

Vote by Mail Among Traditionally Marginalized Voters National Online Survey. July 2020



Research Methodology

Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diagnose the problem audiences have with vote by mail. Is it familiarity? Trust? Process? We must understand which of these problems needs solving 2. Explore the process of vote by mail to identify all potential barriers to entry across demographic audiences 3. Identify messaging that overcomes the barriers to voting by mail 4. Regular tracker to measure the rapid changes in public attitudes toward vote by mail as election day approaches
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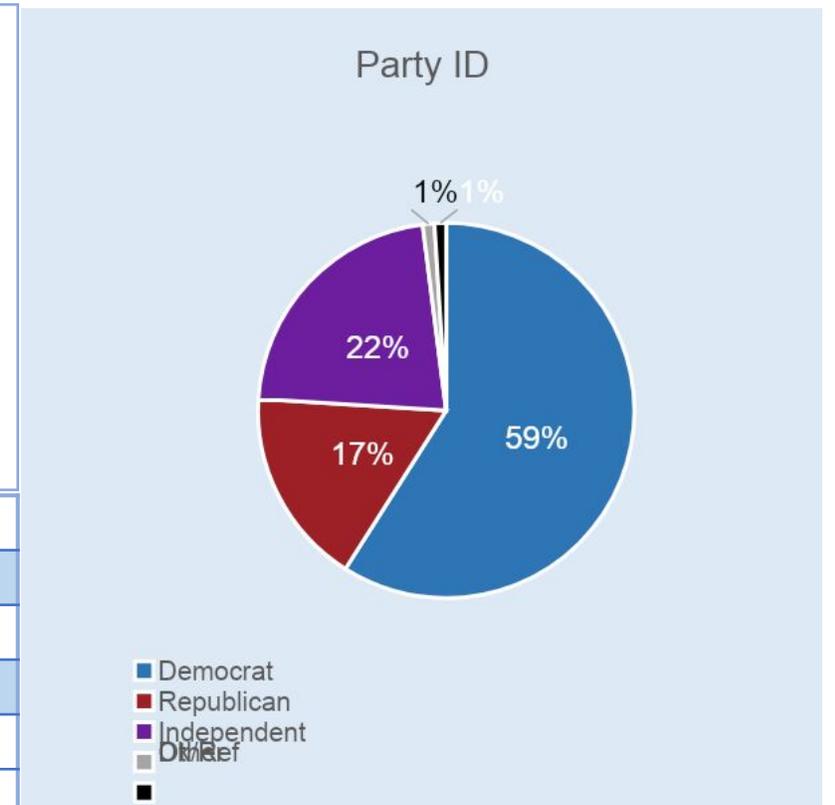
Survey Methodology

Sample	Nonwhite Voters	<p>These findings are from a proprietary survey conducted by HIT Strategies on behalf of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. This survey consisted of 800 Non-White (or POC) voters from all political viewpoints with a 200 person oversample each of African American, Latinx, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and POC LGBTQ voters. The survey was conducted via double opt in online panel, with respondents matched back to the voter file. Geography was selected based on a variety of rural and urban population centers with significant POC populations. The survey fielded from June 29th – July 10th, 2020, and the margin of error is +/- 4% with a confidence level of 95%.</p>
Size	<p>N=800 Base N=200 Black N=200 Latinx N=200 AAPI N=200 POC LGBTQ voters</p>	
Geo	National	
Demo	Non-White Voters	

Focus Group Methodology

Geography	Date & Time	Demographic Descriptions
11 HRCF Selected States*	June 10, 2020	POC LGBTQ voters, Mix of Gender, Ages 35 - 55
FL, GA, and NC	June 11, 2020	Black voters, Mix of Gender, Ages 25 - 45
PA, OH, and WI	June 11, 2020	POC voters, Mix of Gender, Ages 25 - 45
AZ, FL, and PA	June 16, 2020	Spanish Language Latinx voters, Mix of Gender, Ages 25 - 35

