



# **H.R.1 / S.1 – FOR THE PEOPLE ACT**

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Impact of Select H.R.1 / S.1 Policy Changes on  
Black and Brown Political Power

**Dēmos**





**H.R.1 / S.1** is a  
transformative  
structural reform  
package that will build  
**Black and brown**  
political power.



# POLICIES WE ANALYZE:



## DIVISION A: VOTING

Online Voter Registration

Automatic Voter Registration

Same Day Registration

Eliminating Discriminatory Voter ID

Early Voting

Voting By Mail

Voting Rights Restoration

Provisional Ballots

Banning 'Use it or Lose it' Voter Purges

Washington, D.C. Statehood

Territorial Voting Rights

Independent Redistricting Commissions



## DIVISION B: CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Small Donor Democracy

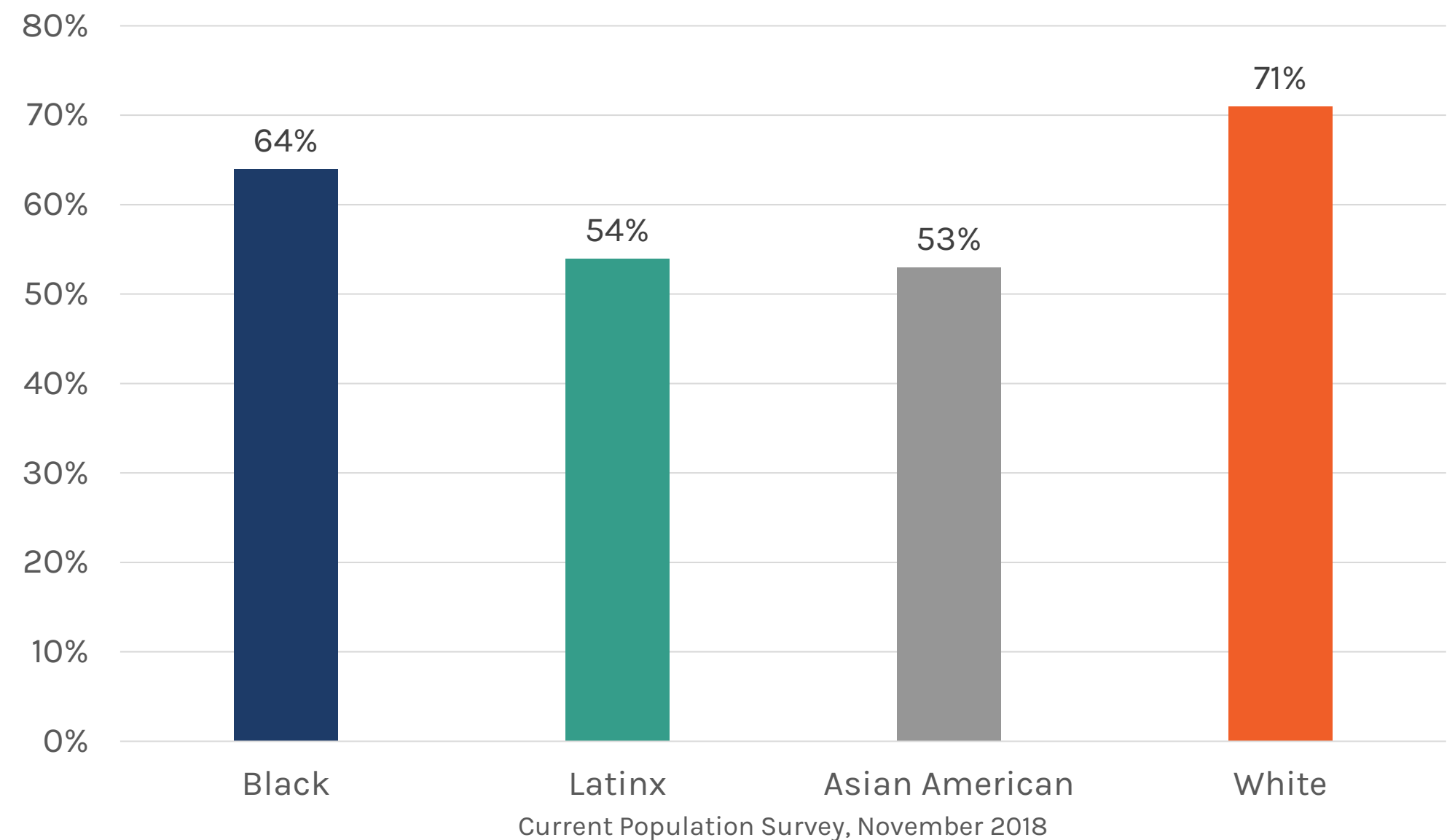
# POLICY AREA: VOTER REGISTRATION MODERNIZATION

In 2020, 29% of people who didn't vote cited not being registered as the reason.

NPR / Medill Poll, 2020

Voter registration disproportionately blocks would-be **Black and brown voters** from exercising their fundamental right to vote.

