



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Early Voting Already Exceeds Record Levels,
National Annenberg Election Survey Shows**

Early voting is proceeding at a record pace, with 14 percent of registered voters saying they have already voted, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

That exceeded the 13 percent who told the 2000 Annenberg Survey in post-election interviews that they voted before Election Day. Another 11 percent, in the polling conducted through Wednesday, said they planned to vote before the rest of the country goes to the polls next Tuesday. At this point in the 2000 campaign, 11 percent told Annenberg they had already voted and another 9 percent said they planned to vote early.

"The term 'Election Day' is becoming something of a misnomer," said Kate Kenski, a senior research analyst at the Annenberg Public Policy, who studied the data. The notion that American voters cast their ballots on the first Tuesday in November is becoming an anachronism. In fact, Election Day is more accurately described as the last day when Americans can vote."

"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 all but certain that more votes will be cast early this year than ever before," said Kenski.

The findings were based on interviews with 1,914 registered voters from October 23 through October 27. The comparable period of 6 through 10 days before Election Day in 2000 was October 28 through November 1, when 1,290 registered voters were interviewed. For this year, the margin of sampling error was plus or minus two percentage points, and for 2000 it was plus or minus three percentage points.

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"Voting before Election Day is most popular in the western states," said Kenski, "with 23 percent of voters saying that they have already cast their ballots compared to 4 percent of those who live in the northeastern United States."

Latinos reported higher levels of early voting than whites and African-Americans. Twenty-three percent of Latinos said that they had already cast their ballots, while 14 percent of whites and 14 percent of African-Americans reported that they had already voted. The higher rate may result in part from the fact Latino respondents were more likely to reside in western states.

Voters committed to George W. Bush were slightly less inclined to say that they would vote early than Kerry backers. Nine percent of the Bush voters said they planned to vote before Election Day and 14 percent said they already had. In contrast, 13 percent of voters committed to John Kerry said they planned to vote early and 15 percent said they had already voted.

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

Percentages who said they plan to vote early, have already voted and plan to vote on Election Day. Respondents who did not know when or if they would vote are not shown.

	Plan to vote early	Already voted	Plan to vote on Election Day
Total	11%	14%	71%
Republicans	9%	14%	75%
Democrats	12%	15%	69%
Independents	12%	13%	71%
Committed to Bush	9%	14%	75%
Committed to Kerry	13%	15%	69%
Persuadable	13%		78%
Men	11%	15%	70%
Women	11%	13%	72%
Whites	10%	14%	73%
African-Americans	21%	14%	58%
Latinos	8%	23%	63%
High school graduate or less	11%	12%	70%
Some college, associates degree, or technical training	10%	15%	73%
Four-year college degree or more	12%	15%	71%
18 to 29 yrs old	16%	13%	63%
30 to 44 yrs old	11%	11%	74%
45 to 64 yrs old	11%	13%	73%
65 yrs old or older	7%	20%	71%
Household income below \$35,000	12%	13%	69%
\$35,000 to less than \$75,000	10%	13%	73%
\$75,000 or more	12%	15%	71%
Union household	11%	12%	73%
Northeast	7%	4%	86%
Midwest	4%	10%	82%
South	16%	17%	62%
West	15%	23%	59%
Conservatives	11%	15%	70%
Moderates	12%	14%	73%
Liberals	11%	12%	69%
Urban	12%	14%	69%
Suburban	10%	14%	72%
Rural	11%	13%	72%

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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 three interviewing periods. From October 23 through 27, 2004, 1,914 registered voters were interviewed. From October 27 through November 1, 2000, 1,290 registered voters were interviewed. In theory, in 19 out of 20 cases, results on the question of whether they have already voted for all registered voters will differ by less 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, such as committed Bush voters or committed Kerry voters, the margin of sampling error would be higher.

The report also deals with a post-election survey conducted in 2000. From November 8 through December 19, 4,411 registered voters were interviewed. The margin of sampling error on the question of whether they had voted early was less than one percentage point, up or down.

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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