



SPECIAL PRESENTATION

“LATINO VOTERS: MISCONCEPTIONS AND REALITY”

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MR. DAN RESTREPO: Good morning. My name's Dan Restrepo. I'm the director of the Americas Project here at the Center for American Progress. On behalf of all us who work here at the Center for American Progress, I want to thank you all for coming. On behalf of our partner in this, NCLR, we are very pleased to be partnering with NCLR on this important event, which we hope will be a very lively discussion today. I'm going to be very quick before turning it over to our panelists, who are the real experts. I'm not going to dare talk about numbers in light of the folks who are going to follow me. I'm going to leave that to them.

The Americas Project here at the Center is focused on the U.S. relationship with and place in the Americas. Today obviously speaks to the place in the Americas. The interconnections with the rest of the Americas are transforming the United States as know it today. One of the key engines of that transformation is the Latino community and Latino communities in the United States. To better understand how they're shaping the direction of public policy in this country, it probably behooves us all to understand them as voters. Away from the distorting effects of the end of an election cycle, the political class in this town and elsewhere in this country to the extent it pays attention to Latino voters does so usually as summer turns into fall in even numbered years, or if there being particularly enlightened as spring turns into summer of even numbered years.

But we're going to try taking a step back and look at it without that distorting effect, without the crunch of the political crunch time, if you will. And also at the dawn – the return of what we expect to be the immigration debate on Capitol Hill again. Obviously an issue that is of importance, as you will hear today, it is not the only issue the voters with the Latino community. I think that bears repeating for all who are listening as we head into what will be the return of the immigration debate to Capitol Hill.

A couple of things on what we're not doing here today. We're not looking for a consensus. I expect it would be hard to find. I think we're going to get a lively debate and a lively discussion. We're not here to provide advice to any particular political party. That is not our role. It is decidedly not what we're here to do today. We're looking to – I guess – flesh out the caricature of the Latino voter, to discuss what resonates with those voters and where they may be headed.

I'm now going to leave you all in the very capable hands of Geri Mannion from the Carnegie Corporation, whom we're particularly pleased is serving as the moderator for this first panel. I think in keeping with what will be the moderator's approach is I'm not going to read people's bios. You all have them. It's better to hear and learn from the folks we have gathered here today than to listen to me any further. So I'm going to turn it over to what I hope will be a very interesting and lively conversation.

Thank you very much.

MS. GERI MANNION: Thank you all for coming out this morning on a freaky day, snowy and slushy. I'm Geri Mannion. I direct the Strengthening U.S. Democracy Program at Carnegie Corporation, which is a private foundation, and one of our goals is to increase civic engagement in the United States. That includes voting, but other forms of participation as well. For decades actually, we have been engaged in trying to particularly focus on low propensity voters and among those, of course, are Latino voters.

More recently, we've been very involved in following the demographic shifts in our country, as we'll hear about today, and the increasing number of immigrants in the U.S. and especially the dispersion of those immigrants to many, many new areas of the country and often places in which they've never had immigrant flows before.

So our focus at Carnegie, which is a private foundation, is on immigrant civic integration: how do we help immigrant really become part and parcel of the American political, economic, and societal frame?

Now, this morning we have great panels in front of us and we're going to talk about the Latino electorate. There's been a lot said about it and especially after last year the demonstrations have shown that there are incredible numbers of both Latinos and other immigrants who are willing to go to the streets and put their voices out there. The question still is, I think, an open one: is this is a sleeping giant amongst the Latino electorate especially or not? And I think this morning we'll look and hear some of the demographic profiles of that electorate, which is incredibly diverse and often very young, but like many others in the entire pantheon of politics in the U.S. will probably make a very huge and influential impact on the U.S.

So I am now not going to read the bios, but I'm going to introduce our panelists. We will try to get them to be very short. We try to keep them from 10 to 12 minutes in their presentation so that this could become a discussion so hopefully you'll think of questions and ideas that you'd like to present to the panel afterwards, and we will hopefully have a great and fun time. Okay.

So the first – I guess I will introduce you all together, so we can just go down on the line. And as you know, in your packets are the full biographies. Luis Fraga is at Stanford University, political scientist, and with Gary Segura who's at Washington State University and also the director – I have to read this, otherwise I'd never get it right – the director of the Washington Institute for the Study of Ethnicity, Race and Sexuality. Gary and Luis are the two primary principal investigators on the Latino National Survey, which has been the first time a major national survey in almost over 15 years. That's been done the last three years and they will present some of their findings.

They will be followed by Clarissa Martinez De Castro, who's the director of state policy and advocacy at the National Council of La Raza. And finally, by Ruy Teixeira who's a joint fellow both at the Center for American Progress and Century Foundation.

And Ruy, as we all know, will obviously provide some potentially contrary viewpoints on what will be suggested beforehand, and he's always interesting and interestingly so.

With that, I think Gary's going to go first and then followed by Luis.

MR. GARY SEGURA: Good morning. I would be fired if – I hate to correct my distinguished introducer, but I'm at the University of Washington, not Washington State.

MS. MANNION: Did I say – I'm sorry.

MR. SEGURA: And in Washington that would be an extremely big deal.

MS. MANNION: At least I didn't say it was D.C. (Laughs.)

MR. SEGURA: No, that's true. It is the other Washington, as last night's plane flight can attest.

I want to talk today about the Latino National Survey. There's lots of folks who survey Latinos for political purposes, some of whom are in this room in fact. We actually survey Latinos for academic purposes and we specifically set out to not do a survey associated with the presidential election, but instead to try to get a feel for a whole variety of aspects of Latino life in the United States. And what you see there is the list of collaborators and you'll see under Luis' name that the University of Washington is also listed, because Luis is moving to U.W. this summer, so we're pleased to be having him.

And in addition, our colleague John Garcia is in the audience there, so he can speak for himself if you have to. There's us at Cornell. We took a picture. We figured it should be on the cover of the book jacket or something. We had a lot of funders who paid for the survey and we appreciate their support, including the Carnegie Corporation and our program office, who is sitting at the other end of the table, so we are indebted to her – making me feel even worse for correcting her about Washington State, but we do appreciate the support.

What did we do? We did a national telephone survey of 8,600 Latino residents in the United States. That number 8,600 is pretty important because as the survey researchers in the room know, numbers buy you analytical power. You can do a lot more with a lot more interviews, but it also makes it more expensive. And we tried to think a broad nature – a broad understanding of the qualitative nature of Latino social and political life. We did the sample state-stratified, so that each of the state sub-samples are in themselves valid samples, so that if people are interested in doing analysis at just at the state level, they can do that.

It's approximately 40 minutes long. We did it in English and in Spanish. The universe was all Latino adults from the United States, not just citizens or permanent residents. There's a variety of things that we included in the survey and I'm not going to go through these in any depth because we want to focus today on participation and the

electorate, but there's going to be a web address at the end of this presentation and all of the information, including the questionnaire, is posted and available for download.

So there's the states that we did. We did 15 states and the District of Columbia – a statistical metropolitan area. And our resulting demographics look a lot like what the Census Bureau tells us. There was a few bits of variation. For example, our Spanish-language respondents were consistently higher than the Census would have predicted, suggesting that the Census is continuing to undercount particularly recent arrivals.

And I'm going to talk first about this question of assimilation of values and identity and the reason I'm going to talk about this is, as you know, among the most politicized aspect of Latinos' presence in the United States is whether or not they'll be a full member.

We drew a sample based on identified Hispanic households through a variety of factors including surname. However, ultimately they define themselves. They had the opportunity to answer yes or no, are you Latino of Hispanic?

One of the big politicized aspects of the Latino presence in the United States is the question of whether or not they are part of the United States, part of the polity, part of the culture, or do they stand alone. This is the subject of a variety of controversial books, et cetera, and something that we thought we would devote a little bit of attention to.

If you'll look at language proficiency – this is the results from the survey – by the fourth generation, everyone is answering in English. Frankly, by the second generation, three-quarters are answering in English and another 20 percent are English fluent, even though they answered the survey in Spanish. So you see very, very high English proficiency – above 93 percent – by the time you have the first generation U.S.-born. So first generation here is referring to foreign-born individuals.

It is also worth noting; however, that Spanish language retention tends to remain relatively high and the reason for this is likely that there's a constant refreshing of the Spanish language speaking population, so that even subsequent generations don't necessarily entirely lose the skill. Importance of learning English; however, remains very high.

One of the myths is that, of course, immigrants don't want to learn English and it turns out that even among the first generation, 99.3 percent answer that it is somewhat or very important for everyone in the United States to learn to speak English. And those numbers remain high, although curiously the very number drops as the somewhat number goes up over the course of generations. Ironically, those generations all speak English, so it's not clear what that means.

How important it is to maintain Spanish? Well, it's pretty important. People seem to think that that's an important cultural marker. How strongly do you think of yourself as an American? This is another question that you frequently hear asked and we

asked it in comparison to how strongly do you think of yourself as Cuban or Mexican or Puerto Rican or whatever the nationality group was. And what you'll see is that the number of people identifying as American is actually relatively high even in the first generation – over 50 percent say somewhat or very strongly – and jumps into the 70s and then into the 90s by the time you get to the third generation.

At the same time, there's a consistently strong identification with national origin group. It just happens that over the course of time the very stronglies decline and then somewhat stronglies have come, but people don't lose that nationality identity.

It turns out that the question of pan-ethnic identity – do Latinos across national origin groups think of each other as part of a community – the answer is increasingly yes. Far more so – the last academic survey done on Latinos was done in 1989, a long time ago, and they found that there was no Latino – no Mexican thought of a Puerto Rican as someone who had a common interest or whatever, and in fact we find substantial increase in commonalities, so that people who are using pan-ethnic identifying terms and people who are expressly saying that they have things in common with other groups – that number has gone up consistently.

I'm going to actually probably skip this one in the interest of time. Okay, now what are some markers of assimilation that people who are assimilation scholars frequently look at? If we're to believe Samuel Huntington, Protestantism is a key element of American society. And lo and behold, Roman Catholic percentages among Latinos drop like a stone across the first four generations. It is still a predominantly Catholic population, but the stereotype that every Mexican or every Puerto Rican is Catholic is clearly not the case.

In terms of social capital, which is something that Geri's program is very interested in – this is group participation – we found outrageously high levels of group participation and we actually probed them on this. And people are actually becoming involved in a variety of activities such that by the N-generation – the people who have been here several generations – over a third of them report being members of some form of social or political organization.

Military service – again, if you or a member of your close family has served in the military, those numbers jump up to almost 50 percent by the second generation. That's something that has considerable interest in current circumstances. The education less than high school – we often talk about the high Latino high school dropout rate. It turns out that by the second generation only 23 percent have less than a high school education and that number drops considerably again in the third and fourth generation, so why do we say that there's this high Latino drop out rate? Well, there is; it's just that they're almost all in the first generation, so we have this very bad educational performance in the first generation, which clearly needs some effort directed at it, but it's not as bad as all that once you get to the second and third generation.

Household income again climbed with – there’s an interesting blip in the third generation. And marriage outside the group, which is often considered a marker of cultural assimilation – over half of all Latinos by the fourth generation marry non-Latinos for spouses.

Attention to politics: attention to U.S. politics tends to be relatively high. It’s not particularly high in any American on average, but it’s relatively high for the Latinos. And attention to home country politics – this notion that they’re paying attention to what’s happening in the nationality of origin – is actually very little, so those numbers are actually people who answered they pay little or no attention to their home country politics, and you can see almost 75 percent say that’s the case. About 57 percent of foreign-born respondents say that they should be able to vote in home country elections, but only 4 percent of them have ever done so.

And I guess I’m going to turn it over to Luis at this point and let him talk about the subject of voter turnout. As he walks up, I’ll tell you about this last slide I’m going to reference. In terms of cultural assimilation and distinctness, we asked them if it’s important for Latinos to change so that they can blend into the larger society and overwhelmingly they told us yes. And then we asked them, is it important for Latinos to maintain their distinct culture, and overwhelmingly they told us yes. And, in fact, those answers are positively correlated in every generation, so I think that population doesn’t see it as an either/or proposition. And I’m going to let you go through some of these.

MR. LUIS FRAGA: Okay. They’ll be posted on the website address and other slides, additional slides – we’re actually giving a talk later this afternoon. We made a presentation at the Woodrow Wilson Center as well earlier – I guess in December – and that’s up on the website as well. So as we get more information out, we put it all up on the website. You’ll see it there at the end.

I’m going to try to be quick within my seven-minute time limit that we have. Just a quick snapshot of what our survey shows about the nature of Latino political participation and especially about patterns of Latino partisanship.

First, this is a slide that indicates what Latino interest is in politics, if I’m correct. No? I thought this was – I was looking for the laser pointer, if there is one. That takes us time. Notice that for all of our respondents there is a high response to not being interested among all respondents, but notice if one aggregates somewhat interested with very interested, there’s a relatively high level of interest among all of our respondents.

Notice, however, that it drops off considerably, especially being very interested among non-citizens, and drops off for naturalized citizens as well. So we see a pattern across generations, I think it’s fair to say, that is not particularly surprising, but a level of self-described interest in politics that I think maybe higher than what many people would anticipate.

This is election participation among U.S.-born and naturalized citizens. Notice that in terms of whether or not individuals were asked to give money, registered, voted, and so forth, there are consistently higher patterns of participation on a variety of measures. The U.S.-born compared to the naturalized, but overall higher patterns, I think you would say, than many of us would traditionally understand based upon what some of the previous research would suggest. Almost twice as many U.S.-born as naturalized eligible to participate; significantly more U.S.-born than naturalized asked to vote; more U.S.-born registered voted than naturalized; significantly more U.S.-born voted for Kerry than for Bush by 18 percent; more naturalized citizens also voted for Kerry, but the gap is less than one would think before.

Gender differences in electoral participation: Latinas were a significantly larger share of the eligible participants, depending upon and again using self-described measures of participation. More Latino men asked to participate than Latinas. Latinas participated at higher rates. Both Latinas and Latinos voted more for Kerry than Bush, but significantly more Latinas voted for Kerry than voted for Bush in the last election.