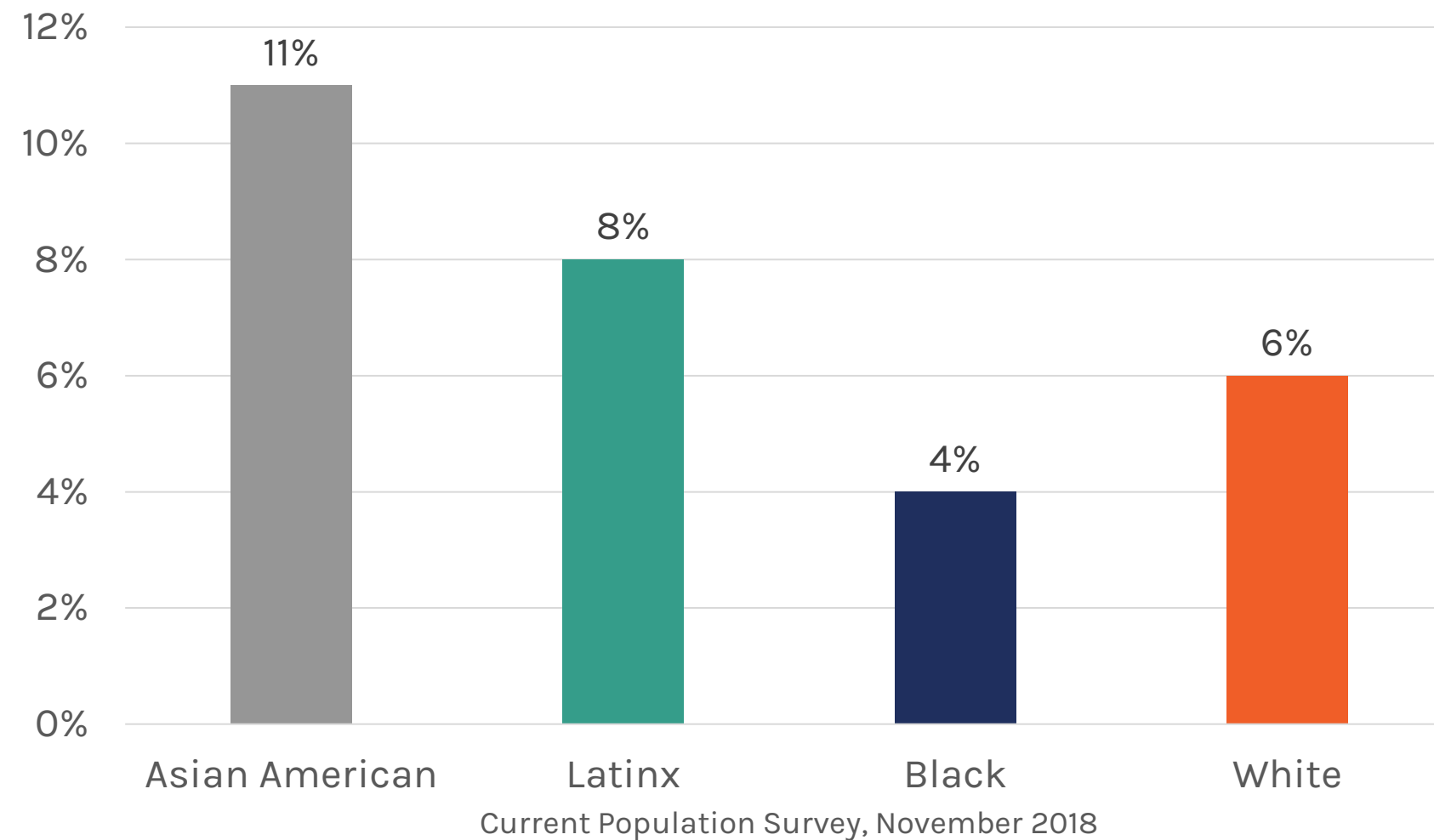
Registration Rates Among Voting Eligible Populations, 2018



# ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION

H.R.1 / S.1 requires that states implement Online Voter Registration (OVR) so voters can register to vote, update or cancel their registrations, and designate a party affiliation easily online

Registered to Vote Online, 2018 Election



**1.9 million Asian American and Latinx voters registered to vote online in 2018.**

Online Voter Registration can help make registration more accessible to **millions of Americans of color.**

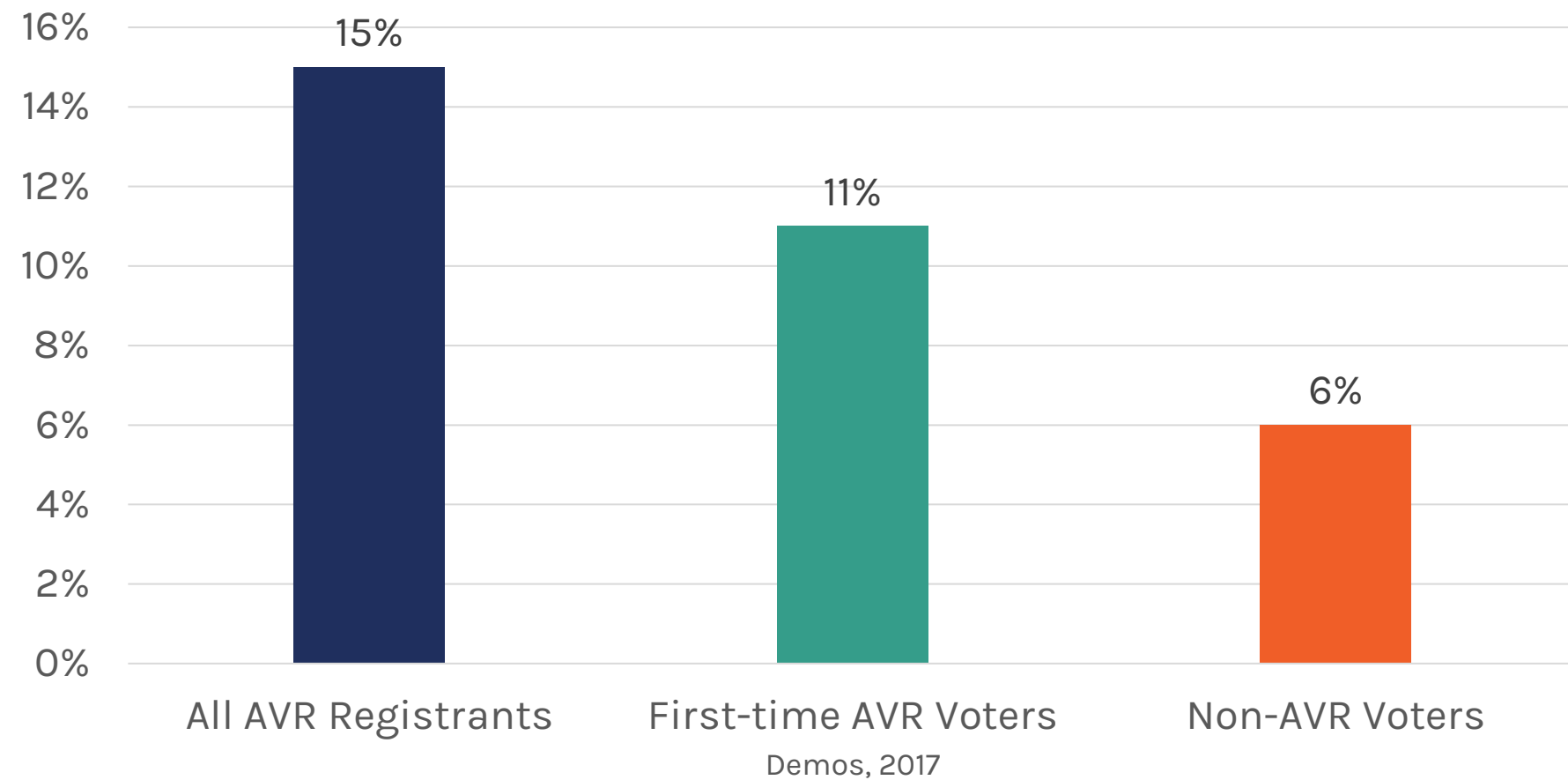
# AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

H.R.1 / S.1 requires states to automatically register eligible, unregistered citizens to vote (AVR)

After implementing the first AVR program in the nation, Oregon added more **Black and brown voters** to the registration rolls.

