



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Over One-Fifth of Voters, More Than in 2000, Plan To Vote Early,
National Annenberg Election Survey Indicates**

Twenty-two percent of America's registered voters say they have already voted or plan to vote before Election Day, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows. In a comparable period in 2000, 19 percent of registered voters either planned to vote before Election Day or had already voted.

Five percent said they have already cast their ballots, and another 17 percent said they planned to vote by absentee ballot or by going to an early voting station. At this point in 2000, 4 percent had already voted and another 15 percent said they planned to vote early at this point in the campaign."

"While no one can predict voting participation for certain," said Kate Kenski, a senior research analyst at The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania who studied the data, "the combination of the higher percentage reporting early voting -- accomplished or planned -- and the fact that such states as Florida, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Utah have adopted 'no excuse' absentee procedures to make voting easier make it likely that more votes will be cast early this year than ever before."

For 2004, the data were based on interviews with 1,940 registered voters from October 12 through October 18. The comparable period of 15 through 21 days before Election Day in 2000 was October 17 through 23, when 1,673 registered voters were interviewed. For each year's data, the margin of sampling error was plus or minus two percentage points.

"Absentee and early voting are most prevalent in the western states where 39 percent of western voters say that they have voted or plan to vote before Election Day, compared to 11 percent of those who live in the northeastern United States," said Kenski.

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Voters in urban areas were most likely to say they had voted or would vote early. For urban voters, 30 percent did not plan to wait until Election Day. In suburban areas, it was 21 percent and in rural areas, it was 18 percent.

“The term ‘Election Day’ is becoming something of a misnomer. The notion that American voters cast their ballots on a single day, Election Day, is no longer accurate,” said Kenski. “Election Day is more accurately described as the last day when voting takes place.”

Those voters who view President George W. Bush favorably were slightly less inclined to say that they had already voted or planned to vote early. Twenty percent of those who viewed Bush favorably said that they had already voted or planned to vote before Election Day. In contrast, 24 percent of those who viewed Senator John Kerry favorably said that they that they had already voted or planned to vote early.

Kate Kenski, a senior research analyst at The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania, developed the research for this report. The National Annenberg Election Survey, the largest academic election poll, is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center (www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org). It has been tracking the presidential campaign since October 7, 2003 and interviewing will continue until after Election Day. Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the director of the survey. Ken Winneg is the managing director of the survey. Adam Clymer is the political director of the survey.

Another major election project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center is FactCheck.org, a project that tries to hold politicians accountable by exposing false or misleading campaign statements. It is available online at www.FactCheck.Org.

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Tables

A. Percentages who said they planned to vote early or had already voted and those who planned to vote on Election Day. Respondents who did not know when they would vote are not shown.

%	Planned to vote early or had already voted	Planned to vote on Election Day
Total	22%	76%
Republicans	22%	76%
Democrats	25%	73%
Independents	20%	78%
Females	23%	75%
Males	22%	76%
Whites	22%	76%
African-Americans	28%	70%
Latinos	28%	69%
High school graduate or less	23%	76%
Some college, associates degree, or technical training after high school	23%	74%
Four-year college degree or more	22%	77%
18 to 29 yrs old	24%	72%
30 to 44 yrs old	22%	76%
45 to 64 yrs old	19%	79%
65 yrs old or older	28%	70%
Household income below \$35,000	27%	71%
\$35,000 to less than \$75,000	21%	78%
\$75,000 or more	20%	78%
Union household	25%	74%
Northeast	11%	88%
Midwest	15%	83%
South	24%	73%
West	39%	59%
Conservatives	23%	75%
Moderates	22%	75%
Liberals	21%	78%
Urban	30%	69%
Suburban	21%	77%
Rural	18%	81%

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B. Planned to vote early or has already voted and those who planned to vote on Election Day.

	Planned to vote early or had already voted	Planned to vote on Election Day
People Who View Bush:		
Favorably	20%	78%
Unfavorably	25%	73%
Neutral	25%	74%
People who view Kerry:		
Favorably	24%	75%
Unfavorably	20%	77%
Neutral	24%	74%

Survey Methodology

The National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) is a survey conducted each presidential election by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

The 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey is based on telephone interviews which began October 7, 2003 and will continue past Election Day.

The sample of telephone exchanges called was randomly selected by a computer from a complete list of thousands of active residential exchanges across the country. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. Within each household, one adult was designated by a random procedure to be the respondent for the survey. The interviewing is conducted by Schulman, Ronca, Bucuvalas, Inc.

The results have been weighted to take account of household size and number of telephone lines into the residence and to adjust for variation in the sample relating to geographic region, sex, race, age and education.

This report deals with two interviewing periods. From October 12 through 18, 1,940 registered voters who said they intended to vote were interviewed. From October 17 through 23, 2000, 1,673 registered voters who said they intended to vote were interviewed. In theory, in 19 out of 20 cases, results for all registered voters will differ by no more than two percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all American adults over the same time periods. For smaller subgroups, the margin of sampling error would be higher.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Variations in the wording and order of questions, for example, may lead to somewhat different results.

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