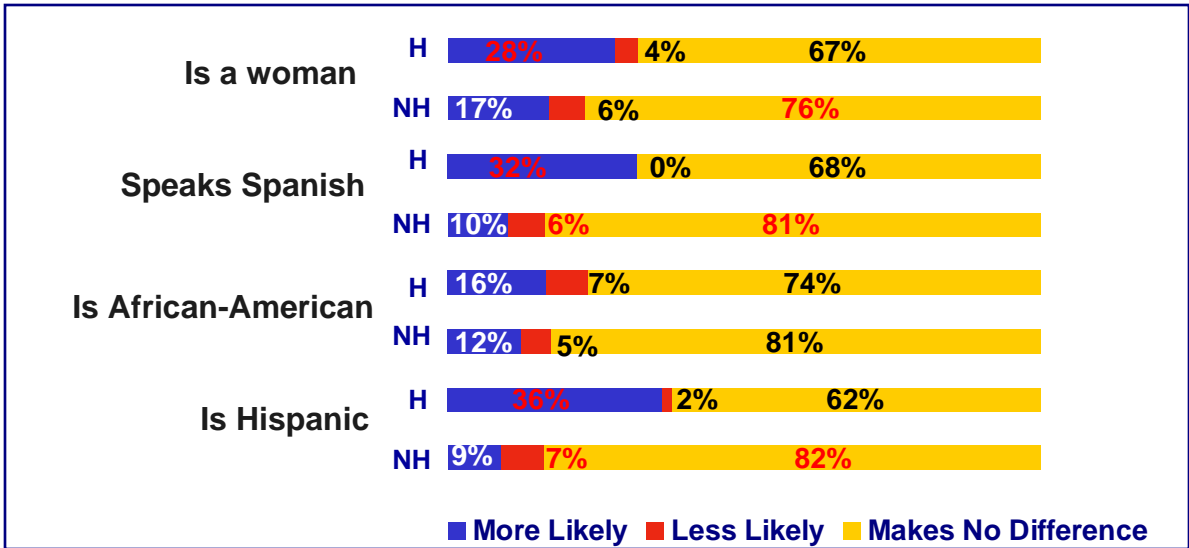
**Candidate Preferences**

In addition to the influence of different issues on voter choice (see *The 2006 Political Study: Political Opinion at the 2006 Midterm Election*) the study explored whether Hispanics and non-Hispanics would be more or less likely to vote for members of certain minorities. The findings suggest that ethnic and linguistic characteristics of candidates have a greater stated influence on Hispanics than non-Hispanics. Between one-quarter and one-third of Hispanics are more likely to vote for a candidate who is a woman, is a Hispanic, or speaks Spanish, significantly more than the non-Hispanics who would be similarly inclined. Still, between 9% and 17% of non-Hispanics said they would be more likely to vote for a candidate with these characteristics. The majority of each population



group said the minority status of a candidate has no effect on their vote, with non-Hispanics significantly more likely than Hispanics to say this is the case.