Now, patterns of partisanship in what may be of greatest interest in just the last few minutes that I have here. These are the overall patterns of partisanship that we find from our survey. Now, we're describing partisanship here in an aggregated fashion. It's not just how you're registered to vote. We actually had two additional prompts. We asked them as well, if you're not registered for one particular political party, with which party do you identify most? And then if they still said "decline to state" or "no preference," we prompted them one more time, well, when do you choose to link yourself to a political party, which one do you identify with most? What you see in the patterns here is a roughly two-to-one margin – if we have the sound connected, you would hear a chime as soon as that red circle comes up, but I forgot to ask for the sound to be connected.

The overall pattern is a two-to-one margin – Democrat/Republican – for the U.S.-born as well. Notice as well that the "don't care" and "don't know" is highest for those who were born outside of the United States. This is aggregated across those three prompts. If you just ask people based upon registration whether or not they are Democrat or Republican, there is a three-to-one Democrat margin.

Partisanship among citizens – now, the previous slide was for everyone. This is just among citizens. So if one is talking about partisan patterns, citizens make the most sense. If one looks at it just in terms of citizens, the same patterns of a two-to-one margin exist for the U.S.-born as well as for the naturalized. Notice that the number of independents is slightly higher among the naturalized, but not by any significant margin. Notice as well that those who are not registered do not show the same two-to-one Democrat pattern that is demonstrated before. One might think of that as potential Republican opportunity for individuals to become engaged in the political process. Notice as well that for the not registered, they have the highest reported rates of not caring or not knowing about the political parties.

Quickly, differences by gender. We find relatively few differences by gender, although slightly less propensity on the part of Latinas. These are citizen numbers – slightly less propensity to identify Republican. Citizenship and issue positions – last four slides that I want to present to you trying to get at not just what the patterns of partisanship are, but also trying to get at what the patterns of partisanship tell us about important issues. This was a response to the question “what do you think is the most important problem facing the country today?” and what one sees in terms of differences between citizens and non-citizens is that roughly, they identified – now, our survey occurred from December of 2005 through August, but most of it was done between, I would say, February and August. We took time off during the Christmas holiday because of the tradition in many Latin American countries of people who are here to go back to the home country so to not bias our sample, we didn’t sample very many people. We just did callbacks during that period of time. So this was the time, in other words, when the Iraq war was extremely significant.

Notice the patterns there. Notice as well that illegal immigration, when you ask the question “what’s the most important issue facing the country?” did not score particularly high, but was there – but was there for Latinos as well.

Partisanship and issue positions now facing the country separated out by partisanship, by those who identify according to our three prompts as Democrat or Republican. Notice again that across Democrats, Republicans, and independents the Iraq war ranks highest. Notice that illegal immigration is still there, but noticeably less as an important issue facing the country.

Now, partisanship and issue positions regarding which party do you think is most able to address the identified issue before; that is, for the Democrats we asked the question: which political party has a better approach to address this problem? For the Republicans we asked the same question: which political party do you think has the best approach to addressing this problem? And what you find is that the Democrats are noticeably more confident in the ability of the Democratic Party. Whether that’s realistic or not, we did not ask about, but there’s a perception. Democrats are much more confident than their party, I would suggest, than the Republicans are – just from the previous slide – than the Republicans are, but not surprisingly you get plurality responses. Perhaps the most significant plurality response, though, is in the neither category, which my laser pointer won’t allow me see – the third column going down.

Neither political party is the winner, if you will, between the two, but for those who have a preference, it’s clear that the Democrats have a higher level of confidence in their party than the Republican identifiers do.

Three more slides. Citizenship and issue positions on “what do you think is the most important problem facing Latinos today rather than the country?” Most important problem facing Latinos, and what you find here is illegal immigration jumps to the top. So there’s an interesting separation when you ask what’s the most important issue facing the country and ask separately what’s the most important issue facing Latinos in the

United States today. There, according to our responses, illegal immigration jumps to the top; education and schools drops down, especially for non-citizens, which is interesting.

Then we have, finally, for partisanship and issue positions, if you separate out Democratic, Republican, and independent identifiers, notice that illegal immigration still rises to the top as the most important issue. Notice as well that education and schools rises to the level of number two across all of those groups.

And our final slide, if I can get it – thank you. Our final slide, partisanship and issue positions, preferred party to address the problem facing Latinos, which political party do you think has a better approach to address this problem? This is a fascinating slide and the only that you really need to remember. I just say that to keep your attention and so that Geri won't cut me off since we've gone over our time.

Notice how confident Latino Democratic identifiers are in the ability of the Democratic Party to have a better approach to addressing whatever they identified as the most important problem facing Latinos. Notice how different the pattern is for Latino Republican identifiers. Notice that they have just about as much confidence in the Democratic Party to address the most important issue that they have identified facing Latinos as they have confidence in the Republican Party.

That has rather significant implications for the extent to which each political party might see itself as gaining some advantage regarding Latino communities by addressing issues based on substantive positions or addressing issues based upon larger questions of identification and what some have called the nature of the aspiration agenda.

All of our findings to date are available on the website that's there at the bottom of the University of Washington Institute for the Study of Ethnicity, Race and Sexuality: an executive summary, demographic tables, questionnaire and top lines, and we're happy to take any questions that you have.

Thank you very much.

MS. MANNION: You talk faster than I do, which is amazing. (Laughs.)

MR. FRAGA: I was born in New York.

MS. MANNION: Oh, here you go.

MR. FRAGA: Actually, I was born in Texas, but I (off mike).

MS. MANNION: Clarissa?

MS. CLARISSA MARTINEZ DE CASTRO: While Luis was looking for the laser pointer, I'm looking for the button because I'm not as technologically savvy as he is. Excellent. Well, since I knew that I was following Luis and Gary, I see I need to have

a PowerPoint, but the main objective of it is so that you guys can find a typo in it or a wrong statistic.

Before I start, I just wanted to say I'm with the National Council of La Raza, the Latino Empowerment and Advocacy Project, which is our contribution to Latino electorate expansion through road testing, best practices with community based organizations, and trying to increase the pool of knowledge on Latinos by doing research and polling in partnership with a variety of organizations. Some of them are here today.

And on that note, we also – there's a report that has been made available to you that is brand new. We're putting the finishing touches on it, and I wanted to recognize some members of my team who are here, including the co-author of that report, Lindsey Daniels, and also members of my team: Catherine Montoya and Stacy Terrell, who worked very hard with these community based organizations and in getting this information out. And Cecilia Munoz, our vice president, who you'll later today. Some of the work for this report and the support for this report and the work we do is also thanks to Geri and the Carnegie Corporation, as well as the Knight Foundation.

So without further ado, basically I think that there's been a lot of talk about the Latino electorate and for many here who have been following it, a lot of the news that are news this year or even the last year have been something that people are very familiar with for several, several years now, but you feel a little better to know that people are finally coming to terms with some of the realities of this electorate.

So what does the electorate look like? If you look at Latinos from an electoral perspective, you can do three cuts. So if in 2004 the Latino population reached 40.5 million, the first cut would be that about 13.9 million of those 40 million are under 18, so therefore not yet eligible to vote. And just as a caveat or disclaimer: our oldest information comes from the census, which as you know tends to underestimate Latinos, but it's one good way for those of us who do not do our original research to be able to look at patterns and such things from an apples-to-apples perspective.

So anyway, so if you do the first cut, 13.9 million are out because they're under 18. Then if you do a second cut, if you look at the voting age population that is Latino, that would be around 26.1 million. And these graphs are all in your report, by the way. So out of those, 10 million are not yet citizens. That leaves you with 16.1 – 16.6 million Latino citizens of voting age and among those, 9.3 million are registered and 7.6 million voted in the 2004 election.

So if you look at it from different ways, and I think that's why sometimes people get a little confused depending on which statistics you're citing – if you look Latino voting age as a whole – of the voting age population, which Gary alluded to in his presentation, the voting rate for the Latino voting-age population would be 28 percent, which is very low. If you are looking at only the Latino citizen voting-age population that array would be 47.2 percent, but if you look at the voting participation of Latinos

who are registered, then that rate gets fairly close to African-Americans and white counterparts, and that would be 81.5 percent – at least for 2004.

So when compared to the electorate as a whole, you could say two things: that Latinos are over 14 percent of the population of the United States, yet they're only 8 percent of the electorate, at least according to exit polling in 2004, and that in the big scheme of things – looking at this graph – that maybe the Latino electorate means not so much. And maybe that would be true if politics were a static game, and I think we were reminded in 2006 that that is not the case.

So what's the big fuss about the Latino vote if this is what it looks like? Well, I think the fuss concerns only those who are concerned about long-term political survival and – sorry, I missed my punch line. Okay – because if you look at Latino voting growth rate comparing, again, apples to apples – if you look at a comparison from midterm to midterm and from presidential to presidential election, and you look at how the voting has been growing for that population compared to other groups, then the picture is clear about what the fuss is about.

So even though Latino participation gaps are still significant, the growth rates for both registration and voting – this is voting, but for both registration and voting the growth rates are in the double digits consistently. And if you look simply, let's say, between 1990 and 2000, the number of Latinos registered to vote grew by 70 percent in that decade compared to 4 percent for whites and 27 percent for African-Americans. In terms of actual voting numbers for the same decade, the number of Latinos that voted grew by 105 percent, compared to 23 percent for whites and 60 percent for African-Americans.

Obviously, if we were to close the participation gaps between Latinos and African-Americans even in half, that would have resulted in 2004 alone with an additional 871,000 Latinos registered to vote and an additional one million votes – Latino votes – in that election.

So given the graphs, given the facts about the age of the population and the citizenship rates of the population, it is fairly obvious that two of the key strategies for electorate expansion in the Latino community are, one, citizenship promotion; and the other is voter registration, but particularly strategies that are targeting young Latinos.

And what we also know, if you look at it, there's 425,000 Latinos turning 18 every year who are citizens and there's at least 3.6 million Latinos who are already eligible to become citizens and that means after having fulfilled their residency requirements which are fairly lengthy, et cetera, et cetera, then if you add to that the fact that we've seen very significant spikes in naturalization applications over the last year, due on the one hand to anti-immigrant rhetoric and backlash and on the other one to pro-immigrant organizing and demonstrations, and the fact that Latino naturalized citizens also show very good rates of participation once they become naturalized. I think that it looks promising.

On the other hand, we also know that, unfortunately, the majority of campaigns – traditional political campaigns, which are still the traditional or the more powerful mobilizing agents, do not attempt to implement these strategies. So there's no citizenship promotion strategy when you're working on getting a candidate elected. There's fairly short-term focus and that doesn't serve this community well. And as we very well know, there's also very little investment in terms of mobilizing youth and where Latinos are concerned, not only that, but a lot of the investments in mobilizing youth are still focused on four-year colleges, for example, and the majority of Latinos are not there. As a matter of fact, Latinos who are undergrads tend to be in two-year colleges. So even though a good number of young Latinos register on campus – about 13 percent based on some polling information we have – the fact of the matter that the majority of young Latinos are still registering at DMV and college registration is tied with mail.

So when looking at Latino voting registration strategies, I think that one of the things we need to look at is whether the strategies currently in place make sense for this population. We also need to know that a lot of Latinos, particularly those that are still Spanish preference, tend to identify community drives as one of the places where they register and that's the highest rated (place?). And we know that in the last couple of years, attempts to establish voter identification processes and other things that greatly limit the ability of community based organizations to do that kind of job are going to have a negative effect on electorate expansion strategies for this community.

So very quickly, because I think you've heard some of this already and there are some examples of that on the report and I would invite you to visit our website. There's about three reports there where we have some very specific examples of these trends – is that, as you've heard, the majority of Latinos vote Democrat and actually self-identify as Democrat, but there are shifts and those have been evident. And I think particularly the percentage of Latinos voting for the Democratic candidate for president has decreased relatively steadily since 1988 with the major deviation being the Bill Clinton race in 1996. In terms of Hispanic, I think, immigration, just because there's so much more attention and polling done on it it's a good bellwether about how Latinos look at candidates based on their positions and not just some party affiliation, and these splits within a state where Latinos vote for one candidate or one party in one race and for a different party in another race can be seen in a number of states.

That goes to splitting the ticket and also looking at candidate positions, I think Davis in that past in a negative way was an example of that – Governor Davis in California – and I think currently Schwarzenegger is a good case study in terms of that. He started very strong on a tough stand on immigration and made many blunders and really tried to straighten that out and managed to increase his support from his first election to the second.

And then that there's been a lot of discussion about whether Latinos are swing voters or not because they're still majority Democrat and they still vote majority Democrat, but I think that these shifts are fairly significant particularly when you're

talking about a political environment where the margins are very small, and some of the states that are coming in play are states where the margins are even smaller and Latinos are a significant and/or growing part of that electorate, like Arizona, Florida, Nevada, New Mexico, and Colorado.

So last but not least, in terms of – I think you're going to hear this getting the sense throughout the day, but immigrant integration and citizenship promotion strategies are key for this population and again, they are not the kind of strategies that traditional electoral campaigns put into place.

At the same time I think that investments in Latino focus voter registration and outreach are very needed. Latinos still report that they don't get contacted as much by political parties even though – even all this debate and all the fuss and even though that anytime that there's talk about investment in this electorate, it tends to revolve solely around media when it's political campaigns or parties. How are you going to put an ad out there? Even when it only is at that level of outreach, it's still reported by Latino as very low level of contact, so I think that we need to keep that in mind. We need to keep in mind also to do more research on this electorate, to learn better about the nuances of where they stand on issues.

There's been a lot reported in the past about how even when education and the economy, which are the issues that more consistently place at the top of the Latino list, became part of a debate in a presidential race, for example. When it was on education, it tended to be on class size, as some example, as opposed to improving the schools to begin with. On healthcare, it was about prescription medication, for example, when Latinos don't even have insurance. So even when the issue at the top place, the nuances of the issue where Latinos connect to it tend to be missed.

