



Voter Concerns and Attitudes about California's November 2020 Election

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Project Overview

Motivation:

Voting in California will change this November, so outreach should change with it.

Aims:

- Assess needs for low-propensity voters in November 2020
- Probe awareness of voting options and voting mode preferences
- Explore messages that motivate and inform
- Deliver recommendations to larger ecosystem of community organizations and election officials





CHIRLA
Coalition for Humane
Immigrant Rights



KRC
korean resource center





Design and Implementation

Target: First-time and low-propensity voters

Method: Focus group interviews + community advisors

Strategy: Multi-stage, multiple stakeholders, collaborative



Timeline

Mid-June:

Building
community
advisory group

End-June/Early July:

Recruit focus group participants
Screener survey, Zoom primers
(translation, troubleshooting, etc.)

Mid-July:

Conduct focus groups
Some monolingual (eg.
Korean), some mixed (eg.
Tagalog)

End of June:

Train-the-trainer
sessions









Early July:

Craft custom focus group
guides (translate, select
appropriate messages,
etc.)

End of July:

Report with full
findings released
soon.

Snapshot of focus group sessions

Language	Advisory Group	Participants	Age	Geography	Date
English (Youth)	 	14	17-25	Inland Empire	July 13
Hmong		8	26-56	Fresno	July 12
Korean		16	33-65	LA	July 9
Spanish		10	27-63	Bay Area / Central / SoCal	July 9
Tagalog/English		9	18-62	Bay Area / NorCal	July 9
Vietnamese		18	18-78	OC / LA	July 8
Mandarin		13	35-55	OC/ LA / Bay Area	July 7

Key Impressions

1. Sense of duty and understanding power mobilizes people to vote
2. Trusted messengers and information sources vary by group
3. Elevated preference to vote by mail or drop-off because Covid-19
4. Concerns about mail-in ballot link to whether vote will be counted
5. Concerns about drop-off are about box locations and availability
6. Explaining verification and tracking services alleviates VBM concerns
7. Recommendations for broader representation in voter messaging
8. Community expertise was key to executing and completing project

“I vote because others can’t.”

- 47 yo, woman, Los Angeles County, Spanish language focus group

“Be that the issue of the pandemic, or social movements such as Black Lives Matter, I am very concerned ... about what future generations will have to deal with, their safety and survival... through voting we express our demands.”

- 59 yo, man, Orange County, Korean language focus group



Motivations to Vote

Civic duty and voice

- Sense of obligation
- Privilege

Power

- Want to vote out of office a high-profile incumbent
- Desire for policy change and community improvement
- Contribute to decision-making process

“Coming from a family that doesn’t want to vote or are scared, scared for their background information to be shared,..., we need more reassurance in our community to understand it’s okay to vote.”

- Under 25 yo, woman, Alameda County, Tagalog/English focus group

“[I]n my Vietnamese community... the important question is, “Who will be the spokesperson?”

- 52 yo, woman, Orange County, Vietnamese focus group

Trusted Messenger and Info Sources: Screener

“When it comes to getting messages about voting, what are the different ways that you have received messages for voting?”

- Most marked three or more sources
- Voter guides and other materials from local election officials
- Ethnic media for non-English, monolingual communities
- Social media: not just for youth!

Trusted Messenger and Info Sources: Focus Group

- Community anchor organizations
- Official election sources: online and for deadlines and rules
- Family/friends: among those who use word-of-mouth
- Traditional and ethnic media: radio, television and print
- Social media: linked to age and ethnic group

How will you vote this November? Focus Group

“Will polling stations and equipment be sanitized?”

- 49 yo, woman, Fremont, Tagalog/English focus group

“Drop box! Especially when you are leaving in the morning ... just drop your ballot on the way, save time.”

- 52 yo, man, Los Angeles, Korean language focus group

“I don’t want to go out... I will do it by mail.”

- 38 yo, woman, Redwood City, Spanish language focus group

“Is there an option to vote online, just like the Census 2020?”