Voter turnout also increased by **4 percentage points (64% to 68%)** between 2012 and 2016, the highest of any state. Demos estimates AVR is responsible for **2-3 percentage points** of that increase.

Share of Registrants and Voters Who Were People of Color, Oregon 2016



# AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

H.R.1 / S.1 requires states to automatically register eligible, unregistered citizens to vote (AVR)

In October 2020, the **Georgia** Secretary of State reported **7.6 million** registered voters in the state, **5 million** of which came through AVR.

Millions of those voters are **Georgians of Color**, including **hundreds of thousands** of new voters of color that were added to the registration rolls between **2014 and 2020**, thanks in part to AVR.

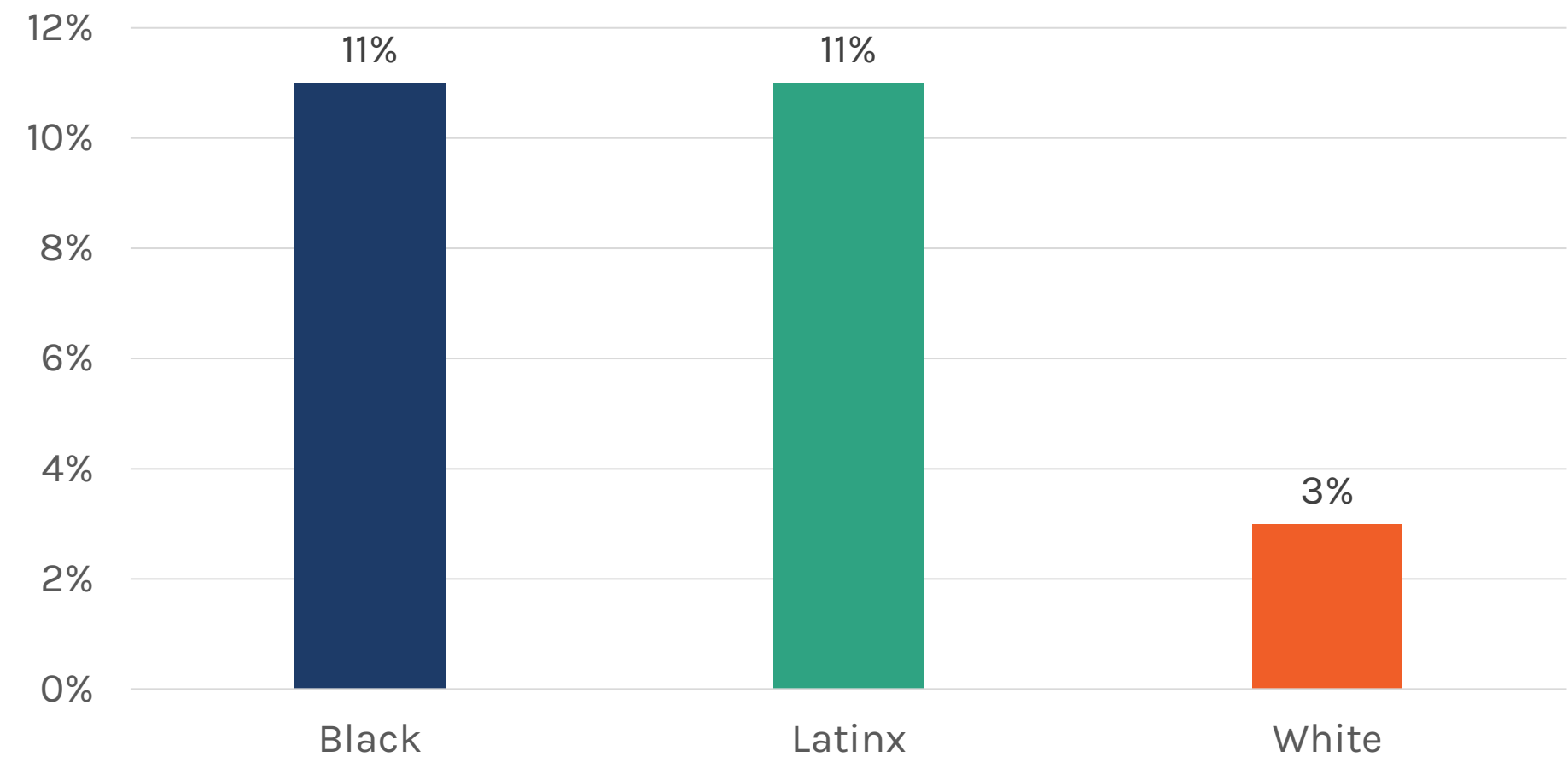
The 2020 margin of victory for the presidency was less than **12,000 votes** in **Georgia** – meaning voters of color added through AVR likely made a decisive difference.

# SAME DAY REGISTRATION

H.R.1 / S.1 requires states to allow voters to register and vote on the same day (SDR) during early voting and on Election Day

Registration deadlines before early voting and Election Day disproportionately disenfranchise would-be **Black and Latinx** voters.

Americans Who Report Missing the Registration Deadline When Trying to Vote Most Recently



PRRI Voter Engagement Survey, 2018



# SAME DAY REGISTRATION

H.R.1 / S.1 requires states to allow voters to register and vote on the same day (SDR) during early voting and on Election Day

↑ **10pp**

Turnout among young voters ages 18-24 due to SDR

Recent research finds that SDR increases turnout among **voters ages 18-24**—the most diverse generation in history—by **10 percentage points** and increases the youth share of the electorate by **1.4 percentage points**, more than any other age group.

Hill and Grumbach, 2019

↑ **1.4pp**

Increase in Gen Z share of the electorate

Forthcoming research from Demos finds that voter turnout among **Black** and **Latinx** voters in states that have SDR is higher than in states that without SDR.

Demos, forthcoming (2021)

# ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATORY VOTER ID

H.R.1 / S.1 requires states to permit voters to submit a sworn written statement to meet identification requirements for voting in federal elections

Voter ID laws disproportionately disenfranchise **Black and brown voters**, especially young voters, who are less likely than white voters to have photo ID and for whom the costs of obtaining voter ID are more burdensome.

# ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATORY VOTER ID

H.R.1 / S.1 requires states to permit voters to submit a sworn written statement to meet identification requirements for voting in federal elections

1.8  
million

17.3%, or **1.2 million Black youth** and 8.1%, or **600,000 Latinx youth**, compared to just 4.7% of white youth (ages 18-29) reported not voting because they didn't have the proper ID.

(Black Youth Project, 2012)

2.5  
million

Among youth ages 18-29 who registered but did not vote, 28% of youth of color, or **about 2.5 million young, voting eligible, registered voters of color**, reported having problems with voter ID, compared to 17% of white youth. (CIRCLE, 2016)

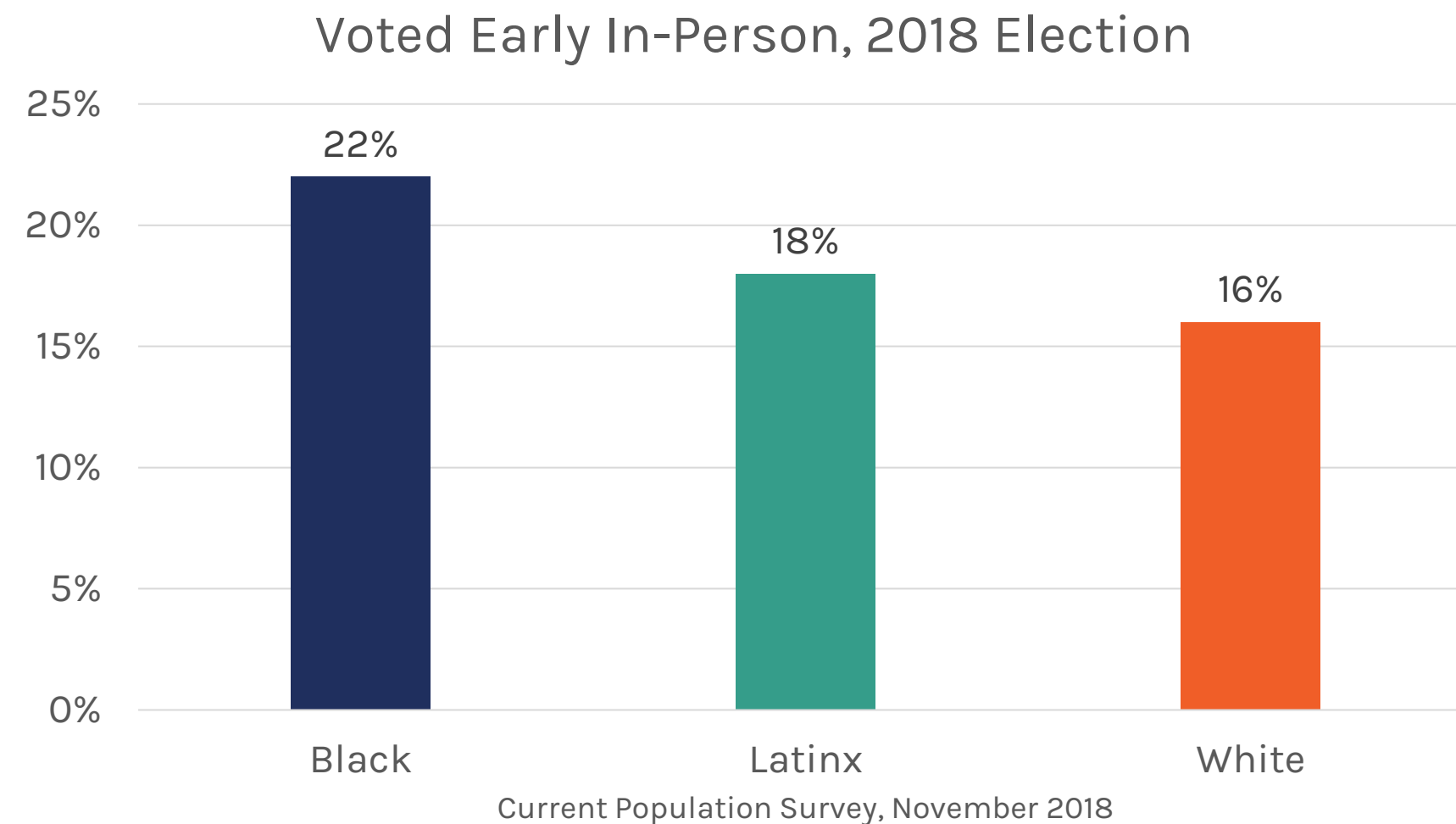
14pp

In Texas, people of all ages without voter ID were **14 percentage points less likely to vote** than they were in elections without strict voter ID. Voters without ID are **disproportionately Black and Latinx**. (Fraga and Miller, 2018)



# EARLY VOTING

H.R.1 / S.1 requires states provide at least 15 consecutive days of early voting and ensures early voting locations are accessible



**Black** and **Latinx** voters are more likely to take advantage of early, in-person voting options than white voters.

In **2020**, the share of **Black voters** saying they planned to vote early in person or by mail jumped by **25 percentage points** over **2016**, from 42% to 66%.

Cooperative Congressional Election Study Poll, 2020 – via FiveThirtyEight

# VOTE BY MAIL

H.R.1 / S.1 will prohibit states from erecting eligibility requirements for voters wishing to vote by mail (VBM) in federal elections, making VBM more accessible to Black and brown voters

## 65.6 million

Americans voted by mail in 2020, including many Black and brown Americans

**24%**

Of all ballots in 2016  
were cast by mail

**41%**

Of all ballots in 2020  
were cast by mail

Vote by mail systems in most states do not work equally well all communities. **Black and brown voters** face difficulties accessing VBM ballots, burdensome requirements for casting their ballots and restrictions on returning them, and higher rates of rejection of completed VBM ballots.

With more voters of all races and ethnicities interested in voting by mail after the 2020 elections, we need **racially equitable** VBM systems.

U.S. Elections Project, 2020

# VOTING RIGHTS RESTORATION

H.R.1 / S.1 will restore the voting rights of those not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction

Felony disenfranchisement laws are racist in their roots and discriminatory in their impact. They prevent **5.2 million people**, disproportionately **Black and brown people**, from voting nationwide.