And last but not least I think that it's a good sign, although it's a little disheartening in terms of how accelerated the rate of expansion could be. The only folks that are really playing a significant role in these kinds of strategies are community-based organizations and people in the nonprofit sector – a lot of ethnic organizations, immigrant rights organization partnering with service providers to do citizenship drives across the country and to try to get immigrants and Latinos connected to the political process.

In addition, I think that it would be great to start looking at strategies to reach Latinos on their 18th birthday, and a number of groups are doing that and we're very hopeful about that, but generally speaking this is a population that's still seeing prevalent underinvestment. And, obviously, to change numbers and to close the gap, that investment will have to be changed. And the hope will be that if that happens, in terms of a projected potential Latino participation in '08 that if you look at a very dummy calculation, since we're not demographers, you'll see the calculation we did in the report, but there's a potential 2.3 million additional registered Latinos for '08 and an additional 1.9 million Latino votes in '08, just looking at '04 patterns. But if we were to really invest and do strategies to close those gaps, there could be 3.5 million additional Latinos registered and 3.2 million additional Latino voters in '08.

Thank you very much.

MS. MANNION: Okay. Great.

Ruy, you're going to take it home.

MR. RUY TEXEIRA: Okay. I'm looking forward to delving into that report that Clarissa talked about. It looks great. And what I'm going to say here right now, I don't at all disagree with the recommendations about what needs to be done in terms of reaching the Latino electorate. I don't really disagree with any of the findings from the Latino National Survey. Instead, I just want to kind of zoom in on these data and this population from a somewhat different angle and just give people a little bit different perspective on it. So to do that, I'm going to outline three things to keep in mind about Hispanics as a political force.

One is they're big, but they're not that big. Two is they're important, but they're not that important. And three is they're volatile, but they're not really swing voters. So let me explain what I mean by each of those.

Okay, first: they're big, but they're not that big. So let me throw two numbers out here for you to begin with: 50 and 24. That's the amount of the population growth from 2000 to 2004 that was accounted for by Hispanics. Twenty-four, 24 percent is the amount of increase – the percent of increase in voting eligibles – eligible voters – that's accounted for by Latinos.

Second two numbers: 29 and 46. For the same time period, 29 percent of the population growth in the U.S. was from non-Hispanic whites, but 46 percent of the growth of voting eligibles was from non-Hispanic whites. And incidentally, this report here on population electorate and voters among Hispanics, I recommend to you. It's done by the Pew Hispanic Center by Roberto Suro, Richard Fry, and the very fine demographer Jeffrey Passel of the Urban Institute. It's chock full of good data and one hopes they will update their analysis soon.

But let me give three other numbers to kind of think about this first point: 39, 65, 76. Okay, what are those? Thirty-nine percent of the Hispanic population are eligible voters, 65 percent of the black population are eligible voters, and 76 percent of the non-Hispanic white population are eligible voters. So that's what I mean when I say they're big, but they're not that big.

Second point: they're important, but they're not that important. So let's think about that one. Now, first of all, of course it's true Hispanics have become the biggest minority in the United States. Not only are they big in California, but they're concentrated in some key states that are definitely in political motion and are contestable between the parties like New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada. All that's true, but let's remember the facts that I pointed out in the first point that I mentioned and consider

this number: 79. So what's that? That's the percent of voters in 2006 that were non-Hispanic whites in our last election, all right? So it's the case of non-Hispanic white voters are still the key to most elections and will be for the foreseeable future, even among young 2006 voters – those 18 to 29 – 71 percent of those voters were still non-Hispanic whites.

And now consider these numbers: 76, 22 and 77, 22. What are those? Those are the minority vote in 2002 and the minority vote in 2006, okay? So in other words there wasn't much shift looking at minorities as a whole. So that tells you – what does that tell you? That tells you that the switch from a 46-51 loss for the Democrats in 2002 to a 53-45 win in the Congressional vote in 2006 was entirely driven mostly pretty much by the non-Hispanic white votes. And that's something to keep in mind, and that's what I mean when I say they're important, but at least at this point not that important.

Let me get to my final point here: they're volatile, but they're not really swing voters. What do I mean by that? Well, okay. First consider this number: 69, 30. What's that? That's the Hispanic congressional vote 69 percent Democratic, 30 percent Republican in the last election – 2006. This doesn't sound terribly much like swing voters. Now consider these three pairs of numbers: 64, 35; 61, 37; and 59, 40. What are those? That's the congressional vote for 2000, 2002, and 2004, so obviously there's a lot of volatility there. The voter is moving around, but it's fluctuating around a level of Democratic support that's not too far away from two to one. So they're volatile, but none of these are even close to an even split, so think about that when you think about Latinos as swing voters.

One final number: 43. This is actually from a survey that Clarissa's organization did. What is that? That's the Democratic advantage in party ID among likely voters in their survey. And, you know, depending on the survey and depending on the population, a survey can be less than that, but pretty much you always get these huge Democratic advantages in party ID. And Republican Party ID, almost no matter what sub-population of Hispanics you look at doesn't seem to get much out of the low to mid-20s, which isn't too good for them.

And then there's of course huge Democratic advantages – almost all issues of concern to the Latino population; that is, which party Latinos prefer on that issue. We know that Latinos are the most pro-government population in the United States; the one population that consistently says they'd rather have a government that costs more and provides more services than one that costs less and provides less services. And then of course there's immigration, so I just won't even talk about that, but obviously that's kind of nudged this population a little bit even more in the Democratic direction.

So are they volatile? Absolutely. But are they swing voters? Well, not if we think of swing voters as a group whose allegiance is contestable, right? They could go Republican in one election, Democrat in the next election. That's the traditional meaning of swing voters; not that they moved around, but they moved around from one party to the other. I don't think that's happening yet with Hispanics. I don't think it's likely to

happen anytime in the near future. So if you're looking for swing voters, go out and try to round up some white Catholics, but I don't think the Latinos really qualify in this regard.

So those are my three things to keep in mind about Hispanics as a political force and I'll just leave it right there. Thanks.

MS. MANNION: Well, thank you very much. And I want to thank the panel for really being very good about the time and leaves us almost half an hour for questions, so I always have questions, but I'd rather go to the audience first and let's start with –

MR. RESTREPO: There's a microphone, so –

MS. MANNION: Did you want people to identify themselves or not? Yes. Please identify yourself and your –

Q: Yes. I'm Joel Wishengrad of World Media Reports, WMR News. To this panel, I want to ask a question. You're giving me statistics, but typically what are these communities and individuals voting for? Is it that they are looking for better housing? Are they looking for better education? And also, depending whether it's a rural location or an urban location, could you fill in some of those particular data in those statistics please?

MS. MANNION: And since that you asked that, one of the questions that the survey (focus?) was be issue – did you ever ask what their solutions would be for any of this stuff or would they propose anything or education reform?

MS. DE CASTRO: Just very quickly, on a consistent basis, most polling shows that Latinos identify education and jobs or the economy at the top of their list – very consistently, whether it's a Republican leaning survey or a Democratic leaning survey. I think that that's what has tended to confuse sometimes at reaching out to this community and what role immigration plays. Immigration – except this year it's obviously on the top of everybody's list. Immigration tends to be sort of like a gauge by which Latinos measure the level of respect or the perspective that a candidate or political party has for the community and I think that the Latino National Survey Research shows that very strongly with some of their questions, so immigration serves that. And when it's part of the debate, it plays that role very intensely. And I hope that with the research that's coming out over the last year we can put that baby to rest because I think there's continuing debate about whether Latinos care or don't care about immigration and I think again that the devil's in the details: it's about those nuances, so education, the economy are on top, as I was saying earlier. The problem is that a lot of times when they become the main message of political campaigns, they tend to focus on things that slightly miss what the Latino hook to that issue is.

MR. FRAGA: I'll respond to that briefly. We have a variety of questions in our survey and we're still exploring the answers to those questions. Policy solutions – we

asked a set of attitudes towards a number of issues related to education: vouchers, bilingual education. We relate that to experiences that the individuals have had, equal funding across districts and other education related issues. We also asked the traditional battery of policy options regarding immigration – overwhelming support for some legalization plan. Not surprisingly, on education the patterns are more mixed. One of the things that we did with our survey is to geocode each of the respondents and we're gathering the data now. We're just about finished.

Actually knowing what the neighborhoods, the communities, systems of political representation are so that we've got a better sense of the context within which they might be interpreting the information that's there. The general difficulty is that you don't know why anyone votes the way they did; that is, it's difficult to know. People give you a preference on an issue, you know how they voted for a candidate. Unless you specifically ask them, "in that race, why did you vote for that candidate?" we're really drawing inferences from a set of distribution patterns rather than having great confidence in exactly why it is in this particular election with this particular set of candidates that the voters voted in this particular way. Some surveys do that. Our survey did not do that to any great degree, although we did ask about support in the last presidential election.

MR. SEGURA: And ours was not an electoral study, but it is also very clear that the availability of Hispanic surnamed candidates will dramatically increase both turnout and participation simply because they have the opportunity to vote for someone (off mike).

MS. MANNION: Anyone else? Yes.

Q: (Off mike.)

MR. RESTREPO: Can you please wait for the microphone?

Q: (Off mike) Hispanic outlook on higher education and we covered the really broad diversity of the Hispanic community and that's why I was wondering what your population was – if it's just surnames – because there's of course a lot of Latinos who don't have a Spanish surname. And also, we're just finding such a wide range of interest in and stands on these issues and that's why I was wondering about the nuances, too, since we're finding many are sympathetic towards the illegal immigrants, but it doesn't mean that they want to stop the flow of illegal immigration. They want open borders. Maybe it parses out by nationality group, too. So I'm wondering how nuanced some of this is going to be because when you make big generalizations, I don't think that's really that helpful.

MR. SEGURA: If I could respond to that. We're going to talk about this, we're going to have some slides on this up on the website if you want to take a look at them, but if you explore the immigration attitudes across generation, the analytic claim has always been that if you look at third and fourth generation Latinos who are several generations in the country, U.S.-born, English dominant, et cetera, that there would be

widespread opposition to illegal immigration favoring a much more punitive policy, et cetera, and there just isn't any evidence for it.

It is, in fact, the case that fourth-generation Latinos are less in favor of an amnesty program and slightly less in favor of an earned legalization program, but the numbers are still overwhelmingly positive such that across all generations, two-thirds to three-quarters of all Latinos favor at the very least an earned legalization.

Q: (Off mike) are not Latino, so we're not just talking about illegal Latinos, you know.

MR. SEGURA: Well, true enough, though I think in the popular imagination and on the floor of the House of Representatives all illegals are Hispanic. Rhetorically, in terms of public discourse it's true.

MS. DE CASTRO: Yes. And I think the other thing to note is that there's a lot of polling out there about immigration and there's also a lot of polling about – there's more polling on Latinos, but if you look at the questions carefully you can figure out whether somebody's trying to find what Latinos think or whether somebody is trying to get a response to say what Latinos think. So when you look at the issue of immigration in particular, whether it is Latinos or national attitudes – and our panel next is going to talk about that at more length, but it is worth mentioning.

Look at the questions. There are a lot of apples-to-oranges comparisons here. It's not the same to ask somebody if they favor a path to legalization or immediate deportation. It's not the same to ask somebody if they prefer open borders or legalization. Nobody in this country I think, for the majority of the people in this country, do not favor open borders. Even the National Council of La Raza doesn't favor open borders, regardless of what some people may say. So I think when you look at those questions, it's very clear that people are not interested in the answer. They're interested in polarizing a response to make a point, so if you just be cautious of that when people are saying where people stand on this or other issues.

MS. MANNION: John, did you want to say something?

MR. JOHN GARCIA: (Off mike) do immigrants contribute to their countries or not? The overwhelming Latinos indicate immigration is a positive force in American society.

MS. MANNION: Sorry, would you like to say something?

Q: Joe Rothstein. I'm a political consultant. Is there anything in your data that would indicate, regardless of party, whether Latino voters vote overwhelmingly for Latino candidates?

MR. SEGURA: We have a question. We haven't done any analysis on that. Just to put it in context, we got the data at the end of the summer. There's like 180 questions in it. John might have done something, so maybe he should answer the question, but we do ask them "does it make a difference if there's a candidate who is also Latino?"

MR. JOHN GARCIA: There are three questions. One asking, if you had a Latino candidate running, would you vote for that person or for somebody else? If that candidate spoke Spanish, how important are issues? A consistent majority of our respondents says it's a positive if the candidate is Hispanic, slightly more said it's – actually, slightly less if a person speaks Spanish per se. The largest response – I think it's like three-fourths – said issues is a major factor in making decisions about which candidate they want to vote for.

MS. DE CASTRO: And that's been consistent with past polling that we've done; obviously, not as extensive as the National Latino Survey, but that is also cited in previous reports that –

MR. FRAGA: We also asked a question on presidential favorability for President Bush and whether or not his ability or alleged ability to speak Spanish was important. Only 5.1 percent of respondents rated him favorably – thought that his ability to speak Spanish was important; more important was his leadership and his issue positions. But those who rated him favorably are those who had a positive aspect consistent with the general data.

MS. MANNION: Okay. (Off mike.)

MR. SERGIO BENDIXEN: Sergio Bendixen. I'm a pollster. I know I'm on the next panel and this is not proper, but I can't let one – (laughter) – statement by Ruy get by.

MR. TEXEIRA: You want to take a shot at me? I don't care. Go ahead.

MR. BENDIXEN: I'll agree that we may be smaller and not (the headline?) but just –

(Cross talk.)

MR. BENDIXEN: In New York City in 2000, Hispanics voted 80 percent-plus for Hillary Clinton, a Democrat. A year later, the same exact group of voters voted 50 percent for Michael Bloomberg, a Republican. In New Jersey in '97 they voted for McGreevey at 48 percent. Four years later for McGreevey at 72 percent, four years later for Corzine at 77 percent. Florida Hispanics voted for Gore in 2000 at 70 percent. Just two years later they vote for Jeb Bush at 64. In California in '98, they voted for the Republican Lungren at 15 percent. The last two elections for governor they voted for Schwarzenegger at 32, 40 percent. In '96, they voted for Dole 21 percent, in 2004 they vote for Bush at least 40 percent.

