



25 million MORE votes!

That’s the difference between the midterm turnout rate of the voting eligible population (VEP) in the three 100% “Vote at Home” states (CO, OR, WA) using that time-tested, secure way to vote, versus the percentage for the rest of the country. For all the talk about the “huge” turnout of 50%, which it was compared to recent midterms, what would we have called it with 25 million MORE votes cast? What would it have said about our representative democracy? Once again, we can note that in a general election, V@H states out “polled” non-V@H states by double digit percentage points! Here are the details:

	Votes Cast	VEP	% turnout
USA Total	118,049,275	235,714,420	50.1%
USA w/o V@H states	110,417,324	223,181,143	49.5%
CO	2,583,580	4,103,903	63.0%
OR	1,914,923	3,113,178	61.5%
WA	3,133,338	5,316,196	58.9%
Total V@H states	7,631,951	12,533,277	60.9%

Source: US Election Project as of 12/11/18

Speaking of “all the talk,” we witnessed in some counties in Florida and Georgia stark examples of how NOT to handle mail ballots and signature verification. What we didn’t witness is any of those issues in the states that are either 100% mailed-out ballots (CO, OR, WA) or those which vote with well over 50% from mailed-out ballots (AZ, CA, HI, MT, UT). Yes, there was a brief kerfluffle in Arizona based on the fact that not all counties were handling signature verification consistently. But quickly, mature bi-partisan heads prevailed, and [the counting went on to conclusion](#). The message is simple: mailed-out ballot voting works very well, when well-known processes are in place for it to work well. And yes, NC-09 showed that election fraud is possible in any voting methodology. But, it also showed that with even modest safeguards, those who try to cheat with paper mailed-out ballots get caught. And it also highlighted how mailed-out ballot tracking systems ([like Denver’s Ballot TRACE](#)) or [Democracy Works Ballot Scout](#) can help catch those issues even faster. [For your reference, here’s an updated turnout map of the US. \(as of 11/30\)](#)

Staying on turnout for a moment, we received some very interesting information that allowed us to compare the 2018 midterm turnout by age cohort nationally vs. Oregon with its 100% mailed-out ballot model. National data courtesy of Catalist, Oregon data from their Secretary of State’s office - both using 2016 Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) census data as the denominator. Clearly, while “a rising tide lifts all votes,” younger (lower propensity) voters are much more engaged when they have a ballot in their hands.

VOTE HOME

Age Group	National turnout	Oregon turnout	Difference
18-34	28%	45%	17%
35-49	46%	64%	18%
50-64	64%	70%	6%
65+	77%	83%	6%

For some time, we and many others theorized that the use of mailed-out ballots, where voters could take their time to research and vote on down-ballot candidates and issues, should result in higher down-ballot engagement. With the help of Pantheon Analytics, and the benefit of the 2016 general election in Utah, where there were some counties still using a polling-place model, with others having moved to 100% mailed-out ballots, we now have validation for that. [The study Pantheon conducted showed a 5.5% lift in turnout in State House races, seen here.](#) As their summary concludes, *“Overall, this research indicates that Vote At Home is a boon to civic participation at all levels of the ballot when measuring by the important metric of raw vote totals.”*

We are delighted to report that Vote at Home Executive Director, Amber McReynolds, recently appeared in Washington, D.C. to accept a [“Public Official of the Year” award from Governing Magazine.](#) Amber received the recognition for her work over the prior 13 years making Denver’s election system a model of security, efficiency and voter engagement. And her passion for this continues here at Vote at Home. She says, *“If I can make it easier for one voter, let alone many,” she says, “then I know I’ve done something in this world.”* She now has been invited to speak to elections officials and legislators in states looking at moving to more voter-centric election models, including MI, NE, OH, IL, and NM.

Finally, we are pleased to [direct you to our new web site](#), designed to be more accessible, to make clearer the benefits of the Vote at Home model of holding elections, and a better source of insight for all interested parties. Feel free to let us know how you like it, and where we might continue to improve its effectiveness. One thing you’ll see there in a few weeks is an announcement of our Advisory Committee. It truly is an all-star team of bi-partisan election reformers. Stay tuned.....!