**Effect on Vote of Candidate's Ethnic and Linguistic Characteristics**

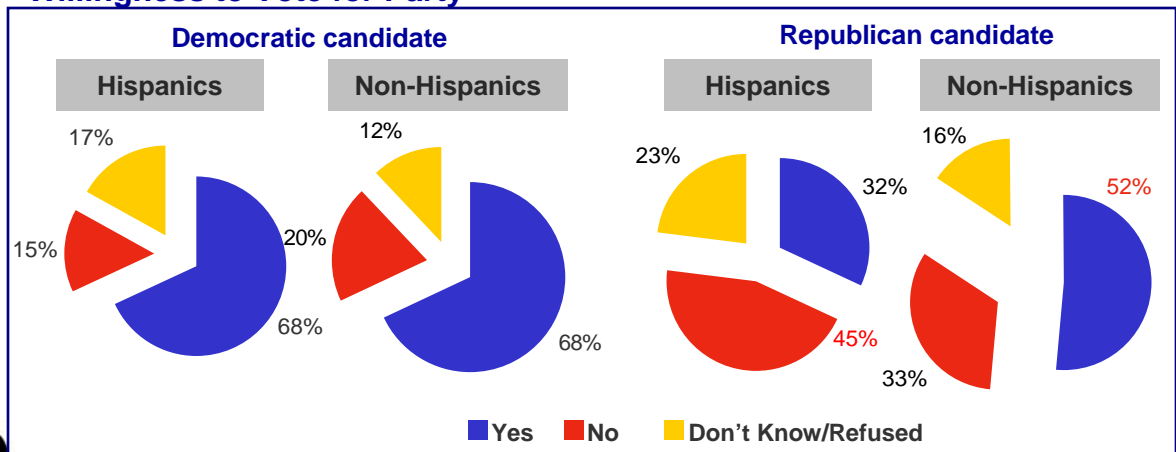


Q: Now I would like to know if you are more or less likely to vote for a candidate who... or does it make no difference? Base: Registered voters, Hispanics n=103, non-Hispanics n=228

**2008 Candidates for the Presidency**

Both Hispanic and non-Hispanic likely voters mentioned Hillary Clinton most when asked, impromptu, whom among public figures they would most like to see elected president in 2008, but other preferences varied between the two population

**Willingness to Vote for Party**



Q. In the 2008 presidential election, would you consider voting for a Republican/Democratic candidate? Base: Registered voters who intent to vote, Hispanic n=93\*, Non-Hispanics n=220

\*:small base

groups. Some 6% of both Hispanics and non-Hispanics said they would want Barack Obama to be the next president. Among non-Hispanics, 4% would choose John McCain, while fewer than 1% of Hispanics named McCain as their choice.

In addition to Obama, Hispanic likely voters mentioned several other African-Americans, more than did non-Hispanics: Colin Powell (3%), Oprah Winfrey (3%), Condoleeza Rice (1%), and Alan Keyes (1%). Hispanics named by Hispanics included Antonio Villaraigosa and Bill Richardson, each mentioned by 1% of respondents. The two other names most mentioned by Hispanics were John Kerry (2%) and Bill Clinton (2%). Among non-Hispanics, after Hillary Clinton, Obama, and McCain, most mentioned were John Kerry (3%), Colin Powell, Condoleeza Rice, and John Edwards (2% each).

When asked if they would consider voting for a candidate from the Democratic party in the 2008 presidential election, a similar proportion of Hispanic (65%) and non-Hispanic (70%) likely voters said they would. Significantly fewer Hispanics than non-Hispanics, however, indicated they would consider voting for a Republican candidate, 34% versus 53%.

Respondents who indicated they would consider voting for a Democratic or Republican candidate were read a list of possible candidates in each respective party and asked to indicate on a 3-point scale the extent to which they would consider voting for that person. Of the Democrats, Hillary Clinton would most be considered by both Hispanics and non-Hispanics. Of the Republicans, Colin Powell and Condoleeza Rice would be most considered by Hispanics and Colin Powell by non-Hispanics.

**Willingness to Vote for Specific Candidates**

Democrats	Hispanics %	Non-Hispanics %	Republicans	Hispanics %	Non-Hispanics %
Hillary Clinton, Senator from New York	83	68	Colin Powell, Former Secretary of State	80	78
Al Gore, Former Vice President	59	57	Condoleeza Rice, Secretary of State	77	61
John Kerry, Senator from Massachusetts	57	57	Rudy Giuliani, Former Mayor of New York City	47	71
John Edwards, Former Senator from North Carolina	52	65	Newt Gingrich, Former Speaker of the House	43	33
Barack Obama, Senator from Illinois	41	58	Jeb Bush, Governor from Florida	40	40
Joe Biden, Senator from Delaware	29	45	Bill Frist, Senator from Tennessee	37	37
Mark Warner, Former Governor of Virginia	22	37	John Mc Cain, Senator from Arizona	37	64

Q. I'm going to read you a list of people in the [Democratic/Republican] Party who may run for president in 2008. For each, please tell me if you definitely would consider voting for that person, if you might consider voting for that person, or if you definitely would not consider voting for that person. (% who answered "definitely" or "might" consider. Base: Registered voters who would consider voting for a Democratic candidate, Hispanic n=63\*, non-Hispanic n=150; Republican candidate Hispanic n=30\*, non-Hispanic n=114.

\*:small base