If Hispanics are not swing voters, there are no swing voters in America. (Laughter.) These are 60, 40, 60, 50 and 70 percent shifts in the statistics and there's (off mike). But to question the swing nature of the Hispanic electorate when you look at what's happened in specific cities and states and nationally for years is ludicrous.

MR. TEXEIRA: Well, a couple of points: (a), the fact that you can find can instances in which Hispanics have voted fairly heavily for progressive Republican candidates – I'm not sure that means a lot about the fundamental political nature – let me finish this point – (laughs) – for Hispanic – I don't think that means that much.

The second point, though, is of course if you take elections all over the United States and every election over time, you will find examples where there have been swings in the Hispanic electorate where there – as I said, they're volatile, but you could do the same thing with the non-Hispanic white population. You could even do the same thing to some extent with the African-American population. It's not that nobody is a swing voter by your – by my definition. Everybody's a swing voter.

If you want to define it simply in terms of the fact that shifts occur from election to election, and sometimes big shifts, there isn't a social group in the United States that you couldn't describe by that criterion as a swing voter or swing voter group. So my point is: what's the center of gravity of the Latino electorate? The center of gravity of the Latino electorate leans heavily progressive, tends to vote heavily Democratic. And certainly that varies sometimes from election to election, but the center of gravity about which the Latino electorate fluctuates is where I said it is, not at the 50-50 line or anywhere close to the 50-50 line, which is in my view the correct definition and the traditional definition of what constitutes a swing voter group.

MR. BENDIXEN: (Off mike.)

MR. TEXEIRA: Okay. Well, I'll get it to you.

MS. MANNION: Okay. All right. Well –

(Cross talk.)

MR. TEXEIRA: So your point is that Hispanics are – not that they're not –

MS. MANNION: Next panel, next panel.

MR. TEXEIRA: – contestable between the parties, but rather they're more volatile? Is that your point? Are you denying that Hispanics are fundamentally a heavily Democratic leaning constituency? Is that your view?

MR. BENDIXEN: (Off mike.)

MR. TEXEIRA: But if over time they average two to one Democratic to this day, how does that make them a swing voter?

MS. DE CASTRO: I think one of the interesting things about this discussion – and I've heard it many times; I've seen a lot of polling by Democrats that for some reason, like if I'm paying for a poll, I want to know what the reality is of my risk assessment, and a lot of the polls I've seen from Democrats tend to try to want to make Democrats feel better. And, yes, ideologically speaking I think it's true. Latinos even if they identify themselves as conservative, they are more pro-government than any other population and there's a number of other indicators: support for public education, et cetera. But I think that – I don't now. As I'm getting older, my center of gravity certainly is changing, so I'm assuming it is with this population too.

I think that if you want to get caught up in semantics – you know, this is what swing voters mean and this is not what Latinos are doing – if you want to get caught up in that, in terms of looking for something you're like your report on page eight about some of the margins of victory and Latinos in those states and about other races that I'm sure Sergio would talk about, it doesn't matter if we're talking that they – you know, you're a swing because you swung – 50 percent of your voters move to the other side when you go home packing because you lost an election. So I think that – I at least am talking about it in those terms and that's why I think that both Republicans and Democrats who are political operators and who are truly concerned about the longevity of their parties are looking at this population.

So we can talk about semantics and we can talk about the exact definition of swing in political science. I think – I'm not a political scientist, so maybe I'm misusing the term, but I mean what it means to a political candidate and I think that long-term starts get built today.

MS. MANNION: I think everybody is seeking a new party myself personally – (laughs) – but there's two more responses actually to Ruy. Do you want to do that?

MR. SEGURA: Yes. I want to go first. I can't help but disagree with basically the entire gist of Ruy's presentation. (Laughter.)

MS. MANNION: And we have ten minutes left.

MR. SEGURA: Right. But it's actually not going to take me particularly long because of the great example that really illustrates what's going on. I actually agree with Sergio that there's substantial change in the Latino electorate from election to election. There's lots of examples – and he gave them. By contrast, the African-American electorate – it's big news when the Republican share goes from 10 to 11 percent. That's not the reality we're describing for Latinos, so it's very different electorate. The majority of whites in the United States vote Republican. The majority of whites in most states in the United States vote Republican, and that hasn't changed for some time.

The state of California is the best illustration I can give, because everyone in this room probably thinks that California is a reliably Democratic state. The problem is that prior to 1992, California had voted Republican in every presidential election since World War II, save the Johnson-Goldwater debacle. It was a reliably Republican state and to this day, it remains – the whites in California remain a majority Republican constituency. The reason that every statewide office, save Arnold, is held by a Democrat and the Democrats hold almost constitutionally impregnable two-thirds majorities in both chambers in the California legislature is because between 1992 and 2000, 1.1 million new voters were registered in California and one million of that 1.1 million were Latino. So what's happening in the mountain west – in Arizona, in Nevada, in Colorado – making those places competitive, which my friend and colleague Tom Schaller, the columnist for the *Baltimore Sun*, thinks is the only strategy for Democratic dominance in the coming era is to make penetration in the mountain left.

The only way that happens is that Latino population growth, because whites in the mountain left are not dramatically changing their partisan identity, so even though I agree with Sergio that there is substantial variation in Latino vote share for each political party, even if we held that constant, the distribution of two to one in favor of the Democrats is of tremendous importance when the number of people in certain geographic constituencies is growing so rapidly. So how we could dismiss them? The Democrats could not be elected to anything without the state of California. They would be shut out of presidential elections forever and the only reason California is a Democratic state is because of Latinos.

MS. MANNION: One last response. Luis?

MR. FRAGA: One way to think of this is that the important question is not whether they're swing voters, but rather whether or not they are determinative voters; that is, whatever percent of them vote in a particular way. A 20 percent Republican Latino vote can be extremely significant in determining the outcome of election, depending upon how whites split their votes and what the percent of African-American and Asian population are in a particular area. At some risk, there are a couple of articles that have been written that look at this issue directly. Gary's authored some, I've authored some where we tried to trace it out in California, tried to trace it out nationwide, and show exactly how Latinos over time have been more determinative contributors to Democratic outcomes.

That suggests a strategy for both parties; that is, the Democrats need more Latino support to maintain their margins where they're strategically positioned to gain from that because of demographic growth, and the Republican Party has a tough choice to make as to whether they can limit the extent to which the general demographic trends that are described continue to lean Democrat to the same degree or whether they might want to try to capture white votes by pursuing a distinct set of strategies, which is a high risk strategy that we saw regarding many immigration issues in the last congressional election.

And so the determinative nature of the vote is more important, I would argue, than the swing nature of the vote, although swing is more sexy than determinative, but determinative is what the candidates and the parties I think are really trying to understand and get at.

MS. MANNION: We're going to have a two-minute response from Ruy and then we're going to go one more question from the audience and I think we have to end.

MR. TEXEIRA: Well, I'm actually delighted I managed to stir up a little conversation. That's great. Just a couple of points about some of the comments that have been made. First of all, I completely agree that the center of gravity of the population is two to one Democratic and they're growing. That mix effect, that shift is fundamentally going to benefit the Democrats. I completely agree with that. I've said it many times and in fact – and I also agree that given that, it's in the interest of the Democrats to maximize their return from the shift, and in the interest of the Republicans to minimize (off mike). So in that sense there's going to be a lot of action, as well there should be, around Latino population.

I guess I would question the idea, however, that if you want to understand the political transformation of California or the current political transformation in some of the mountain states that it's completely determined by the Latino electorate, which I thought was what you were saying. I don't think that's the case. I think if you look at county by county voting patterns, I think if you look at exit polls and other surveys that had been done for the last 20 years, you can't understand the transformation in California without also (off mike) the non-Hispanic white population in a lot of the key counties, for example, particularly in the L.A. and Bay area.

So I question that – the supposition. And again, that was partly what I was trying to do by what I said. I tried to push – maybe just trying to kind of nudge things in another direction and say, well okay, yes, big, important and they move around a lot, but let's also look at it from this perspective and see the ways in which that's constrained and maybe it's not quite as big as sometimes people say. And there are other like political actors, other moving parts in this political machine that are as important and perhaps even more important. So that was my point and in that sense, you may think you completely disagree with me, but I don't completely disagree with you, so there.

MS. MANNION: There you go. (Laughter.)

One last question. (Unintelligible) was that you before?

Q: Hi.

MS. MANNION: And you are?

Q: My name is Kat Barry (ph). I work at Young Voters Strategy over at GW and, Clarissa, you mentioned earlier the importance looking into 2008 of reaching out to

the unregistered and registered Latino population to get them registered and mobilized – sorry it’s kind of a two-part question. One is, what are the plans and works among the nonprofit community to do that? And then what would you recommend to the political parties that they do win over these voters and get them involved?

MS. MANNION: You’ve got two minutes.

MS. DE CASTRO: I think – well, very quickly. I think again, a lot of the current strategies are campus strategies. That’s not necessarily a great strategy for Latinos. We need to look at more intense partnerships with student groups at the high school level. I think a number of community based organizations are doing some of that. The problem is they’re trying to do it with a lot of times very little support and we need to test some of those and try to come up with some models we can promote. But there’s a lot of push for online strategies. Even among Latinos 18 to 24-year-olds that are registered only one percent register online, so the push for online strategy as a strategy to get more youth involved is not going to benefit Latinos.

It needs to be, again, I think the combination of community based both young people volunteering and at the same time partnering in those efforts has been effective. We need to look at the fact that the majority of young Latinos are registering at DMV and figuring out how we can streamline and improve those strategies and also the same number of Latinos that registered on campus registered by mail, so we – what it signals is that there’s deeper exploration that needs to happen and it needs to happen with this population in mind, as opposed to trying to fit strategies that work for other communities to this population. I don’t think that we need to segregate people and create different, completely different, or separate and equal approaches, but we do have to think of where people are coming from and where they congregate.

MS. MANNION: And on that point, I’d also like to say, we – there’s lots of barriers, continuous barriers to (unintelligible) participation in this country, as you all know, and if you think of the fact that young people in general don’t vote at the rates they should be, why not use the schools, for example, to register them before they graduate – would be a new idea that even though they couldn’t vote until 18, they could at least be – get a mail card or something or something on their birthday saying that you are registered and you could actually vote. Same-day voter registration in many other states are really actively engaged in helping people to vote when they want to vote, usually which is a month before the election, which is usually way after any of the major deadlines are for any kind of registration.

And last week, since 9/11 particularly – naturalization has never been a very easy thing in this country, and as my parents are naturalized citizens I remember them very vividly scared to death going down, it was in ’65. And the fact is that they spoke English and they had come with English skills at least, but they did not – there’s no English language preparation help and no programs available. Naturalization, especially since 9/11, has become a nightmare. It can take two years, costs now \$1,000 per person. You have FBI checks, you have all these things. But if you really want people to participate,

you have to also help them, and that could be something that we think about it as we look at comprehensive approaches to both immigration as well as election reform.

So on that, I'd like to thank our panel and thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. RESTREPO: We're going to transition panels and do this on the fly, so if you all can hold your seats. For those who can hear me but don't yet have seats in the room, there are actually a bunch of (center?) seats in the room, so if you want to come from the lobby to sit down, that would be great. All right. If folks could clear the front of the room, we're going to go ahead and get started with the second panel to keep the conversation going.

It is now m distinct honor and privilege – again, if folks could take conversations out of the room, I'd appreciate it. All right, it's again my distinct honor and privilege to introduce the moderator for our second panel. Again, I'm not going to bore folks with biographical data. I'd be here all day if I read Cecilia's impressive résumé, but it's my honor and privilege to turn things over to Cecilia Munoz from the National Council of La Raza. Thank you.

MS. CECILIA MUNOZ: Thank you very much, Dan. Thank you everybody. I guess the one important element of my bio is that I have the great honor of working with Clarissa Martinez and her team from the National Council of La Raza. So my job is to keep this discussion going and to focus a little bit more – our panel is going to focus a little bit more on some of the nuances of Latinos' views and we have a really wonderful distinguished panel for you. So my job is to introduce them and to keep the trains running on time, so I'll warn them now that I will make sure that everyone has their opportunity to talk and we have opportunity for discussion. So I'm going to introduce them in the order that I'm going to ask them to speak.

First we're going to hear from Celinda Lake from Lake Research Partners. Celinda has a long track record of work with institutions like mine and many others, both looking at immigration issues and Latino issues and Latino voters. She is somebody who we take pride in working with because of the depth of work that they're able to do and the quality of it.

She'll be followed by Sergio Bendixen of Bendixen and Associates, who's done some really innovative work polling, particularly in immigrant communities, particularly also with non-English speakers and in really digging into the nuances of Latino views both among native-born Latinos and immigrants.

He'll be followed by Tamar Jacoby, who's with the Manhattan Institute, and Tamara has long been an observer and a commentator on some of the key issues associated with Latinos, particularly immigration and integration issues and we'll hear from her about those issues today.

And she'll be followed by Lionel Sosa, who is the executive director of Mexicans and Americans Thinking Together, or MATT, but Lionel is also known as the real force – the architect behind some of the most powerful political ads that have been aimed at Latinos and Latino voters, especially in the Spanish-language market, particularly those very effective ads run by the Bush campaign. And I'm proud to say that Lionel was also a member of the board of the National Council of La Raza where I work.

So let's start with Celinda.

MS. CELINDA LAKE: Thank you. Thank you very much. And I'm delighted to be here and delighted to be here with this panel. Let me summarize a little bit and I'm going to summarize for you data from surveys that we did for the National Latino Policy Coalition and also of whom the last panel – many of the members of the last panel are members, and also for the Council of La Raza.

