



WHY ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS SHOULD VOTE

The American dream is increasingly out of reach for many people, including far too many Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) children and families. AAPI families have experienced stagnating wages, declining health care coverage, erosion of pension protections, rising personal debt, and jobs disappearing as a result of global competition and rising housing costs. Further, the gap between America's richest and poorest is at its widest points in at least 25 years. At a time when costs are rising and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are working harder just to keep up, Barack Obama will provide relief for the middle class and support for working people. In addition to his health care and tax relief plans, Obama will make college affordable, reform our bankruptcy and credit card laws, protect the balance between work and family, and put a secure and dignified retirement within the reach of all Americans. Obama has been a strong advocate for working people throughout his public life, and he will stand up to special interests and bring America together to reclaim the American dream.

This election is a critical moment in our history. We can change the nation, but Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders need to vote to do it.

- Barack Obama frequently says that real change cannot come from the top, but rather that it has to come from the bottom, and he's right. The change that we want and that this country needs won't come on its own. We have to get involved to make it happen. And the first step to getting involved is getting registered to vote.
- Throughout this campaign, we've seen millions of Americans get involved who have never been interested in politics, never volunteered on a campaign, and many who have never been registered to vote before.
- It's exciting and inspiring to see so many of us – young and old, Asian and Pacific Islander, rich and poor – getting involved for the first time, because they know that it's time for change. We're tired of the cynicism, the fear, and the petty gridlock that has defined our politics for so long. If we get involved, if we choose hope instead of fear, we will change not only our politics, but our entire country.

There have been too many times that elections have been lost because not enough people voted.

- The last two elections were decided by extremely close margins. In 2000, the Presidential election was decided by roughly 500 votes in Florida. In 2004, it was just two percent of the vote in Ohio. And this election is going to be just as close, if not closer.
- Barack Obama believes that in 2008 and beyond, we can register enough new voters to remake our politics. There are currently over 55 million Americans that are eligible but not registered. That's over 25% of our voting eligible population.

- During the primaries, voter registration drives conducted by the campaign registered more than 200,000 new Democrats in Pennsylvania; more than 115,000 new Democrats in North Carolina; and more than 150,000 new Democrats in Indiana. Those numbers only scratch the surface of what's possible.
- Obama/Biden can win this election, but they cannot do it without our help. We need to register as many new voters as possible and make sure that they get to the polls on November 4.

The Asian American and Pacific Islander community can help deliver the White House for Barack Obama and Joe Biden in 2008.

- The AAPI community is one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the country. More importantly, our community is the only ethnic community that has voted increasingly Democratic in every presidential election since 1992.
 - 1992 31% AAPI vote for Clinton/Gore
 - 1996 43% AAPI vote for Clinton/Gore
 - 2000 54% AAPI vote for Gore/Lieberman
 - 2004 61-74% AAPI vote for Kerry/Edwards
- Recent elections have shown that AAPIs have the ability to act as a critical swing vote in major elections, especially when motivated to vote. Their critical role in Senator Jim Webb's 2006 victory in Virginia shows their electoral power.
- Nationally, about **two-thirds** of all Asian Americans who are registered to vote are Democrats.
- 47% of Asian students recently polled by Harvard identify as Democratic, 15% Republican and 39% independent — making them more Democratic than any other ethnic group except African-Americans in the survey.
- For 2008 elections, Asian Americans nationwide said they want the presidential candidates to address issues in this order: economy/jobs (28%), health care (19%), war in Iraq (15%) and education (15%). Immigration was chosen by 9% of the Asian Americans surveyed, the report said. (Asian American Legal Defense Fund)
- AAPI numbers might be small compared to other ethnic groups—only 5 percent of the total population—but they've been growing nine to 10 times faster than the general population, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census.
- If AAPI voter registration increases by 30% in the General Election, just imagine how Barack Obama and Joe Biden could expand the electoral map. We can potentially win Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio and the Southern corridor votes of Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia – as well as Colorado and Nevada.

The Obama-Biden campaign is empowering new voters with the *Vote for Change* 50 state voter registration project.