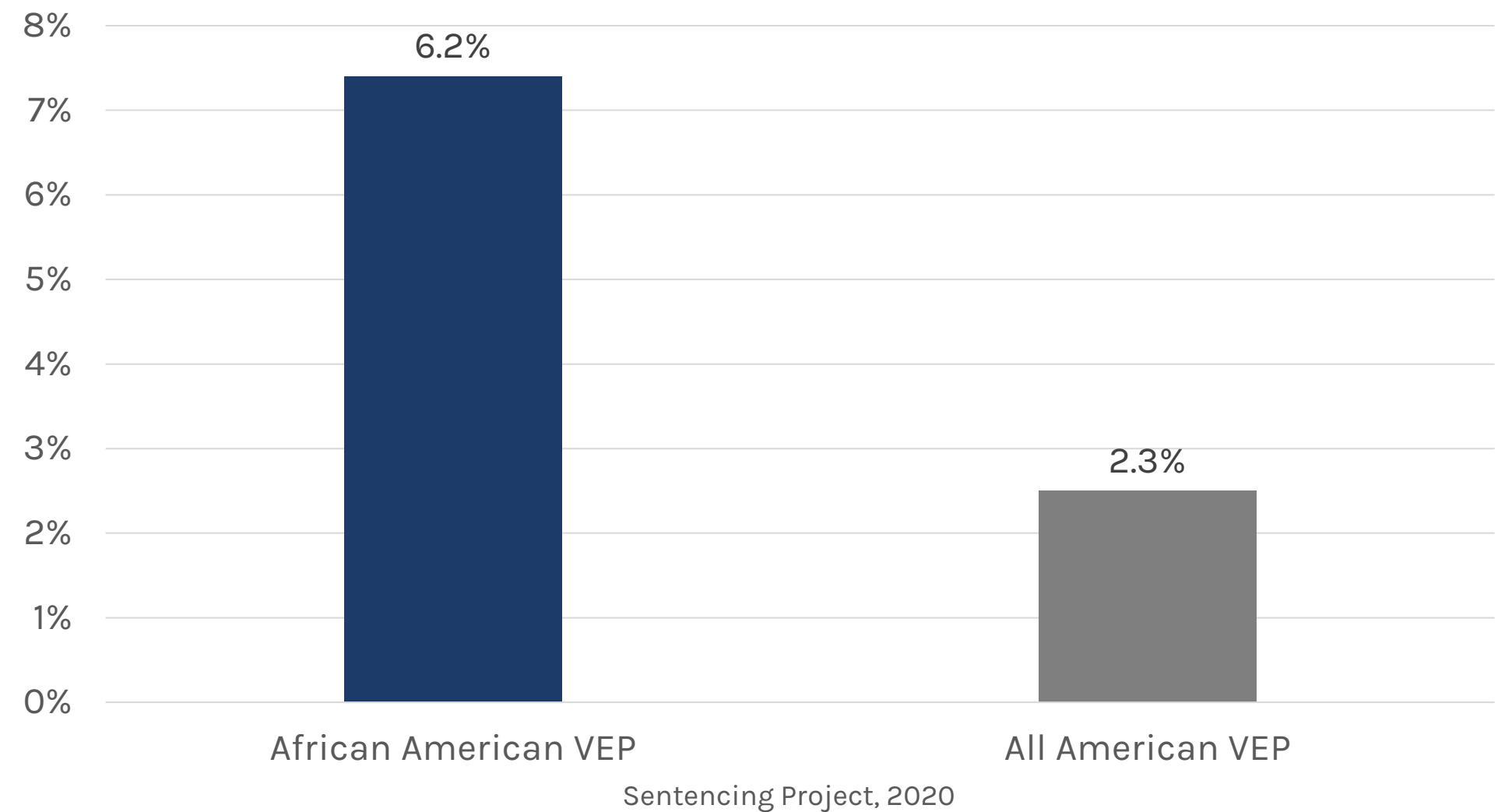
**13%**

U.S. population that is Black

**35%**

Disenfranchised population that is Black

Felony Disenfranchisement Rate Among Voting Eligible Population, 2016





# VOTING RIGHTS RESTORATION

H.R.1 / S.1 will restore the voting rights of those not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction

# 1.7 million

## Black & Latinx people

would be re-enfranchised nationwide by the post-incarceration rights restoration provision of H.R.1

Sentencing Project, 2020

**372k Black & Latinx Floridians**



113k margin of victory in 2016 Presidential race

**120k Black & Latinx Georgians**



55k margin of victory in 2018 Governors race

**15k Black & Latinx Wisconsonites**



23k margin of victory in 2016 Presidential race

**205k Black & Latinx Texans**



215k margin of victory in 2018 Senate race

# PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

H.R.1 / S.1 requires that all provisional ballots cast by eligible voters be counted

Provisional Ballots are cast at higher rates in counties with larger **populations of color**, and **voters of color** may be more likely to have to cast provisional ballots.