Three key overall points in terms of the concerns and interests of the Latino population. First of all, the Latino population is a change oriented electorate and they remain a change oriented electorate and that probably contributed to some of the volatility you heard argued about in the last panel. Sixty-eight percent of Latinos, even at the beginning of this year, thought the country was going in the wrong direction and 73 percent in the most recent surveys disapproved of the job that George Bush was doing.

Secondly, and I think it was discussed in the previous panel, the Latino agenda is different than conventional wisdom suggests. And in fact, one of the things I love about polling is conventional wisdom is almost always 100 percent wrong or at least plus or minus 5 percent 100 percent wrong, and in these case it's very wrong. And you heard Clarissa and others talk about this.

There was a diffuse issue agenda in the last election and that continues for the Latino population, but it was an issue agenda very much centered on economic issues and community issues. Twenty percent said education was the number one issue in deciding their vote and we did ask some questions and it was a good distinction made in the last panel about just asking concerns versus asking what determined your vote. But in the congressional election, 20 percent said education was their most important issue, 18 percent said economy and jobs – which is actually the number one issue among Latino males – 17 percent said the war in Iraq, 9 percent said immigration, 9 percent healthcare, 8 percent retirement, 5 percent taxes, 5 percent moral values, 4 percent terrorism, and 3 percent crime and drugs.

I think as others talked about also, when these issues are talked about, they're talked about in different ways so that if we looked at the healthcare agenda, for example, the number one issue among Anglo voters was prescription drug cost in the last election. That was way down the list in terms of Latino voters and in fact the top issues were access to healthcare, rather than affordability, because affordability being an issue that is more of a concern to people who are insured. The Latino community is more concerned

about getting access to basic healthcare, getting access to insurance. And then children's healthcare – a huge issue in the Latino community.

Similarly in education – often in education the number one and two issues are small class size and quality of teachers. The Latino community tends to be more supportive of teachers, actually, and less critical of them and also tends to rank at the top of the list safe schools in many communities and anti-gang prevention programs. You hear talked about a lot particularly in the first 100 hours the whole issue of college loans. The Latino community as interested in college loans, but actually more interested in access to community college and post-high school training or even training for people who do not have high school degrees.

So, again, even when we pick an issue, it's the texture of the issue can be different in the Latino community. And not to get bogged down in the previous debate, but I would say one of the things that makes for the kinds of swings that Sergio was talking about and I think if you get – if you have swings in a vote group like this, you are definitely talking about a swing voter group, if you're a candidate and you ignore this community at your peril – and I don't think the candidates – I agree, I don't think the candidates care what you call that. (Laughs.) They just want to win and they don't want to leave this group up for targeting by some other – by their opponents, but the texture of the issue as well as the issues can make a lot of difference.

We talked a little bit about immigration already, but let me just say that I agree very much with the way Clarissa was talking about it and others on the panel. As you noticed, only 9 percent said that immigration was their number one issue in deciding their congressional vote, but the nature of the immigration debate obviously had a huge impact on the fortunes of the Republicans and the swing against Republicans and the tone of that debate – the salience of that debate in terms of the candidate made a very, very big difference: 51 percent said it was a factor in deciding their vote and I think it was even more the tone and the nature in which it was discussed as well as the substance of that discussion that influenced it.

This is also an issue – immigration is also an issue, as people mentioned in the last panel, where you see some real differences by cohort, by age, and certainly in terms of the tone of the debate and in terms of participation in the marches a very, very big difference between older Latinos and younger Latinos, and then some difference by geography and by ethnic origin. But having said that, I agree completely with Geri's point that everything we've done for Tamar and others shows the Latino voters and non-voters are overwhelmingly in favor of a path to citizenship and tough but fair immigration reform.

Latinos were very engaged in the last election. They showed a tremendous amount of interest in the last election: 43 percent rated their interest a 10. We also saw strong interest among young Latino voters and I think there is an enormous potential to mobilize young Latino voters, but I would agree completely with Clarissa's point that you can't target these voters in the same way. And a huge proportion of Latino voters

need to be targeted – young Latinos need to be targeted at their workplaces and through cultural institutions. Many are not even finishing high school, much less going on to university.

The last thing I would say about the interests of the Latino community, and I'm glad to talk about all of this tomorrow when we talk about in Q&A – these are values oriented voters and these are voters that often – that gets interpreted then as targeting them through conservative values, wedge issues, gay rights, gay marriage, abortion, and certainly this community is more conservative on some of those issues.

However, there are two things that I think are some of the most important things we found in our research last cycle and that is that in a Latino community particularly, issues like healthcare, issues like education, certainly issues like immigration are values oriented issues. These are not just policy conversations in that community. And in fact, we said – we asked a question, real family values means valuing families by having affordable healthcare and jobs that pay well enough so you can take time off with your children. Eighty-five percent of Latinos – 69 percent strongly agreed that, yes, that was family values.

And we push the issue even harder. We said, which represents more your sense of values and moral values? Is it favoring social policies to help the poor or opposing social policies like legalizing gay marriages? Seventy-five percent of all Latinos and 75 percent of young Latinos said social policies like helping the poor more represented moral value to them. Only 9 percent of all Latinos, only 10 percent among younger Latinos, and less than a fifth of actively every week churchgoing Catholic Latinos said that their view of moral value was better represented by issues like opposing legalization of gay marriage and abortion. So certainly that is a traditional community, but very end values very, very important in talking to this community and a values oriented dialogue, but not on the kinds of traditional wedge-issue dialogue that often is thought of as the only approach to that community.

So in sum, Latino voters made a huge difference in these last elections. They were very engaged in the elections. They have an enormous potential in the 2008 election, but independent of the semantics of the last panel I will say this: there isn't a candidate out there that thinks they're going to take this vote for granted and has any possibility of winning. The candidates are going to target this population if they're going to win, no matter what they call it.

Secondly, it's a very diffuse issue agenda in election and community, anchored by actually pocketbook and economic issues, but the way to talk about those issues as well as the issues themselves are different often in that community than in the population overall.

Third, immigration played a role – a very important role – but it was often at the tone level as much as at the policy level. And fourth, values matter, but it's not just the

wedge politics values. The value orientation of this community – a much, much broader orientation than just gay marriage and abortion.

Thank you.

MS. MUNOZ: Thanks, Celinda.

Sergio.

MR. BENDIXEN: First of all, let's go – thank you very much. Let me get right to the presentation so I don't run out of time. These are the exit poll results for the last three presidential elections – '96, 2000 and 2004 – and for the congressional vote in 2006. And I think we can all agree by looking at the red bar that between '96 and 2004, to a great extent because of the great work of Lionel Sosa and because of the fact that George W. Bush was such an attractive candidate for Hispanics – (laughs) – the Republicans did very well in 2000 and 2004. And even though you may not agree with every single number exactly, you'd have to admit that in 2006 the Democrats did better. And what I'm going to try to talk about for a few minutes this morning is what were the issues that really impacted on this shift towards the Democrats in the 2006 elections?

And first, let me take care of immigration, which some of the other speakers have talked about, but let me just reemphasize how important immigration was in this election. I believe that immigration is to Hispanics what civil rights is to African-Americans. It is a litmus test. You do not understand the importance of immigration at the Latino electorate unless you go deeper than asking about what is the most important issue.

I think that most Hispanics – at least many of the ones that I listened to in focus groups all over the country in 2006, saw the debate about immigration as a debate not about policy, but about whether Latinos are welcome in this country, about whether Latino culture is a positive for the United States. And they saw, they heard much of the debate as demagoguery, reactionary, even racist. I couldn't agree more with Celinda that it was what the nature of the tone, not about the specifics of the immigration policy and I'll be very interested to hear what Lionel has to say, but I think immigration hurt the Republican Party tremendously.

Here's three results from a poll that was commissioned by New America Media, by the Center for American Progress also sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation, like many of the other projects that you looked at this year, but 70 percent of Hispanic voters and the studies say that there's a growing anti-immigrant, anti-Hispanic sentiment in the U.S.; more than 60 percent say that this anti-immigrant sentiment is having a negative impact on their families. They will talk about this as people don't greet us with as much respect as they used to, people find it easy to offend us, to insult us, to treat us badly at the movies, supermarkets. And 64 percent say that they think that this anti-immigrant sentiment is being fueled by racism against Latin Americans and Asians.

The strength of this feeling among Hispanics about immigration, again, cannot be measured by asking what is the most important issue. It can only be understood by listening to how people talk about the debate and how they have it – saw it as it impacted on their lives.

Let me go to a quote by Samuel Huntington, who said just a couple of years ago, and of course he wrote the book *Who are We*. “America’s Latino immigrant deluge is so little like any earlier wave, so hostile and resistant to sharing the common American language, civic rights and virtues upon which our republic’s self-governance depends that it constitutes a major potential threat to the cultural and possibly political integrity of the United States.” The Hispanic voter who may not be very wealthy and who may not be very well educated and who probably doesn’t know who Samuel Huntington understands, knows that this is what the immigration debate is all about: whether Latinos belong here, whether our culture is a positive or a negative. And they reacted accordingly in this 2006 election just like they reacted that way against Pete Wilson and the Republican Party in California in ’96 and in ’98.

But let me go to another issue that I think was just as powerful in the 2006 elections. It was powerful for all voters, but I think specifically so for Hispanics and most of these results that I’m going to share with you come from a survey sponsored by People for the American Way. The support for the war – this poll was done December of last year – was in the teens among all Hispanics at 17 percent, and among those that are immigrants, it didn’t even reach the teens. And when you ask them when the troops should be coming home, an overwhelming majority – three-quarters, much higher than any number that you would see among the overall American electorate – 75 percent said bring the troops home before the end of 2006.

Now, it may not surprise you that the numbers are strong against the war and the numbers are so high in terms of bringing the troops home, but I want to make sure you ask them what I behind this feeling. Why do they feel so strongly about the war? That is because they look at the world in a different way than your average American voter.

Let’s go to the next – they believe by overwhelming numbers to great extent that the United Nations should have more power than the United States. They feel that the United States foreign policy should at the very least be acceptable to the United Nations. They are internationalists. They don’t believe in a sentiment that many Americans share that basically the United States should be able to do whatever it wants in the world. It is this internationalist feeling that has feed the strong opposition to te war from the beginning. From the time the war started, their numbers were a lot lower in terms of support for the war.

And they even go further in this next slide. The foreign policy of the United States, or would you say that the United States has used its military power and gone to war mostly for just causes that have made the world better, or that the U.S. has used its military power and gone to war for selfish causes that have made the world a more dangerous place? The majority – the large majority of American Hispanics say that the

United States over the last few years has gone to war for selfish reasons that have made the world more dangerous. They condemn U.S. foreign policy and its militaristic approach.

And I think that that is one of the defining concepts behind the way Hispanics, Latinos, immigrants, U.S.-born look at the world in a much different way than your average voters. They are internationalists. They believe we belong to a world community and that we must – our actions must be acceptable to the rest of the world and they don't celebrate the militaristic environment that so many Americans are in all honesty so proud of. That is what makes this electorate so different and it will define the way that it goes in the future.

And also, I have to agree with Celinda, you can't ignore the fact domestic issues were also important. Hispanics are lower socioeconomic in terms of their lifestyles. Affordability is something they have to deal with on a daily basis. They can't afford the health insurance. They can't afford the daycare services. They can't afford the auto insurance. They can't afford to buy a house. They can't afford to send their kids to a – they can't afford to pay the college tuition. They're greatly affected by domestic issues and, as you can see here, they strongly support the increase in the minimum wage, they strongly support national health insurance even though it might mean raising taxes, they strongly support public education.

So again, to finish up and summarize, immigration – for sure the issue that was in the heart, the emotional issue, the issue that I think created a lot of dynamics against the Republican Party and in favor of the Democrats. The war in Iraq had a tremendous impact just like it had with the overall electorate, but it was based on concepts, on concepts of internationalism and anti-militaristic feelings that I think will permeate for the next few years. And also, as we have seen in many other elections, Hispanics basically want a better life and feel that the issues that impact on their ability to make money, on their ability to take care of their families by providing them with healthcare and to educate their kids will continue to be important in every election.

MS. MUNOZ: Thank you very much, Sergio.

Tamar?

MS. TAMAR JACOBY: Thank you, Cecilia. I'm very glad to be here and to be on this distinguished panel. I'm going to talk about immigration and integration issues and I'm going to talk about the difference or the gaps or the surprising lack of gaps between the Latino community and the mainstream. And there's no question that if you arrive – if a Martian came to Earth last spring, the week of the rallies in March, and then stayed through the election campaign and watched mostly Republican ads, Republican and Democratic ads in a lot of states, you would think we were heading for civil war. You would see millions of people in the streets and then he would see these horrible, ugly, xenophobic, immigrant bashing ads on TV and he would say the future of this country really is in danger. And I think that's the sentiment that – I think a lot of Latinos

picked up on that and felt that that hostility from the mainstream did represent – hostility they saw in ads did represent the mainstream attitude and that, as Sergio puts it so eloquently, they're not welcome here.

I would argue that it's more complicated than that and what I want to do in my presentation is show those complexities and the basic point here is that those ads represent about 20 to 25 percent of the public. Any polling done on immigration among the mainstream shows 20 to 25 percent of the public doesn't like immigrants, is worried about what they're going to do to American culture, wants to send them all home, wants to build a wall, but they are a loud minority. They are mostly white, they are mostly men, they are mostly not college educated, they're half Republican, half Democrat, but they are a minority. Lou Dobbs doesn't represent America. And when you look – and he doesn't even represent Republicans.

And when you look a little more deeply at Latino and mainstream attitudes toward immigration and integration, you find that there's a lot more in common there than you think. In particular, they both agree that the system is broken and they actually agree on what the solution should be – majorities. And I think there's a lot of work to be done obviously, but I think that work is – we're not heading for civil war and that work is more doable than that Martian's vision would think.

So look at the rallies. What were the message of the rallies? People wanting the system fixed, people wanting to be legal, people wanting to work with dignity, a clamor for a solution and a view that the solution can't happen without taking care of the 12 million unauthorized people who are already here. Well, guess what? That's exactly what polling shows the mainstream thinks. Clamor for a solution – the system is broken, hunger for a solution, and you can't have a solution without taking care – doing something for the 12 million. So let's look at a little more – that's the kind the summary. Let's look at a little more detail of the numbers.