- *Vote for Change* is being led by the Obama-Biden campaign and the grassroots supporters and volunteers who make up the backbone of Obama's movement for change.

Obama for America launched the website www.voteforchange.com to simplify the registration and absentee ballot request process.

- 2008 Presidential Battleground States:

State	AAPI Population ¹
Florida	402,552 (2.3%)
Michigan	238,395 (2.3%)
Minnesota	180,214 (3.6%)
Nevada	158,532 (6.3%)
Ohio	177,447 (1.5%)
Oregon	311,894 (3.9%)
Pennsylvania	292,621 (2.4%)
Virginia	371,806 (4.9%)
Washington	451,162 (7.0%)

Top Ten AAPI States:

State	AAPI Population
California	4,612,735 (12.8)
New York	1,327,898 (7.0%)
Texas	801,255 (3.5%)
Hawaii	624,483 (49.1%)
New Jersey	656,740 (7.5%)
Illinois	540,193 (4.3%)
Washington	451,162 (7.0%)
Florida	402,552 (2.3%)
Virginia	371,806 (4.9%)
Massachusetts	313,762 (4.9%)

FLORIDA

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
Region	% of Overall VAP	# of AAPIs of Voting Age
Orlando	3.0%	85,428
North Florida	2.7%	48,100
Tampa	2.2%	76,835
South Florida	2.2%	72,615
Palm Beach	1.9%	29,114
Florida Panhandle	2.0%	15,626
Southwest FL	1.2%	11,474

MICHIGAN

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
Region	% of Overall VAP	# of AAPIs of Voting Age
Detroit	3.6%	136,848

¹ 2006 U.S. Census Bureau State QuickFacts available at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>

Grand Rapids – Kalamazoo	1.6%	23,573
Lansing	2.6%	13,363

MINNESOTA

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
<i>Region</i>	<i>% of Overall VAP</i>	<i># of AAPIs of Voting Age</i>
Minneapolis-St.Paul	3.8%	119,933
Rochester	3.0%	5,738
LaCrosse-Eau Claire	2.4%	1,659

NEVADA

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
<i>Region</i>	<i>% of Overall VAP</i>	<i># of AAPIs of Voting Age</i>
Clark County	8.4%	118,170
Washoe County	5.4%	16,904

OHIO

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
<i>Region</i>	<i>% of Overall VAP</i>	<i># of AAPIs of Voting Age</i>
Central	3.2%	45,339
Cuyahoga	2.6%	25,116
Southwest	1.9%	25,323

OREGON

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
<i>Region</i>	<i>% of Overall VAP</i>	<i># of AAPIs of Voting Age</i>
Beaverton, Hillsborough	8.85%	39,418
Lake Oswego	3.75%	23,692
Portland Area	7.74%	51,137

PENNSYLVANIA

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
<i>Region</i>	<i>% of Overall VAP</i>	<i># of AAPIs of Voting Age</i>
Philadelphia	5.8%	61,456
Philly Suburbs	4.4%	84,113
Pittsburgh	2.4%	22,503
Outer Philly	2.2%	17,756
Harrisburg	1.6%	22,120

VIRGINIA

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
<i>Region</i>	<i>% of Overall VAP</i>	<i># of AAPIs of Voting Age</i>
Richmond-Petersburg	2.5%	27,136
Norfolk-Portsmouth	3.3%	42,308
DC Inner	13.7%	145, 601
DC Outer	7.0%	71,489

WASHINGTON

Counties with Highest AAPI Population		
<i>Region</i>	<i>% of Overall VAP</i>	<i># of AAPIs of Voting Age</i>
King County (Seattle)	13.9%	240,918
Pierce County (Tacoma)	8.64%	60,547

We must unite and work harder than ever to ensure that Senator Obama is elected president. We need a president who will advocate for AAPIs and who understands our values and concerns. Senator Obama will be that President.

Please encourage your friends and family to join the AAPI for Obama group at <http://my.barackobama.com/aapiforobama>. They will receive news and updates on what the AAPI Vote Team is planning, access valuable resources and literature on AAPI issues and Obama's candidacy, and purchase *AAPI for Obama* gear.

Working together, we will make history.



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