*AZ, FL, MI, NC, NV, OH, PA, VA, WI, GA and TX



Key Findings

1. **FEELINGS.** There is a mixed bag of feelings voters have towards the November election. Though Hopeful is the highest rated feeling at 32%, it is followed by Anxious (14%), Discouraged (13%), and Nervous (13%). The hopeful attitudes are a significant improvement from the concerns expressed in focus groups and represent an increased morale among voters.
2. **COVID-19.** 76% of voters believe the corona virus is likely to have an influence on the November election, leading many to pursue safer alternatives to voting. It is the dominating context of this election cycle and must be considered when developing VBM messaging.
3. **VOTE BY MAIL PREFERENCE.** Whereas in our focus groups many POC voters found it much easier to vote in person. Now, 48% say they are likely to vote by mail, with 59% of AAPI voters stating that voting by mail is their current voting preference.
4. **VOTING DIFFICULTY.** Given the national context of what we are experiencing, it's no surprise our highest rated message was COVID-19, which 53% of POC voters rated as an 8 – 10, followed by Increased Turnout (49%), and Less Fraud (47%). Here again we see a difference of opinion between the different people of color. AA and AAPI voters rated the COVID-19 message the highest at 58%, whereas Latinx voters rated it much lower at 48%.
5. **COMMUNITY DIFFERENCES.** We were able to increase Strongly Favor vote by mail choice by 5% for the upcoming November election, with Latinx and AAPI voters both seeing 6% increase in their support. The biggest jump in vote by mail attitudes we saw was in likelihood to vote by mail in November if there was still no COVID treatment available. Overall 10% shifted to Very Likely to vote by mail if COVID-19 was still a threat in November, highlighting the health anxiety that exists in these communities.



Messaging Guidance

Anchor to COVID-19 and the safety/security that voting by mail creates.

Harness the increasing hope, optimism, and resilience of minority communities.

Demonstrate how the accessibility of voting by mail has already increased participation of under- represented communities.

Demonstrate how vote by mail has already reduced voter fraud.

When referencing how vote by mail has already improved voting use locations, statistics, and dates.

MESSAGING PITFALLS TO AVOID

Avoid discussing vote by mail as being more convenient. There is a nuanced but important difference between convenience and accessibility.

Avoid discussing vote by mail as a community or social event. While it is sited as something that should be done with children to demonstrate civic responsibility, voting is otherwise perceived as a private experience.

Defining Audiences

	Base	Shifters	Black Voters	Latinx Voters	AAPI Voters	POC LGBTQ Voters
Top 3 Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hopeful • Anxious • Discouraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hopeful • Nervous • Anxious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hopeful • Nervous • Discouraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hopeful • Anxious • Nervous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hopeful • Anxious • Discouraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hopeful • Nervous • Anxious
Top 3 Reasons to VBM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe & Healthier • Flexibility • Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe & Healthier • Flexibility • Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe & Healthier • Flexibility • Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe & Healthier • Flexibility • Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe & Healthier • Flexibility • Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe & Healthier • Access • Flexibility
Top 3 Reasons to NOT VBM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost/Uncounted Votes • Voter Fraud • Longer vote counting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost/Uncounted Votes • Prefer in person experience • Longer vote counting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost/Uncounted Votes • Voter Fraud • Longer vote counting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost/Uncounted Votes • Voter Fraud • Longer vote counting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost/Uncounted Votes • Voter Fraud • Longer vote counting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost/Uncounted Votes • Voter Fraud • Longer vote counting
Top 3 Persuasive messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 • Increased Turnout • Less Fraud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 • Increased Turnout • Less Fraud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 • Increased Turnout • Sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 • Increased Turnout • Less Fraud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 • Increased Turnout • Less Fraud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 • Increased Turnout • POC