Is immigration a top issue? You get the same kind of split among Latinos and then with the mainstream. When you ask it in a list, only between 5 and 10 percent say it's the top issue in either group. When you drill down on how important did it end up being in your vote this time, because of the way it was a key part of the national debate last year? Yes, large numbers in both groups – it did end up being an important or very important issue in the way they voted last year. But what I take that as being is they're agreeing that it's broken. Fifty – close to a little over 50 percent of Latinos said it was the unimportant issue, a third said it was most important, 62 percent of the mainstream said it was important or very important, but not all those 62 were voting anti-immigrant. We'll look at that again in a minute. They agree that it's broken.

When you ask them, do you think immigrants are good for America, again the numbers are almost the same. It's three out of four in both groups. I mean, some polling shows a little less. Celinda's recent poll said a little less Latinos, 63 percent said they're good for the country, but it's basically – most polled at three and four. Both Latinos and the mainstream think immigrants are good for the country. And among the mainstream, 3

and 4 percent according to Gallup poll and a recent poll confirms what Gallup finds consistently, three in four Americans – mainstream Americans know that Latinos do work that Americans don't want to do.

When you ask about should the numbers of immigrants go up, be decreased, or increased, again, there are differences there. More immigrants and more Latinos tend to say keep the numbers the same. More mainstream tend to say keep decrease the numbers or keep them the same, but decrease or keep the same – it's about parallel. The percentage in either group saying increase is small.

Now, of course there are big, big differences underneath these numbers and what the debate signifies to each group is very, very different. I spend a lot of time on talk radio getting feedback from the people with the smoke coming out of their ears. Celinda and Ed Goetas, a Republican pollster, have done a lot of polling for me and for some of my partners, national immigration forum and I spend a lot of time watching focus groups and for the mainstream immigration issue is about – I think it's about two things. It's about 75 percent in very survey tell you it's about control, it's about legality, it's about restoring the rule of law.

People are also concerned about what does immigration mean for what they call America as we know it and what they're getting at is what Sergio was pointing to: will American culture change and will it change for the better because of Latinos. But even with these deep concerns, and they are deep concerns and sitting behind these mirrors at the focus groups can be a kind of scary, troubling experience because people are upset. But people get over their – you get people talking. It's predictable in every focus group: at the 45-minute point, they kind of put those differences aside and they say, look, these people are here, these people are coming, we need them for economic reasons. What are we going to do about it? How are we going to handle it? And they get pragmatic. And they want control, they want enforcement, they want tough policy, but they are pragmatic.

Now, obviously for Latinos is about something totally different. It is about are we welcome here. It is about what do they think of us. It's a threshold issue, just that are we welcome? It's about discrimination. Recent Pew Hispanic Center poll found that 54 percent felt that the discussion in the last year was – they felt discrimination, so one side talking about control and illegality and the other side's talking about do they want us here. Those are very different conversations.

And the intensity on both sides is very different. When you look at the people in each camp who are most – feel most intensely, feel most strongly about the issue, among Latinos it's people who think that immigrants are good for America. There's a four-to-one intensity difference. This is one of Celinda's numbers. Latinos think immigrants are good for America. And when you look at the mainstream, the most intense people are those Lou Dobbs voters, so that's the explanation of what the Martian saw. The intensity on the Latino side goes in one direction and the intensity on the mainstream side goes in another direction, but when you get them thinking about the solution and if I leave with

anything today it's this: when you get them thinking about the solution, both groups look to the same solution.

The Latino numbers aren't surprising. Eighty-four percent are for legal – think that legal status has to be an important part of the solution, 54 percent think more worker visas and a way to come to work with dignity is important. But when you look at the mainstream, the numbers are similar or even in some cases higher. Luntz did a poll – looked at what was the biggest issue that shifted mainstream voters from Republicans to Democrats this year. Guess what it was? Immigration. Republicans hadn't gotten a handle on immigration. Now, they weren't necessarily saying, be nice to immigrants, but they were saying we want a solution.

When you ask mainstream voters, do you favor candidate A, who wants an enforcement only approach, or do you favor candidate B, who wants a comprehensive approach that includes earned citizenship and includes worker visas, the split is basically 60/40. People are for a solution that includes a path to citizenship and a solution that includes letting people come to work with dignity and this has really been true – every mainstream poll since the debate heated up in March – and we're talking not just the polling we do – those of us who want comprehensive answers – but *Time Magazine*, the Gallup Poll, the ABC-*Washington Post* poll, the NBC-*Wall Street Journal* poll. Between two-thirds and three-quarters of voters say that immigrants here should be able to get on a path to citizenship if they meet certain conditions, if they earn it, if they meet certain requirements. And 75 percent of those polls at the time of the election said they want the 110th Congress to act on this.

The debate means different things to these two sides. There is this culture issue that we haven't really, I think, debated as a country yet. It's at the level of innuendo and fear. We haven't had the discussion we need to have about helping immigrants become Americans, but when you get to the solution on immigration policy, the views are not that different. The answer is the same.

A word in closing about this question of integration and culture. There are very few numbers on this so far. We've heard some of the numbers earlier from the new survey that we were all waiting for. What you tend to find when you ask Latinos – and it's been true for 10 years – is that you have very strong numbers saying, talking about change, blending in, even using the language of the melting pot. Eight in 10 said it's important to change and blend in as in a melting pot, but eight in 10 also said it's important to maintain your distinctive Latino culture. And they're not necessarily inconsistent. You get that strong view on both sides.

The mainstream – we haven't started to do polling on mainstream attitudes toward integration and culture yet and I think it's one of the very important areas that we have to explore, but I think we haven't yet found a way. I think the issue of will Latinos become Americans, will they be successful in America, will they be as productive as they can be, will they come to feel they belong? There, too, I would argue both sides have the same goals. Latinos want to be successful and fit in and belong. They don't want to lose their

culture, but they want to be successful here. They want to become Americans and that's what the mainstream wants to have happen. We have to start to find new ways to talk about it so we can talk to both sides in the same language. Right now the extremes are dominating the debate. You hear the university multicultural folks saying integration is genocide and you hear the Lou Dobbs voters saying they can never integrate and that's – we're going to coerce them.

I think there is a way to talk about it that can work for both sides, because I do think that both sides want the same thing, but we haven't even started to develop that language. We haven't started to develop a definition of what it means to integrate that can work for both sides, and we haven't started to really seriously think about what policies we can use to help people in a way that's not coercive and that will work for mainstream voters and for Latinos. So I think there's a lot of work to be done, but I think that Martian view of the Latinos in the streets and Lou Dobbs railing away on TV, I think that's very misleading and we ought to get beyond that to the work that needs to be done.

MS. MUNOZ: Thank you, Tamar. Lionel.

MR. LIONEL SOSA: I am very honored to be here with my – (off mike) – wonderful, wonderful new information. I'm an ad guy, so my job is to try to get the best message out for Republican candidates and sometimes it's easy and sometimes it's not. Right now is not the best time to be a Republican, but I'm proud to be one. But I always look and have since 1978 been working on Republican campaigns with John Tower, U.S. senator from Texas. At that time in 1978, the most any Republican could possibly expect from a Latino vote was 8 percent of the vote and slowly, because the Republican candidates have been so intent on saying this is our voter group.

Why? Because they're conservative and the sooner we get them, the sooner they will be with us. And many folks have understood that. Many candidates have understood that in the past in '78 and then Reagan in the '80s, because he was from California and understood the values base way of Latinos and the way they make up their mind. And I think as an advertising person, I always feel that people are going to make their decisions based on emotion, based on how they feel about things. You can do all the intellectualizing on issues that you want and they have an effect to be sure, but the real reason people vote for one candidate or the other is, do I like this person? Do I trust this person? Is this person a good enough leader to be able to make the decisions that will effect my life in a positive way? That's how people make their decisions.

So my advice as it has been in the past and will continue to be to any candidate is to view Latinos – this is not my line; it's from Sarita Brown – but as the next great wave of American talent – this is how Latinos must be viewed by every candidate.

Also, candidates do need to have that very, very strong grasp of Latino values and to understand the differences between Latino values and dominant U.S. values. Latino values are based on Catholicism, Spanish colonialism, and respect for tradition, while the U.S. culture is based on independence, on freedom of speech, of getting ahead, of being

number one and so forth. It's a Calvinistic thinking of the new and free America, and so if we look at a real Latinos family first, family helps family, faith in God, humility, working hard, sacrifice, stability, respect for authority, modesty, God helping the poor, and accepting a lot of life's problems and so forth.

These tend to be the Latino conservative values while the mainstream values are those of independence, and when you put them one against the other, they seem to be so diametrically opposed. It's me first. If I help myself first, I can help my family. Faith in self as well as in God. Self expression instead of humility. Working smart, not just hard. Pay your dues, not just sacrificing continually. What's new? What's next instead of stability? Challenging authority instead of respecting it. Tooting your horn instead of being modest all the time. Knowing that God loves the rich as well as the poor. (Laughter.) Solving life problems instead of just accepting most of them. And celebrating big successes, believing that there is opportunity and achievement out there.

So some of these may seem, wow, this is where I come from as a Latino and this is why I came to the U.S. for, so we become a combination of both these values systems. And candidates must understand the varying degrees that U.S. Latinos embrace both of these values systems. So it's kind of a combination that says, yes, family first, but you know what, the best way that I can help the family is to get an education, not to quit school to get a job to help the family, but to get an education to help the family in the long term; having faith in God as well as myself; not that much humility; working smart as well as hard and so forth. So what the U.S. Latino is becoming is holding on to the Latino values, embracing many of the U.S. values to different degrees, and therefore having almost a new value system that candidates absolutely need to understand.

And here are the family values: family comes first and you all work hard to help the family. The old way: drop out of school to get a job. The new way: finish college, earn more, contribute more. It's a better way to help the family. And then family values about money and God loves the poor. As long as you're poor and go to church every Sunday, you will go to heaven, so that a pretty – be poor, you'll go to heaven. Not necessarily. You can – it's okay to have a little money. I know a lot of Latino Democrats that have a lot of money. (Laughs.)

Next slide. And this is their attitude towards college. The old way is, I'll never be able to afford college so why invite disappointment by getting ready for it? How can I get my kid ready for college if I know that I will never be able to afford it? But the new way needs to be, I'll work hard, I will get prepared, the money will be there, I have to be creative and I need to start planning now and that's what candidates need to say. The family values: hard work is good, hard work is honorable. The old way: any steady job is honor. New way: set your goals high on a good career. You're capable of achieving any position in any company you want. Go for it: you can and you will be successful. That needs to be the message.

But to get the vote, the candidates must go after it. I still cannot for the life of me understand why Gore didn't spend hardly any money and Kerry spent zero on the Latino

vote – zero. That is ridiculous when we're out here and we're talking about we both need to go over the Latino vote and then the presidential candidates don't spend a nickel. Hello. What is – is that the message that is saying, we're taking you for granted? I guess so. Most Latinos are predisposed to vote Democrat of course, but they are becoming more open to considering the person. The undecided voter must first like and trust a candidate before they will listen. You've got to like and trust the candidate before you will listen to what they say. You just don't take it all and say, "Oh, they're Democrat, no matter what they say I'm for them." Yes, there's a big group that's going to continue to do that, but more and more they'll say, what does this person stand for?

So communicate expectations, not just issues: a better day for our children, opportunity, equality, a piece of the American dream, total American citizens, equal American citizens, and not helpless victims. The helpless victim thing is a thing of the past. Latinos are understanding that we are now a part of mainstream America and that we have to take our responsibility on leadership and that we can no longer depend on others to make it right for ourselves. There is that feeling. If a candidate somehow says – implies "you can't make it on your own, you need my help to do it," it's a way of saying, you're helpless, you can't do it for yourself. So there has to be a tone, I think. You know, we're talking about the tone of the message: it makes all the difference in the world. Work ethic, patriotism, strong moral character are more of the conservative values. And the candidates who communicate these expectations better, more often, with greater enthusiasm will get the Latino vote.

So this is the message that I say Republicans are better able to put out there, but Democrats should not ignore it. You are the future of America. You are equal and productive Americans, not helpless victims. This country is better and stronger because of you and it will become better and stronger in the future because of your participation. We all need to be optimistic about the future. Set big goals: with our help you'll get there. America needs your talent, intelligence and leadership. You are today's best role models because of the strong family values you bring. Our conservative values are the ties that bind us. And that is a big, big part of the message that every candidate must have.

And on immigration, in a sovereign country you must secure our borders, of course, but any Republican candidate needs to also be mindful of the immigrant struggle for betterment that built this country. America needs the immigrant worker. We must find the solution by supporting practical and comprehensive immigration reform that decriminalizes the hard working people this country needs.

And the ultimate message: we need you, we want you, we will never take you for granted, we will demonstrate our commitment by spending time with you, spending money to court you, treating you with respect, and including you in all we do because our future depends on you. And that is either for a Republican or a Democrat, so for all you Democrats here, this is the Democrat strategy. (Laughter.)

MS. MUNOZ: Giving away free advice, Lionel. For those who are political operatives in the audience, you get from the whole panel – just got a lot of really valuable advice, so I thank the panel very much and I want to open up the discussion. There's a microphone wandering around the room. Please identify yourself. There was a hand here, but there you are.

Q: John Garcia. University of Arizona, part of the Latino Study. Actually a question directed to Mr. Bendixen and Ms. Jacoby. Regarding the Iraq war and the Latinos you mentioned internationalism is a major force. I just wondered whether (there's an added?) connection with regarding to prolonged involvement in Iraq and costs relative to domestic policy and issues the Latinos; that is, your survey has indicated there might be a connect – Latinos are against the war because that distraction – if you want to put it in those terms – detracts from a domestic agenda and also moves domestic resources away from that.