- 56 yo, woman, San Francisco, Chinese focus group

Shift to mail-in and drop box for November 2020

GROUP	Pre-focus group Usually vote in-person	During Focus Group Plan to vote in-person November 2020	Change*
Hmong	2 in 8	1 in 8	25% → 13%
Korean	5 in 16	1 in 16	31% → 6%
Chinese	6 in 10	0 in 10	60% → 0%
Tagalog	4 in 9	2 in 9	44% → 22%
Vietnamese	7 in 18	2 in 18	39% → 11%
Spanish	6 in 10	2 in 10	60% → 20%
English/Youth	6 in 14	1 in 14	43% → 7%



ALERT*: People still want in-person services!
“I found those volunteers who work at the voter center very diligent and helpful.” - elder from Chinese Focus Group

How will you vote this November? Focus Group



In-person: Some interest because of services provided, but greater hesitancy in 2020



Mail-in: Highest interest and enthusiasm, some concern about delivery and vote is counted



Drop box: Great interest and enthusiasm, questions about locations and availability in my county

When will you vote this November? Focus Group

Not asked explicitly. However...community advisors from:

- Chinese group: People prefer taking time to learn about candidates and propositions on the ballot
- Vietnamese group: They enjoy having the time to research and fill out the ballot
- Korean group: Participants are concerned about receiving timely instructions for voting
- Hmong group: With VBM, community can get support from family and trusted organization and time to complete the ballot

Reactions to voter outreach material

- Six different videos: Fresno, OC, LA, and CA SoS
- Five different print materials: Fresno, Napa, San Bernardino
- Four different slogans and phrases: Fresno, San Bernardino
- Some voters see material outside of their jurisdiction
- Custom and in consultation with community advisory group

Praise of voter outreach material

Print

- Visuals and symbols are helpful
- Clean and simple graphics to convey key information

Video:

- More engaging than “old” outreach material
- Translations and voice narration follow imagery presented
- Packed with great information that answers questions

Critiques of voter outreach material

Print

- Text is too lengthy in some postcard and flyer material
- Not motivating for first-time voters, “feels like not for me”
- Translations limited to procedures and “how-to’s”

Video:

- Where are the people who look like my friends and family?
- Backgrounds and scenarios feel corporate and “high-class”

Suggestions for voter outreach material

Print

- Use symbols, calendars, checklists, drop box location maps
- Translate candidate and proposition details
- From elders: keep the “official” look and add hotline

Video:

- Make sure narration matches information presented
- Add blue-collar scenarios and family in public settings like parks
- Finish clip with community leaders at the end to offer help

Example Reaction to Outreach Flyer



“Maybe having a visual of masks, drop box, or a calendar of all the “More Ways”... to indicate each of those things would be helpful.” - 22 yo, woman, Upper Marlboro

Facilitator Probe: “If the word “Safety” was implemented in the messaging how would that influence your decision to vote?”

“I think not clarifying it’s safe during COVID is [more of] a barrier not to vote than not having it on at all.” – 25 yo, male, Chino Hills

Example Reaction to Outreach Flyer

Fresno County VCA flyers - (Hmong) Flyer 2-Up & (English) Flyer 2-Up

- Hmong translated materials, text is too lengthy
- Participants want flyers with more visuals and infographics like calendar with the timeline.
- Include graphics that are culturally relevant.
- It also did not inspire or motivate the participants to vote. One of the participants expressed that she felt this flyer was for someone who was already 'motivated' to vote.


★ **VOTE** ★
FRESNO COUNTY
MORE DAYS. MORE WAYS.
vote.fresnocounty.com

Pib nyob rau thaum Lub Peb Hlis Ntuj Xyoo 2020 ua qib xub thawj, nws muaj ib txoj hauv kev tshiab los xaiv tsa hauv Lub Nroog Fresno. Nyeem kom paub ntau ntxiv txog cov kev xaiv tshiab yooj yim uas muaj rau cov neeg xaiv tsa hauv qab no.

XA NWS MUS.

Txhua cov neeg xaiv tsa hauv Lub Nroog Fresno yuav tau txais ib daim npav xaiv tsa raws kev xa ntawv nyob rau cov lim piam ua ntej kev xaiv tsa, yog li ntawd koj tsis tas yuav tau thov daim npav xaiv tsa raws kev xa ntawv yam meej tseeb txhij txhua. Koj tuaj yeem xa koj daim npav xaiv tsa tuaj yam tus nqi xa dawb xwb.

MUAB NWS TSO RAU.