1

Political Climate

2

Vote By Mail Attitudes

3

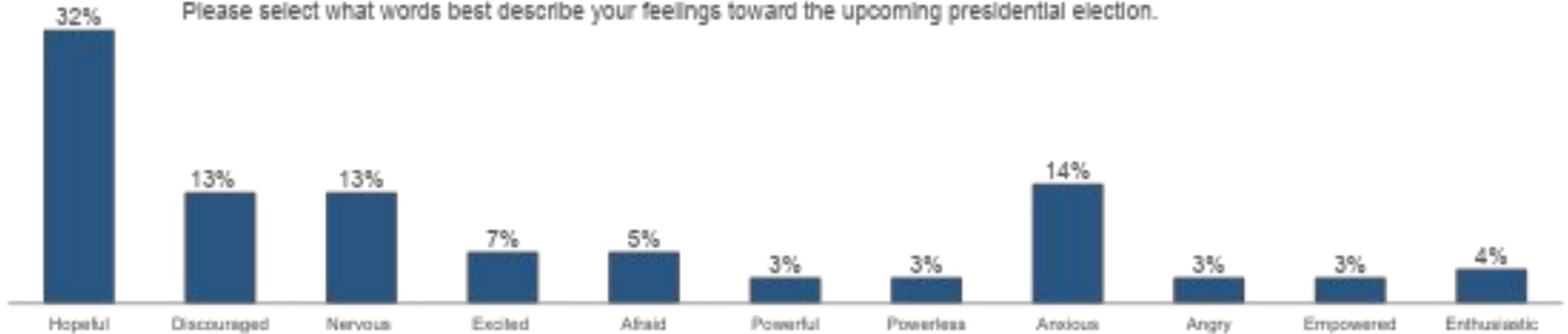
Message Testing

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Conclusion

Feelings towards upcoming election

Here is a list of words others have used to describe their feelings toward the 2020 presidential election. Please select what words best describe your feelings toward the upcoming presidential election.



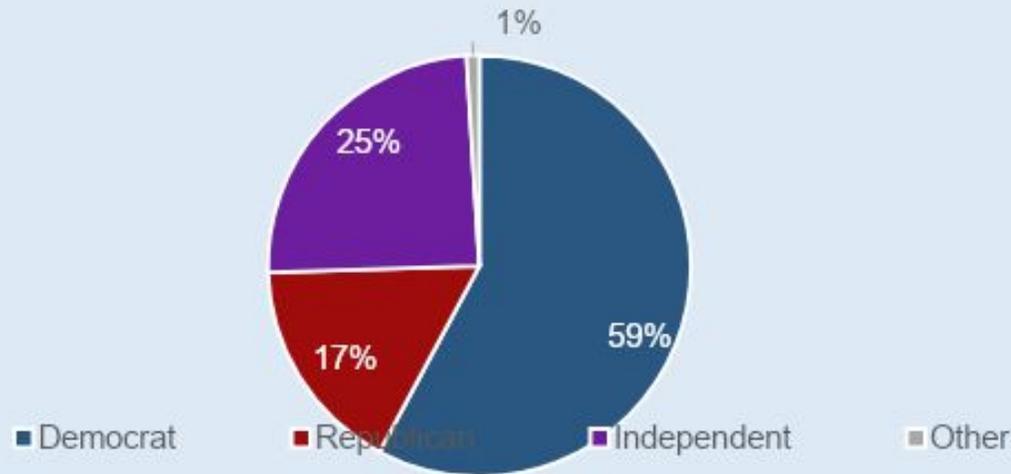
	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Hopeful	32%	41%	27%	27%	29%
Anxious	14%	9%	17%	17%	13%

"I BARELY TRUST VOTING IN PERSON... I DEFINITELY DO NOT TRUST MAILING ANYTHING IN. IT'S JUST TOO EASY TO COMMIT FRAUD RELATED TO MAIL IN BALLOTS".

AA Female, South

POC voter communities are not monolithic

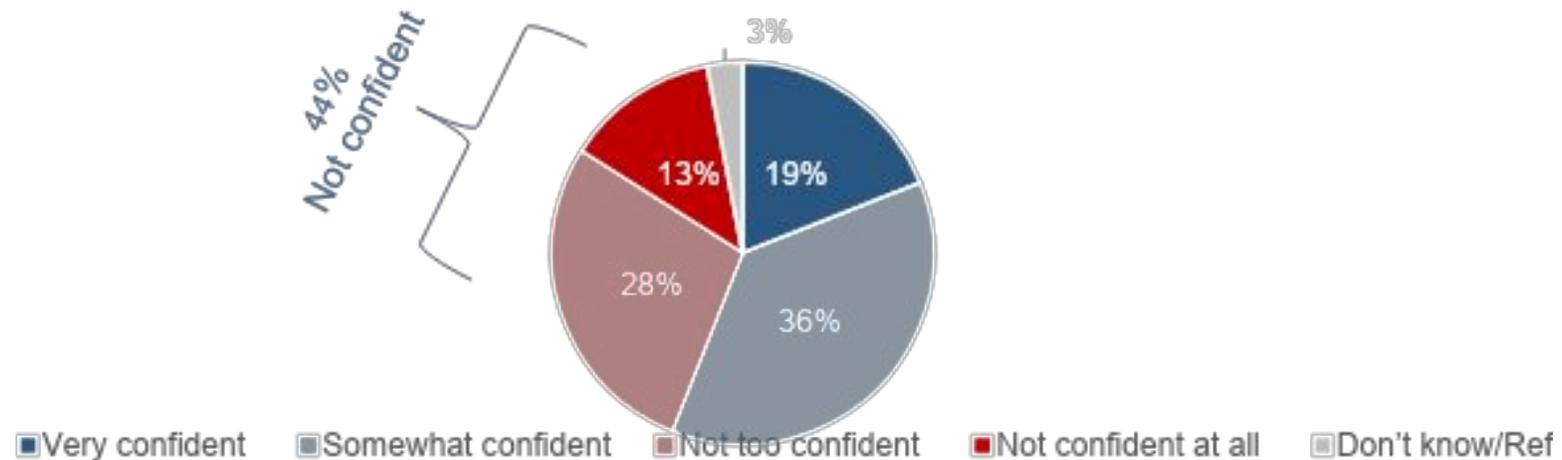
Regardless of how you have previously voted, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or something else?