The question, Ms. Jacoby, is that the public seems to be more in step with a comprehensive immigration reform. There seems to be a disconnect with the leadership in terms of enforcement-first policy and maybe some insights about why that disconnect exists.

MR. BENDIXEN: In terms of the war, for sure Latino voters are similar to all American voters. I think Latino voters felt misled about why we went to war. They feel that the war has not been led in the proper direction. There's been a lot of mistakes made. They definitely feel that a lot of resources being spent on the war could be better spent in the United States. But I think also – to reemphasize the point, I think their feeling against the war – there is also, by the way, a lot of people that will tell you that their children are in Iraq or in Afghanistan. Latinos have a greater representation in the U.S. Army than – they have a greater representation than in the population, so there's all those concerns.

But the point I tried to make in my presentation is that their feeling maybe deeper than those of Americans that are against the war because they are also against this unilateral foreign policy of the United States. They feel that that we need to work with the United Nation as much as possible. They feel that our policy is a little too arrogant many times, and they also feel that the United States has made a lot of mistakes in terms of its foreign policy positions, especially in its use of military power and the celebration of being the most powerful military machine of the century. It's not something that they share. They're not particularly proud of the fact that we are so militarily powerful. They don't think that's a good thing.

MS. LAKE: If I could just add to that too before turning to my impression, two things about the war: one is – and, of course, working with you and working with others in the Latino Policy Coalition, I really want to underscore the point that Sergio is making about the international view of American's place in the world, because if you add the other set of questions, as you know, immediate withdrawal and things like that, it's not like Latinos are for that. They're very cautious about that, so it's – this is not – I really

think the distinction that Sergio presented is the very, very important. It's a much more internationalist community, as you know, John, and it's not that this is the new peacenik community.

The second thing I would say is that international orientation is very interesting and influences other views as well. So, for example, in the healthcare area when you say to as everyone was (unintelligible) the mainstream population that America is the only country other than Canada and – Canada and Europe have national healthcare; we don't. They don't give a damn and Americans don't – the average Anglo-American does not want Canadian-style healthcare. You say to the Latino community, Europe and Canada pays the healthcare, 62 percent support it, so that international orientation goes into domestic policy in interesting ways too.

MS. JACOBY: On this question, what's wrong with the Republican leadership – (laughter) – like Lionel, I'm a Republican. I'm proud of it. I'm horrified at how out of touch they are and the mistakes they've made. Why did they make that mistake? I've been in a room with a Republican senator and he said to me, "Sometimes I hear Lou Dobbs and I think he's my base." They're wrong. He's not the base. It's because he's loud, but it's also because that in a 50-50 split country people think that Lou Dobbs base – people thought that that Lou Dobbs base could have made the difference for them.

They turned out to be wrong. Voters turned out to be angrier that they didn't solve it and that Luntz poll is really striking. The number one reason voters abandoned Republicans and went to Democrats was on immigration and that's got to be – I don't think he asked any further than that, but that's got to be because they didn't solve it. What can we say? And they haven't learned is the amazing thing. The House conference recently on the Eastern Shore, the overall sentiment was, couldn't we ride border security back into the majority? What planet are they living on? But I'm from the wing of the party that sees it differently. The president sees it differently. There's a big wing of the party I believe that sees it differently and I hope will come to the fore in this Congress. We're still going to need Republicans to pass the bill and we're working on them.

MS. MUNOZ: The hand up here. I spotted three hands.

Q: Jaime Zapata with the American Federation of Teachers. My question – and I hope you'll forgive me. I actually have two. Well, primarily for Celinda and for Sergio, but I'd welcome comments from any of the panelists. On education a number of you mentioned that it was a top priority with respect to Latino community. I wonder if you could share some of the views – solutions, if you will – that they may have offered, particularly with respect to vouchers and charter schools.

The second question is really about where Latinos get our information. Media use and any correlation to various perspectives on other issues would be really interesting.

MS. LAKE: Well, our research – on your first question, our research shows the same thing that Sergio's does, which is that the Latino community is not in favor of

vouchers and we've actually done some very, very expensive work on vouchers in places like Arizona in Texas and New Mexico, and contrary to conventional wisdom the Latino community thinks that, number one, good public schools are the best way to end discrimination – that vouchers may actually lead to increased discrimination. People are very concerned that private schools may not be required to accept Spanish-speaking children or children for whom English is a second language, et cetera, et cetera. So the Latino community are very, very committed – even with their attachment to the church and are very committed to public education.

Very interested in safe schools and anti-gang programs. Somewhat less concerned about small class size than some other populations have been, but concerned about quality going on in the classroom, but not completely convinced that small class size, which is such a code, for example, among white moms – not the same level of intensity and code in the Latino community. And you have just in general a different kind of orientation because many of the parents of Latino children are thinking about their own education, which may have occurred in a different country, and bring some of that view to their assessment of what is quality and what is not. More interested in infrastructure and investment in computers and things like that. Where the mainstream population tends to think that most schools are now computerized, Latino parents thinking that we still need a better labs, a good library and computers.

So there's a real richness in terms of the texture and I know there are folks in the audience, Luis and Gary and others, who have done quote a bit of work on that so I hope you'll jump in here. In terms of usage and information – and Sergio's done an enormous amount of work on that – first of all, Spanish media absolutely – I mean, not only are we not spending – the Democrats are not spending enough money in targeting the Latino community, but then we're often spending it in the wrong way targeting the Latino community and it's very, very important to target the Spanish-speaking media as well. There's a lot of youth and a lot of use of both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking, but in our – among registered voters, the 44 percent said they used – listened to Spanish-speaking television every day, 74 percent weekly, radio 41 percent every day, 60 percent weekly. I go to Clarissa's point about the internet: only 11 percent of Latino registered voters say they're on the internet every day, so everybody now – no campaign in their right mind wouldn't have a Spanish website, but they wouldn't necessarily understand the importance of targeting Spanish-speaking media.

MR. BENDIXEN: Quickly on education I think there is a very strong consensus among Latino voters all over the country that the number one solution to improving public education is to fully fund the public schools and the educational programs. I think many Latino parents and the Latino community in general feel that the public schools, especially in their neighborhoods, do not receive enough money. And on other issues like class size and teacher pay, they tend to be fairly progressive. But when it comes right down to it, if you listen to them in focus groups and tell them to summarize their point of view, they just want their schools to be fully funded, to have all of the advantages that schools in the richer neighborhoods have.

There's the media – no doubt the Spanish-language media has a tremendous effect among those that listen to the Spanish-language media, though the majority of American Hispanic voters get their information from English-language voters, but the 30 to 40 to 45 percent, depending on those numbers you accept, that follow Spanish-language media are tremendously impacted by them. It is no accident that in the '90s as Univision and Telemundo focused strongly on what was on happening in California with Pete Wilson 187, there was relentless movement in the direction of the Democratic Party. And starting in 2000 as George W. Bush came to the White House and started – (off mike) – White House and the power of the president and that message across (off mike). In 2000 and 2004 there was great movement in the direction of the Republican Party. That's all that you saw on television on the newscast every night was George W. Bush saying, "I love you, I love you, I love you and you are doing a great service to the United States, you're welcome into this country and you provide a great service," so no doubt that the Spanish-language media has this impact on a group of people that do not have that much information about American politics. They're still learning. They're still getting involved. They don't really understand the differences between the two parties and they tend to get impacted by what they see a television both on the news and in terms of commercials.

Quickly, I'd like to ask Lionel a question. Lionel, regarding the strategy –

MS. MUNOZ: Make it quick.

MS. MUNOZ: – from the '90s through 2004, which was all about family values, cultural connections, hearts and kisses and all of that, was 2006 the year that finally the issues overwhelm that strategy – finally in 2006 the combination of immigration and the war, economics, became more important than what the Republican message has been (unintelligible) Hispanic voters?

MR. SOSA: Well, there was really - and I've been trying to convince Sergio to become a Republican for years and he's – but there's more money on this side Sergio. (Laughter.) But he stays loyal. I think that many candidates felt that Lou Dobbs was their base, as Tamar said, and they wanted to make sure that they covered that. And in doing that, they just flat forgot about the Latino and the way the Latino might feel about that and they unnecessarily had – went out too far, absolutely had the wrong tone.

I believe that it would have been easy to say, we must have secure borders in this country, but we need to be mindful of the immigrant and the importance that they have to our country. It could have been done. It was easy. They just – there's a thing about most candidates that they have this knee-jerk reaction to want to take care of the base. Whether they're Democrats or Republicans, they want to make sure – but will I turn off my base? I tell you what, that base can be turned off and I think sometimes you do it by going overboard trying to reach that hard-line base.

MS. JACOBY: Bur, Sergio, I would say not that it's the year that issues overcame emotion, it's the year that emotion went sour and it's still about – the votes still

about emotion and about tone and that the predominant Republican tone in the past was, we love you, we want you, we value you, and the predominant Republican tone became we hate you, we don't want you. So it's not that issues got more important. It's that the tone went bad.

MR. SOSA: Much better answer. Thank you. (Laughter.)

MS. MUNOZ: Please tell us who you are.

Q: My name is Lena Regornas Orr (ph) and I'm part of the Democratic Latino Organization, Virginia in Fairfax County Democratic Committee. I'm going to ask the question and then I'm going to describe some anecdotal happenings that foot soldiers like myself have encountered. The question is, have any of you studied the degree that voting machines or the voting mechanism impacts the voter impact?

One of the things I found, especially when first-generation voters – registered voters in Northern Virginia was that the reason they did not vote was they were intimidated by the, quote, “electronic machine,” computers. They are not computerized folks. Now, I thought maybe it would only be – I had encountered that once before during the 2004 election in Nevada and I had been deployed New Mexico, but I found that also in Nevada and New Mexico where the concept was that a Mexican male is not going to go into a place where it was predominantly held by women and where he was going to ask to have help on how to vote, so therefore – or be embarrassed and therefore he wouldn't even bother to go vote. So to what extent have any of you looked at those particular type of impediments?

MS. MUNOZ: Thank you.

MS. LAKE: We haven't looked at it a lot. The one thing we have looked at is in New Mexico and in California we did an experiment with post-election surveying of encouraging Latino voters to voters to vote by mail. And it was wildly successful in terms of getting people to vote and increasing participation.

As you know, the rules by state vary enormously for the ability to do that – differs a lot. And we applied some of that in Arizona in the last election where we had record high Latino turn out. We did it on a couple of different languages, although we didn't do so much directly the voting machine, but the idea that there would be a record of your vote, that you could vote at home at your own leisure, and implicit in that is the language translation and all of that stuff. And then, frankly, we also did it in households that we determined probably had some legal voters and some illegal relatives in them and very, very successful in those households because people were worried about their illegal relatives being tracked down if there were any questions about their voting or anything like that. So it's an interesting – you're pushing it even a little bit more. I hadn't thought about the mechanics of the voting machines part, which is the great point, but we have found it very successful to encourage people to vote by mail.

MR. BENDIXEN: In Miami where the Hispanic voting population is fairly elderly there was some concern about the voting machines, but I guess in Florida now people are more concerned about the machines eating your votes – (laughter) – become secondary, and I think as people have gone to at least one or two elections, they feel pretty comfortable with it. There's the male/female situation. You have a point. I've never studied it, but I can tell you this: when we do focus groups with Latino immigrants, we usually have a male group and a female group because, unfortunately, when you mix the two genders in a focus group, the ladies will tend to be a lot quieter than they would be if it's only women in the group.

MS. MUNOZ: Thank you. We have a question here and then there is one in the middle.

Q: Hi. Luis Fraga (ph) from Stanford. I had a question for Lionel and to the extent of Celinda and Sergio might what to respond. It seems to me that one might want to consider an important distinction in the Republican relationship to Latinos between a Bush effect and a party effect. That is, the president in his campaign and his personality and the way he positioned himself as an individual candidate relative to the community is without question consistent with everything you said. I don't see any legacy of that to the party to a substantial degree. Do you see the legacy of that in terms of higher Latino support for Republican candidates in the state of Texas since he's been gone that's consistent over time? Do you see other candidates successfully adopting that strategy; that is, receiving higher percentages of Latino votes – in other words, are there legs to the strategy or is it really unique to this individual who was able with credibility to carry off this very important message?

MR. SOSA: That's a great question and, you know, there has been a lot of these unique individuals and the first one – the one who really got it all started, was when Lance Torrence and I worked in 1978 with John Tower. He got it. He loved Latinos and we would go out into the Latino neighborhoods and he knew where every little Latino bar in San Antonio was. He loved his beer and he said, let's go over to Contreras's Ice House. Go up this way. No, no, go up in Commerce Street, go out here. And when we'd get over there, "Senator Tower! Senator Tower, how are you?" People knew him, and he would sit down and he'd love to talk with them. And he got it. He understood – at that time in 1978 nobody was spending a nickel – no Republican was spending a nickel, but he hired us to do the campaign.

First of all, he only hired us to do the Hispanic part and he had half of million dollars back in '78 for it. By the time it was all over, we were hired to do the entire campaign – the entire campaign that wound up being a \$13 million campaign in Texas and here it started because he got it and he understood it. Reagan understood it and he's the one that said, Lionel, this is going to be really easy, all you have to do is to tie in Latino Republican values to Latino conservative values: Latinos are Republicans, they just don't know it. And that's the way he looked at it, because he got it. And you're right: it is personality, it is the individual. It is not the party. It is not that more Latinos

are saying, I'm a Republican now. No, more Latinos are saying, we're going to make our choice based on that individual and that message and what we think of him or her.

MR. BENDIXEN: Professor, I think that the jury is out on that question. In 2006 in Florida, Latino voters abandoned the Republican Party in large numbers now that the Bush brother is out of the picture. For the first time a candidate for governor, Democrat Tim Davis – in all honesty a weak candidate for governor – got the majority of the Hispanic vote and Bill Nelson against a weak Republican opponent got more than 60 percent.