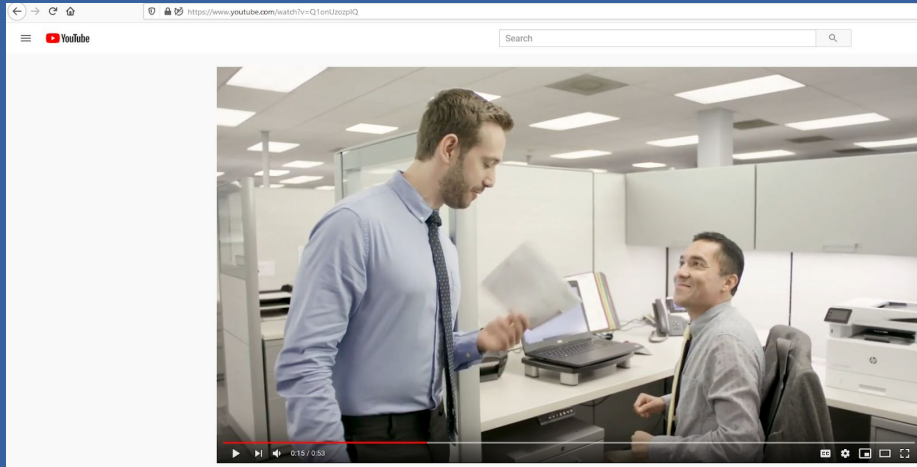
Xa tsa nyob rau thaum ntov yam muab koj daim npav pov rau hauv lub thawj! Koj yuav muaj lub hwm tsam yooj yim dua los xaiv tsa nyob rau hnuab thiab lub sij hawm uas raug raws koj lub ciaj teev tseg.

MUS SAIB.

Koj tuaj yeem rau npe los xaiv tsa, hloov koj qhov chaw nyob, hloov koj tog neeg nom tswv los sis txais ib daim npav xaiv tsa los hloov chaw nyob rau ntawm txhua Lub Chaw Pov Npav, tab txawv yog nyob rau Hnuab Xaiv Tsa.

Txhawm rau kuaj xyuas koj li kev rau npe ua tus neeg xaiv tsa thiab nyeem kom paub ntau ntxiv txog cov kev xa raws Tsab Cai Hais Txog Tus Neeg Pov Npav Txoj Kev Xaiv hauv Lub Nroog Fresno, suab nrog cov kev xav thauj mus los dawb, ntau hom ntau ntawv paub thiab cov hauv kev ADA, mus saib hauv tus vev xaib hauv qab no.

Reaction to voter mobilization / information videos



Orange County Registrar, “Vote From Home”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1onUzozpIQ>

“Add someone driving up to the box and dropping ballot. That would show it is safer.” - 51 yo, woman, Spanish language focus group

When I saw the drop box across from the Arirang Market in Fullerton, it was impressively big, you can't miss it. What a genial idea, I thought” – 59 yo, man, Korean focus group

I think it's targeting a specific demographic. It's not representing all people, It's not very inclusive..” – 18 yo, woman, Youth focus group

So instead of that environment maybe more family orientated like at a local park.” - 18 yo, Coachella, Youth focus group

Reaction to voter mobilization / information videos



Fresno, “Mail it, Drop it.” Hmong Voice Over

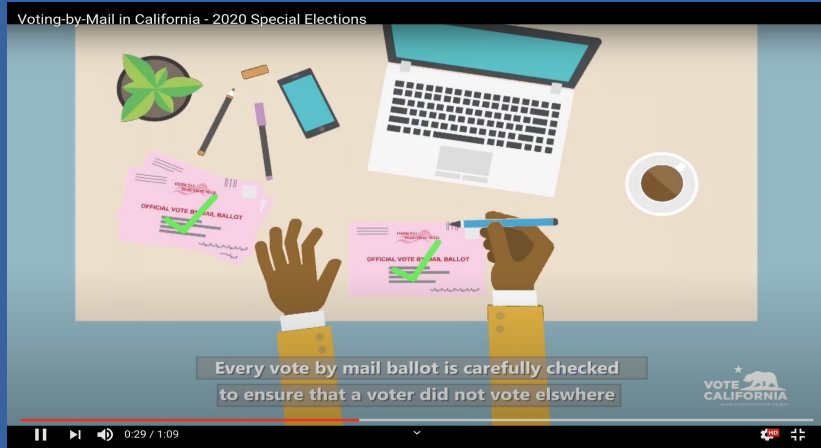
<https://www.co.fresno.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=41171>

“They should add someone from The Fresno Center or Hmong Innovating Politics on the video ... someone they can trust locally about voting”

- 29 yo, male, Hmong focus group

“A hotline phone number of location would be more beneficial for elders than a website link because elders have limited computer skills.” - 29 yo, woman, Hmong focus group

Reaction to voter mobilization / information videos



CA Secretary of State, “Voting by Mail in California -- 2020 Special Elections”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqLL-QGQVkw>

“Lots of good information, but it went too fast.”

