

A Pew Research Center survey finds many Hispanics disappret the job President Donald Trump, but that sentiment may not at the election box on Tuesday, November 6, 2018. BY **DAVID CARACCIO** 

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# Capitol Alert

# The kingmakers in California's 2020 elections could be independent millennial Latinos

#### **BY EMILY CADEI**

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A Pew Research Center survey finds many Hispanics disappret the job President Donald Trump, but that sentiment may not at the election box on Tuesday, November 6, 2018. BY **DAVID CARACCIO** 

Their research, unveiled at an event in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, reveals that nearly 1.2 million Hispanic citizens registered to vote in the state between 2014 and 2018, an increase of 29 percent. That's more than double the rate of increase among non-Hispanics in California, which was 13 percent for the same time period. Another way of putting it: 2 in 5 new registered voters in California were Hispanic.

Along with Texas, that represents the largest proportion of new voters of any of the six states the research covered.

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With one election under their belts, these new, young, independent voters are now positioned to be kingmakers in California's high-stakes 2020 elections.

Decades of academic research have found that <u>voting is habit-forming</u>: the act of voting in one election <u>makes it far more likely</u> an individual will vote in subsequent elections. It's one of the reasons Democrats and allied groups worked so hard in 2018 to connect with and turn out young voters in California and particularly young Hispanic voters, demographic groups that have typically low rates of voter participation, especially in midterm elections.

A <u>number of post-election analyses</u> have found that both Hispanic voters and young voters were major factors in California's historic midterm election turnout in 2018, which was the highest its been in more than 30 years. The data from Univision and L2 reinforces those findings and sheds new light on how the new voters who came out the polls are poised to shape elections in the state, going forward.

Since 2014, the majority of new Hispanic voters in California registered as Democrat. But the percentage of Hispanics who registered as independents, or "no party preference," saw the biggest jump, from 1.1 million to 1.8 million. Those independent Hispanic voters also had the biggest increase in turnout — 200 percent since the last midterm.

A similar pattern emerges for Hispanic voters under the age of 35. Registration leapt 40 percent among that age group, while turnout increased 125 percent for Hispanics aged 18 to 24 and more than 300 percent for the 25 to 34 age bracket.

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In the presidential race, home-state candidates Kamala Harris, California's junior senator, and Rep. Eric Swalwell, have deep ties in the Bay Area and a handful of Democrats have made inroads into Los Angeles. But the Central Valley and San Diego region are firmly in play in the state's presidential primary next March.

Democratic presidential nominee Beto O'Rourke, a former congressman from Texas, <u>visited</u> <u>Modesto and Yosemite</u> on Tuesday to announce an ambitious climate change agenda.

A majority of the state's nearly 500 delegates will be awarded based on how candidates finish in congressional districts. Candidates must receive at least 15 percent of the state vote, overall, to receive those delegates.

Independent voters — the <u>fastest growing segment</u> of the state's voters — are allowed to vote in California's Democratic primary. A <u>bill being pushed</u> by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez of San Diego could increase how many of them actually participate, including many of the young Hispanics who are now part of California's electorate.

## COMMENTS -

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