On the other hand, in California Arnold Schwarzenegger was able to get almost 40 percent of the Latino vote by following much of the advice that we've heard from Lionel and by being very aggressive in terms of advertising on Spanish-language TV. So I think 2008 may very well be the year, in terms especially when we look at the presidential election, when we find out whether the Bush legacy in terms of the Hispanic vote and the Republican Party is one that lasts or whether it was just one of those nightmares that we've got to forget about. (Laughter.)

Q: Good morning. Brandon Mill from the Democratic Governors Association – DGA. I just wanted to commend you. I think this has been a very healthy discussion, very informative as well. I appreciate the messaging, too, because it was not until now that the between immigration to Hispanics to civil rights to African-Americans where really fully understood obviously how important immigration is. And obviously you hear a lot about it, but in terms to me and being able to fully relate, thank you.

Obviously, this past election was very important for young people. Top three issues were economic development, more or less the economy and jobs; the war in Iraq and of course college affordability/education. In terms of the Hispanic community, young Hispanic voters, what were the top three issues?

MS. LAKE: Well, in our data, the top issue – it was very similar, but the top issues were jobs and education among the young Latino voters. And then the immigration issue had a different influence among young Latino voters because so many of them – over half – said they or a friend of theirs had participated in the marches. And they were also – where older Latinos tended to be concerned about the impact of the tone of the marches has had on the community, younger Latinos felt very strongly that the marches had helped create community and I think there are others out there in the audience who (unintelligible) this even more than we did. So the issue agenda: overwhelmingly education and jobs, but the issue of immigration, I think, carrying even more weight among young Latinos and influencing very much as a values and a tone issues, as we've been discussing on the panel.

MS. MUNOZ: Okay, this gentlemen here in the grey sweater and there's the woman on the side.

Q: Here's a loaded question. I want to find out from the panel specifically the impact of Tom Tancredo up in Colorado and I guess the Minutemen – all those people down in the Southwest that are rallying against immigration. And locally here in the Washington area we've seen the set-ups for two Hispanic type immigrants work centers, one in Gaithersburg and the other out in Herndon, and I wondered if the panel will comment about those two issues.

MS. JACOBY: Yes, that's the shrill 20 percent making itself heard. Tom Tancredo doesn't represent the American public. There's no poll on immigration that shows the American public in significant numbers supporting Tom Tancredo, but he's a lot louder than more reasonable voices and that's what the members of Congress who aren't listening too carefully hear, that's what Latinos hear, that's what the rest of us hear. That's what that Martian is going to hear.

We've got to look deeper – what people want. Yes, people want tough enforcement, but they want it solved and they want it solved actually in a fair way. No, I don't hear – I spend a lot of time, as I said, listening to those kooks on the talk radio. Even those people – they're not – bigotry is not – bigotry is part of it, but bigotry is not the biggest part of it so to speak. It's about control. It's about law and order. It's about enforcement. And, yes, it's a concern about the future, but about culture, not really about ethnicity. So Tancredo is not representative and the Minutemen aren't representative, but people do hear them because they speak loud.

MR. BENDIXEN: Just like Huntington is the intellectual of the what we might call the anti-Hispanics movement, because he's not just against immigrants – Hispanic immigrants, he's against all Hispanics or he seems to feel that Hispanics contribute in a negative fashion to American society. The Tancredos, the Sensenbrenners, the Minutemen are the spokespeople. They are the ones who get on television. They're the ones that make it easy to understand that this group of people – and I agree with Tamar that they may be no more than 20 percent – that they really want the Hispanics to start leaving the United States as soon as possible, and definitely not to allow anymore in, so I think they do want – they have created – they are the ones that have communicated Huntington's message in a way that Hispanics can understand this is basically a reactionary and demagogic almost racist rhetoric.

MS. LAKE: If I could just add one thing to that, too. Mainstream America doesn't like the Tancredo rhetoric either. We shouldn't think that this 20 percent view is actually responded to by something like 70 percent or something. And actually I think of all of the Lou Dobbs-type language, et cetera, when they get into the Tancredo-Minutemen-type perspective, they really marginalize themselves. I think where it gets dangerous is when they raise issues of jobs, economy, and pressure on wages and pressures on jobs. And then you start to see sympathy, for example of the African-American community, which really does weigh on the one hand seeing this as a civil rights issue, which is very sympathetic and understanding this information, and on other hand saying, but what about jobs? We don't want wage pressure. We've got a lot of young people unemployed, et cetera. So I think that it's important to understand that

Tancredo and the Minutemen, et cetera, obviously at the center of the battle they can be popular, but in general their rhetoric marginalizes and the much bigger issue that we ought to grapple with is how do we have an economy that's good for everyone, including Latino workers.

MS. MUNOZ: A question back here.

Q: Good morning. My name Lillian Cruz and I'm representing Congressman Chris Van Hollen out of Maryland. And my question is, with respect to increasing the Latino through collaborating with other immigrant groups and communities of color, are there any national initiatives targeting the minority vote as a whole, especially highlighting comprehensive immigration reform and opportunity for small business and education?

MS. LAKE: I can actually speak to the piece about comprehensive immigration reform. I mean, there is a major effort that combines actually Democrats and Republicans for a large part of it, a lot have been part of it, and it's focused the policy goal of accomplishing comprehensive immigration reform. And there is a significant field component that kind of grew out of the marches that is engaged in – particularly in voter registration and is not limited to the Latino community at all, but rather quite intentionally focused broadly on voters who care about this issue.

There's something called the We Are America Alliance, which came together out of the many of the organizations that organizes marches, that has focused specifically on voter registration, voter mobilization efforts. They also focus very heavily on naturalization. You heard mentioned in the last panel that that's a significant piece of the work because there are huge numbers of people who could potentially be in the electorate who aren't covered, because they haven't crossed that hurdle, and it's a very significant hurdle.

So the answer is going to be, yes, there is a real big focus, particularly on immigration, on the energy that we saw in our community that's connected to organizing networks who work not only among Latinos, but among African-Americans and among communities that are focused on sort of low-wage worker issues.

And the idea is that immigration is part of that broader agenda – that accomplishing immigration reform is a step towards accomplishing other objectives that affect the low-wage work force – all of low-wage work force – including wages and working conditions and healthcare. And the hope is if we do this well that in accomplishing this goal of immigration reform, we can build a kind of power and a kind of energy in the electorate that will allow us to go after healthcare and wages issues that matter to low-wage workers.

MR. BENDIXEN: Even though it is not a formal organization, I think that in terms of its work for immigration, I think the national ethnic media is a great ally of progressive reform on immigration. If you look at the Korean, Vietnamese newspapers

and the Chinese television, if you look at the African-American weeklies and you look obviously at the Spanish-language television and radio, they all seem to have a very united message on immigration and I think they are obviously very, very powerful. They reach almost all ethnic Americans in one way or another and they are to my way of thinking an untapped source of support for immigration reform in the United States.

MS. LAKE: If I can just add one thing, too. I noticed that you said entrepreneurship as another example and I just want to underscore what you said because of one interesting statistic: 51 percent of Latinos under 31 will start their own small businesses. And young people in general want to start their own small businesses, but you're right – that's a huge area that we really haven't explored at all I think.

Q: Michael Jones-Correa from Cornell University. I have a question for Celinda and for Sergio. Tamar got asked a question about the rationality of some Republican leaders paying too much attention to Lou Dobbs as their base. I want to ask a question about the possible irrationality of Democratic leaders and not sufficiently spending campaign resources for turn out in the Latino community. So Lionel pointed out that very little was spent in the last presidential election cycle. So is the premise of that question right that very little was spent? And if very little was spent, then why?

MR. BENDIXEN: The answer is simpler than you think, at least from my point of view. I think, unfortunately, the people or some of the people, especially the non-Hispanic consultants involved in the last presidential campaigns tended to look at the Hispanic vote that it was a base vote. They would have agreed with the professor. Ruy Teixeira was saying the Hispanic vote doesn't swing, that it's always going to be Democratic, it's always going to be two to one, you don't need to worry about it, it's the base votes. And they did not listen to many voices within the party like Celinda's and in all honesty like mine, like many of the Hispanic staff people that were within the campaigns that unfortunately did not have enough authority who basically were saying at the top of their voices, the swing vote – Bush is a very attractive candidate, if we don't work hard and we don't spend more money we may lose a significant portion of that vote. So I think this is the debate that you heard in the first panel – base or swing – is a tremendously important debate within the Democratic Party and I think one that finally now as we approach '08 has been settled on the side of it is a swing vote.

MS. LAKE: I would just add to Sergio, and he's been a very courageous warrior in the fight – is that there's been some regional difference and I think that concentration of the east-of-the-Mississippi mentality. Frankly, you don't have this argument with the Arizona Democratic Party, don't have this argument with Governor Napolitano, you don't have this argument with the Colorado state (unintelligible) effort, and you don't have to start with the California Democratic Party. Now, whether they do well or not or whatever, you don't have this argument. And so I think there's been a regional component, too, and I hope with the rise of awareness – the Democrats have been drawn very strongly to the South and I think there's increasing awareness that our victories were in the West. We've got to go West. (Unintelligible) very important and others. I'm hoping that that Western voice will be more powerful because you don't just have this

kind of debate in the Arizona Democratic party and we shouldn't be having it at the DNC either or any kind of presidential campaign.

MR. SOSA: And in end, when you're talking about who's going to determine how much to allocate to the Latino vote, it's always the candidates because the candidate – the staff will do what the candidate says. When we first had our meeting in Texas when George W. Bush got 47 percent of the Latino vote in Texas, when we had our first meeting, he asked, "Lionel, how much do you think you'll need?" And I said, "Well, I'm just going to draw a figure and I think it's going to be about five million." And he turned to Carl Rove and he said, "Give him 10." And that's the attitude, and when that happens – I didn't get 10, but I got more than five. (Laughter.) But that's what happens when –

MS. LAKE: Maybe we should go over to the Republican side. (laughter.)

MR. SOSA: Oh, absolutely. (Laughter.)

MS. JACOBY: Wait, wait I don't want to leave any misimpressions here that Lionel is not a Republican because the money is better. (Laughter.)

MS. MUNOZ: No, I think it's really true when you think about it. If we're talking about the presidential level, the most recent candidate we've had that's able to just communicate, "I know who you are," let alone policy, let alone even "I love you," just "I know you," clearly George Bush is a candidate who was able to communicate that. And at the presidential level, the candidate prior to George Bush who was able to communicate that to our community was Lyndon Johnson. In between, I'm not sure I can name one – not one. So that's pretty significant and it's something we'll see whether it changes in the next cycle or not. It is notable that there is one Latino in the running – in the race.

MS. LAKE: One other thing – (laughs) – I'd thing I'd like to just say, too, is this debate about filling in base – it's really mystifying to be because either way we're not putting enough resources. If they're base, then we should be getting them more money to get out the vote. If they're swing, then we should be convincing people to be base and then getting them out. And what I think is unbelievable the resistance on our side to target sufficient resources to this important population, and I'm really, really hoping that the critical mass of opinion has shifted. I'm not as optimistic as Sergio for the next campaigns. I hope he's right.

MS. MUNOZ: Okay. We've got time for one more. I guess you have the microphone.

Q: I don't like microphones. Okay. My name is Gail Morgado (ph). I'm representing Senator Menendez's office and as a co-chairman of the Hispanic Task Force, we're now trying to do our utmost in researching Latino voting systems and what our priorities should be in tackling issues. Based on your extensive research and years of

experience, what do you feel should be the priority and how do you feel we should tackle the most important issues and strategies in which we can do so?

MS. MUNOZ: How much time do we have? Five minutes. (Laughter.)

MR. BENDIXEN: I would say the Latino electorate expected Democrats to do something about immigration in this Congress. Again, it was not that number one issue when you give them a long list, but it was the emotional issue. It was the issue that connected with them emotionally. And they now feel that – let's see what the Democrats do. This is a chance to really come up with a solution to the issue. They still feel that – even though they're very disappointed in President Bush, they do feel that at least he's going to be reasonable on the issue. So that's a great expectation, and because of where Univision and Telemundo and the Spanish-language media is coming from, that will become to a great extent how Democrats are judged as we approach 2008: what they did or did not do on immigration.

Past that, Hispanics are very much like other Americans. They have very strong feelings about Iraq. They have strong feelings about health insurance. They have very strong feelings about public education and they expect the Democrats to do better, but I think the Democratic leadership should hear loud and clear that to a great extent their credibility depends on what they do or do not do on the immigration issue.

MS. LAKE: I would agree with Sergio about the immigration issue and I also think our window for doing that is fairly narrow because – and I know your boss has been a leader along with Senator Reid in trying to force this ahead.

The second thing I would say, though, is – and I was really struck by Lionel's presentation. Since I don't think we're going to get him to be a Democrat in the near future, we need, I think, to really put a powerful values oriented agenda together and probably around prosperity and opportunity that includes being aggressive about economics, being aggressive about education, but I think frankly right now we haven't done the work that the Republicans have done. We couldn't put together that kind of values oriented presentation that Lionel has done for the Republicans.

And of course I think Sergio and I should be hired to do that, but independent of that I think there needs to be a comprehensive look at a powerful, emotional, values oriented dialogue that will tie together with what we do on immigration, with what we do on the other policies.

And then I think we need a very strong – and your boss did this in the House and I hope you will do it now for both branches – a powerful campaign arm that communicates this so that we go out on the college affordability agenda, we don't just highlight Harvard and Stanford and four-year colleges, but we highlight how those programs will help community colleges and ongoing training, whether or not you have your GED, to get the kind of training and then in every issue, because we are good – the Democratic Party is

good on moving this agenda forward, but we don't talk about it very much in very profound way.

So the two things I would say is I think we need a powerful, emotional, values oriented umbrella to put this under, and I think that then we take our agenda and we need to be sure that we have an aggressive communication arm that talks a lot to the community where they're at about how this agenda serves their family.

MS. MUNOZ: Any closing thoughts? If not, I want to thank everybody. We're at time. I know there are other burning questions out there. Hopefully maybe you'll be able to ask them as the panel breaks up, but I want to thank our panelists and thank the Center for American Progress.

MS. JACOBY: Thank you.

(Applause.)

(END)