Center for American Progress, 2014

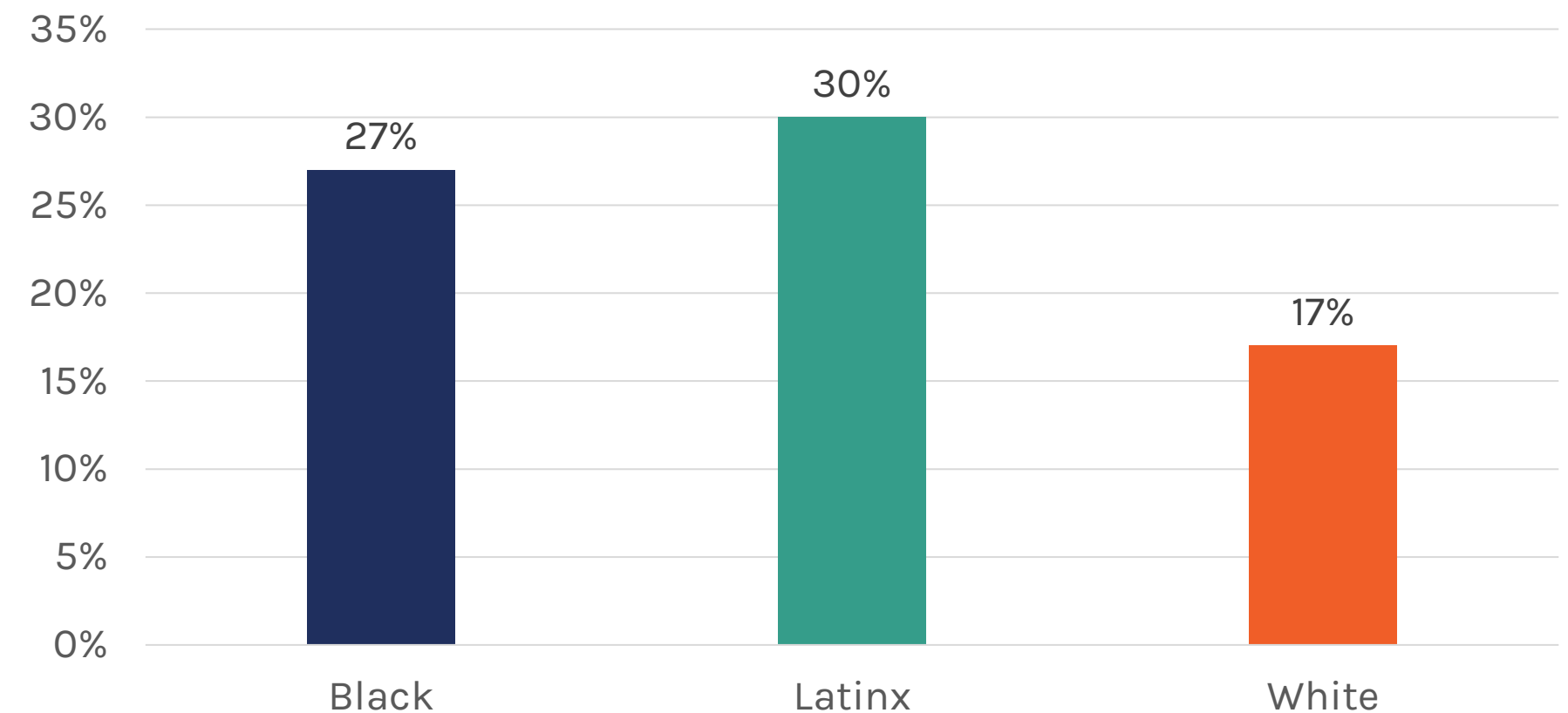
**29%**

of provisional ballots  
cast nationwide were  
not counted in 2016

**30%**

of provisional ballots  
cast nationwide were  
not counted in 2018

Share of Voters Encountering Problems at  
the Polls Who Had to Cast a Provisional  
Ballot, 2012



Congressional Cooperative Elections Study, 2012 - via Shaw and Hutchings, 2013

# BANNING 'USE IT OR LOSE IT' VOTER PURGES

H.R.1 / S.1 protects voters from being purged for not voting

Voter purges remove tens of thousands of eligible voters from the voter rolls. Mass purges based on faulty data disproportionately impact **Black and brown communities.**



# BANNING 'USE IT OR LOSE IT' VOTER PURGES

H.R.1 / S.1 protects voters from being purged for not voting

# 234,000

## Wisconsin Voters

Would have been removed from the rolls in **2020** by a conservative lawsuit challenging the eligibility of voters who did not respond to a mailer.

The margin of victory in the **2020** presidential race in Wisconsin was **20,600** votes. In **2016** it was **23,000** votes.

## 67%

of Wisconsin's Black voters live in Milwaukee County, where the most purge mailers were sent

## 37%

of Wisconsin's Latinx voters live in Milwaukee County, where the most purge mailers were sent

# WASHINGTON, D.C. STATEHOOD

H.R.1 / S.1 includes findings in support of D.C. Statehood

At **63% residents of color**, D.C. would become the state with the second highest share of people of color in the nation.

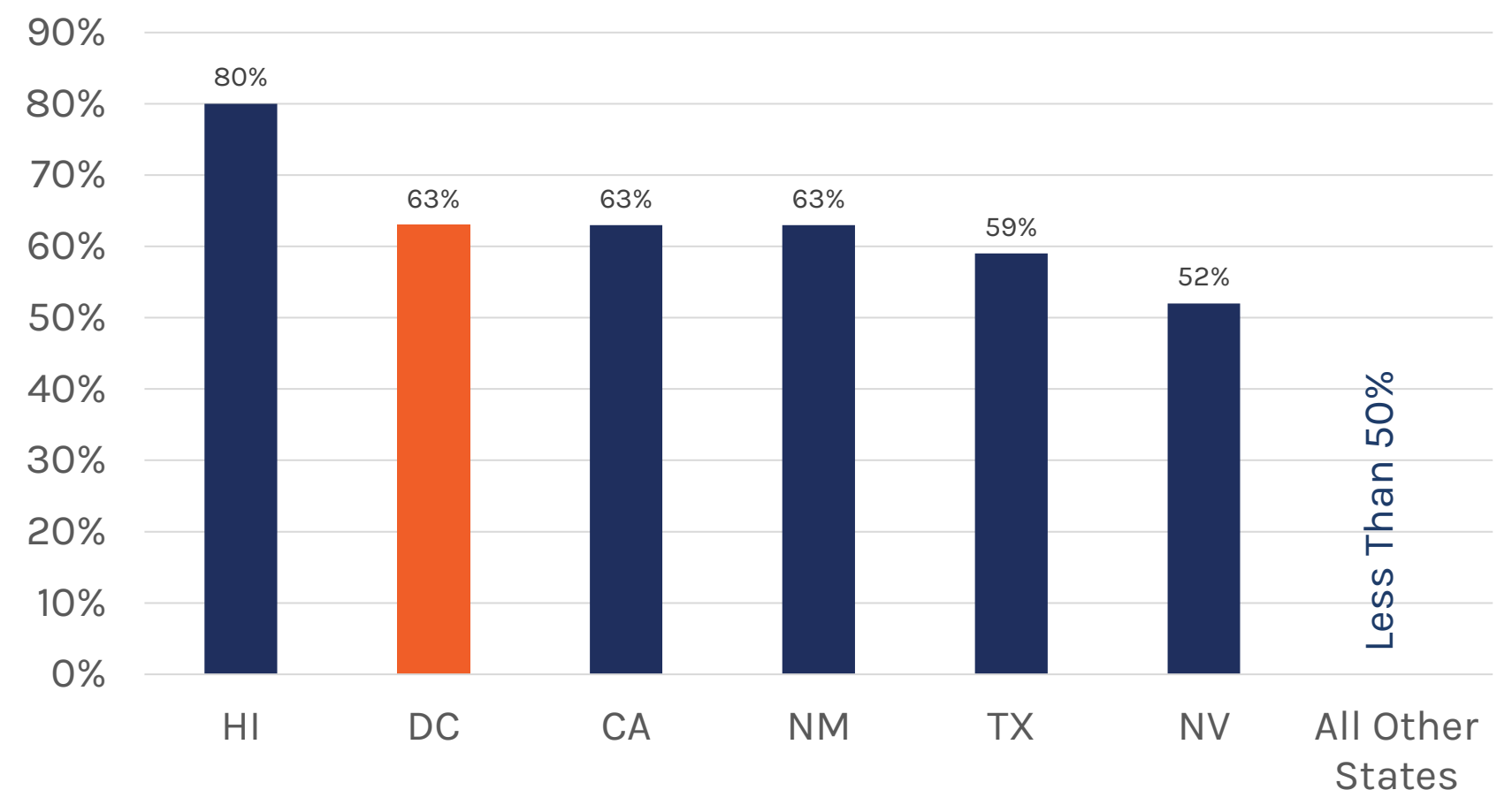
With statehood, nearly half a million (**447k**) **Black and brown Washingtonians** would gain voting representation in Congress and full autonomy over their budgets and policymaking enjoyed by the states.