- 41 yo, woman, Spanish language focus group

“Add that “everyone counts” message, like they do with the Census.” - 17 yo, woman, English/Youth focus group

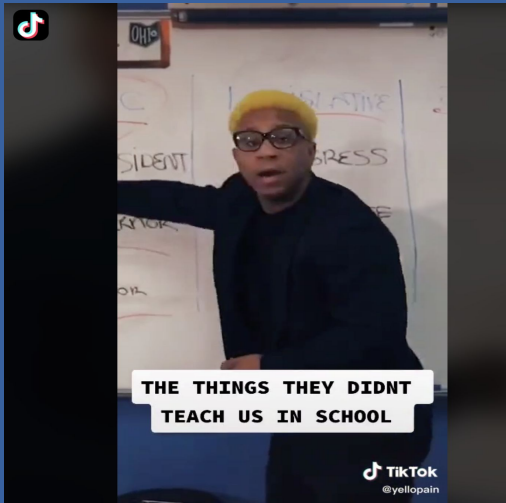
“This makes me feel better that my vote will be counted because I can track it.”

- 20 yo, woman, Tagalog language focus group

“This would motivate and demystify the process of voting, especially for first time voters.”

- 49yo, woman, Korean language focus group

Reaction to voter mobilization / information videos



Yellopain, “The Things They Don’t Teach us in School” on TikTok

https://www.tiktok.com/@yellopain/video/6839913702548983046?source=h5_m



“This video is motivational.”

- 25 yo, man, English/Youth focus group

“It caught my attention because it was musical...helpful in teaching basic information that it’s about us...”

- 18 yo, woman, English/Youth focus group

“Love that this emphasizes local elections.”

- 20 yo, woman, English/Youth focus group

Reaction to outreach and mobilization phrases

“Be heard November 3rd”: okay

“We Rise Together”: well liked

“People Power Starts Here”: mobilizing

“Our Voice. Our Vote”: mobilizing

“Strengths in Numbers”: okay



Recommendations to Election Officials

Recommendation #1

If in-person voting available, make COVID-19 rules clear and enforced.

Recommendation #2

Demographically representative and culturally relevant outreach and information material.

Recommendation #3

Messaging collaboration between Election officials and cultural experts from community advisory groups.

Recommendation #4

Use simple visuals in voting and outreach materials. Clean symbols and graphics

Recommendation #5

Convene similar efforts as the one producing this report early on to coordinate across levels of expertise and authority.

Recommendations to Community Organizations

Recommendation #1

Keep emphasizing importance of community anchors as trusted messengers

Recommendation #2

Collaborate with ethnic media -- synergy with other trusted messengers.

Recommendation #3

When creating your own material, stick with simple, clean graphics that are easy to understand for visual learners.

Recommendation #4

Prepare information regarding impact of specific policies -- our communities want to know this

Recommendation #5

We encourage you to convene remote meetings with your communities -- now more than ever, our community wants to connect and be heard.



Share with your communities
WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov

Additional resources on COVID-19 and voter attitudes

Future of California Elections website

<https://futureofcaelections.org/wp-content/uploads/M-Romero-Presentation-Ballots-During-COVID-19-NES-MAY-21-2020-REVISED-With-Link-1.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7fxMHEy3I4&feature=youtu.be>





Thank you!





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Reflections from Community Partner Organizations



Question and Answers

We Are Available!

Center for Social Innovation at UC Riverside and California Common Cause are available for consultation between now and Election Day in November.



Social Media



<https://www.commoncause.org/california/>



@CommonCauseCA



Twitter: @CommonCauseCA



<https://socialinnovation.ucr.edu/>



@CSIUCR



Twitter: @CSIUCR



Linkedin: Center for Social Innovation, UCR



END