**+ 2 to 3**

Congresspeople of Color

*2 Senators of Color =  
a 22% increase from 116<sup>th</sup>  
Congress)*

Population of Color, U.S. States



# TERRITORIAL VOTING RIGHTS

H.R.1 / S.1 includes findings in support of & establishes a Congressional Task Force on territorial voting rights

**3.6 M**

Residents of the U.S.  
Territories

More than the populations  
of 21 U.S. States

**90+%**

People of Color

For over a century **Puerto Ricans, Guamanians, U.S Virgin Islanders, American Samoans, and Northern Mariana Islanders** have had no voting representation in Congress and lacked full autonomy over their budgets and policymaking.

The residents of the territories have an international right to sovereignty and self determination under the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.



# POLICY AREA: RACIALLY EQUITABLE REDISTRICTING

Self-interested politicians have long used the redistricting process to dilute the political power of **Black and brown** Americans, splitting communities into several districts, or packing them tightly into too few districts.

# INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSIONS

H.R.1 / S.1 requires states to create independent redistricting commissions to draw Congressional maps and requires those commissions to reflect the diversity of state populations and prioritize voting rights for communities of color

**2x %**

of **Latinx & Asian American** members of CA Congressional Delegation Compared to legislative-drawn maps

**↑ %**

of **Black, Latinx, Asian American** state legislators, compared to legislative-drawn maps

After implementing an independent citizens redistricting commission, the share of California state legislators who are **Black, Latinx, and Asian American** increased, in some cases dramatically.

Representation in California's delegations to the U.S. Congress also improved, including doubling the **Latinx and Asian American** share of the delegation.

With the commission-drawn maps, **Latinx** representation in the Congressional delegation reached parity with California's **Latinx** voting eligible population for the first time in modern history.

USC Schwarzenegger Institute for State and Global Policy, 2020

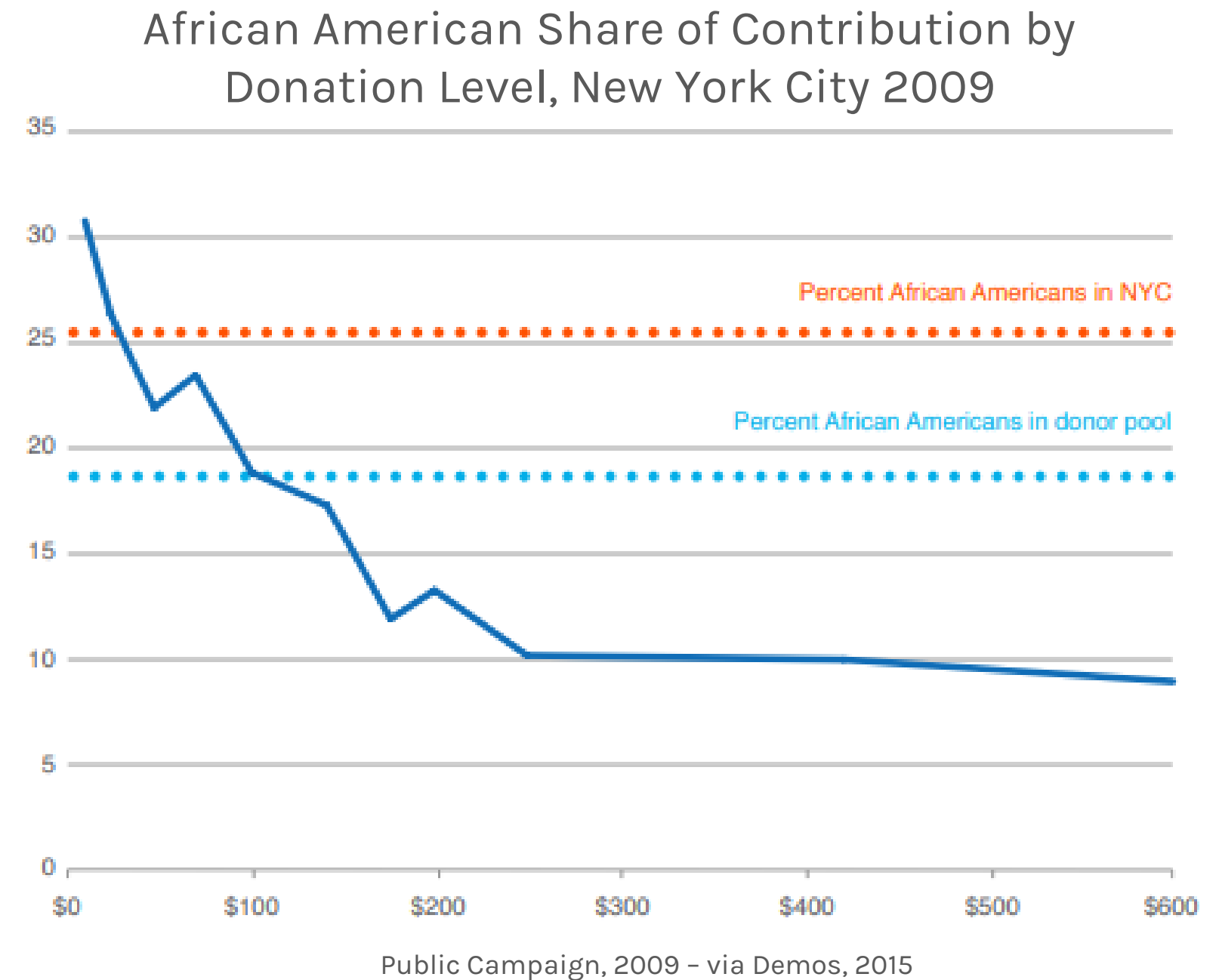
# POLICY AREA: FIGHTING BIG MONEY IN POLITICS

Big money in politics makes it much harder for **Black and brown people** to build and exert political power, to effectively advocate for their interests, and to run for and win elected office.

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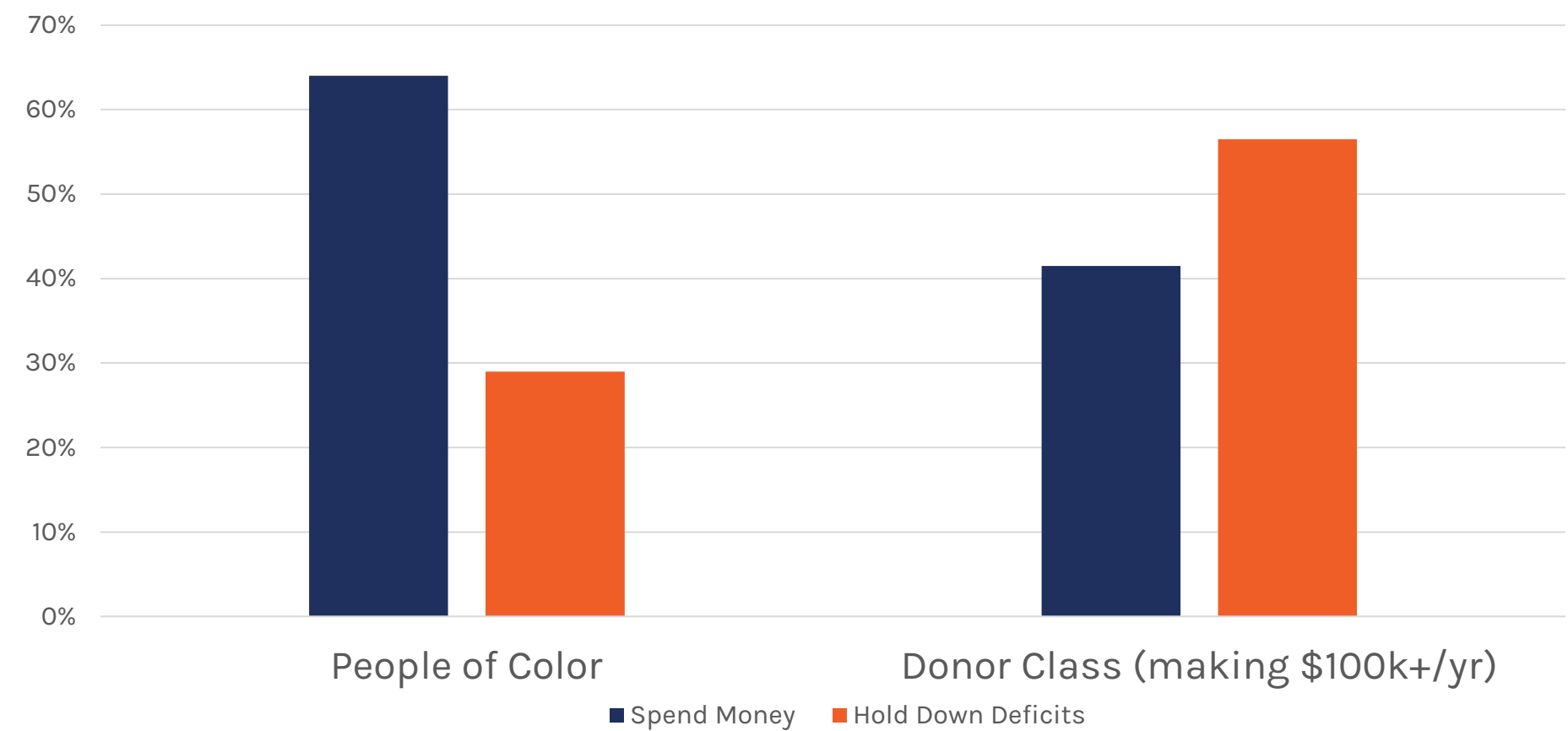
**Black and brown people** exhibit robust democratic participation, including charitable and political giving.

But large donors skew sharply white due to racial wealth disparities driven by historic and current discrimination.



# POLICY AREA: FIGHTING BIG MONEY IN POLITICS

Views on Creating Jobs vs. Holding Down Deficit,  
by Race and Income



Post-ABC Poll: December Monthly – via Demos, 2015

The largely white donor class has sharply different priorities than **Black and brown voters**, especially on the role government should play in creating a fair economy.



# BUILDING A SMALL DONOR DEMOCRACY

H.R.1 / S.1 initiates a small donor matching system, pilots democracy dollar vouchers, and creates People PACs, all of which build the power of small donors in our elections

12-24x

In New York, **24 times** more small donors in the predominately **Black neighborhood** of Bedford-Stuyvesant, **23 times** more in **Chinatown**, and **12 times** more in the heavily **Latinx neighborhoods** of Upper Manhattan and the Bronx gave money to candidates for the city council, a publicly-financed system, than for the state assembly.

Brennan Center for Justice & Campaign Finance Institute, 2012

CT

Once **Connecticut** introduced a grant-based public financing system, the legislature passed a slate of policies that helped working families including a statewide **EITC**, a **minimum wage increase**, and the country's first statewide **paid sick days policy**.

Demos, 2015

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## Democracy Dollar Vouchers

↑ 46%

In Seattle in 2017, the first cycle Democracy Dollars was in effect, the **share of donations from majority of color neighborhoods increased by 46 percent** when considering voucher donors, as compared to cash donors. Voucher donors also better reflected the age, gender, and income diversity of Seattle than cash donors.

4x

Also in 2017, **Four times as many people of color** ran for open city council seat 8 as ran when the at-large seat was last open in 2009, and a candidate of color won.

Every Voice & Win | Win, 2018

37%

Nearly **forty percent of donors** who gave democracy vouchers to 2019 candidates were new donors that cycle.

Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Evaluation, 2020

# BUILDING A SMALL DONOR DEMOCRACY

H.R.1 / S.1 initiates a small donor matching system, pilots democracy dollar vouchers, and creates People PACs, all of which build the power of small donors in our elections

## Small Donor Committees / People PACs

Regular PACs can raise unlimited funds, so they serve as a tool for the wealthy, white donor class to get together and get their way.

**People PACs**, are a tool for the rest of us. They allow base-building organizations in **Black and brown communities** to build power to make their voices heard collectively.

H.R.1 / S.1 allows candidates participating in the small donor matching program to accept contributions from People PACs (but not from regular PACs).

**\$5,000/yr**  
Traditional PACs

**\$Unlimited**  
Super PACs

**\$400/cycle**  
People PACs





**The individual policies of **H.R.1 / S.1** are powerful, but as a package, they are **transformative** and will advance a more racially equitable, **inclusive democracy**.**



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