	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Total Democrat	59%	74%	54%	45%	71%
Total Republican	17%	6%	22%	25%	9%
Independent	25%	20%	23%	31%	20%

Lack of confidence in the integrity of this election

Thinking about the presidential election in November, how confident, if at all, are you that the election will be conducted fairly and accurately?



	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Very confident	19%	18%	20%	18%	23%
Somewhat confident	36%	38%	35%	37%	27%
Not too confident	28%	28%	28%	30%	31%
Not confident at all	13%	13%	14%	10%	16%
Don't know/Ref	3%	3%	3%	5%	3%

"I JUST DON'T TRUST VOTING IN GEORGIA. JUST BEING HONEST. I'M STILL GOING TO DO IT, BUT THEY'VE BEEN STEALING ELECTIONS HERE FOR ALMOST THE PAST TWO DECADES, SO WHY WOULDN'T THEY TRY TO STEAL MAIL IN BALLOTS AS WELL?"

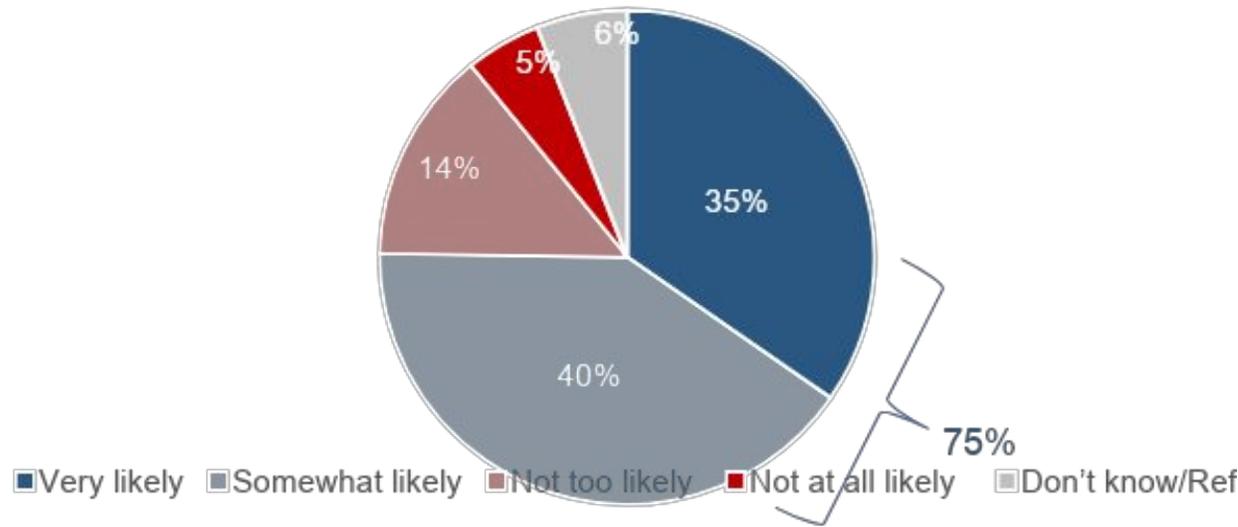
AA Male, South

"IT'S HARDER [TO VOTE] BECAUSE OF THE COVID ISSUE. THE LATINO COMMUNITY, SPECIFICALLY, AND THE BLACK ONE...THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE MOST AFFECTED. IT IS KNOWN AND IT IS NOTICED, AND IT IS THE ONE WE FEEL THE MOST.

Latino

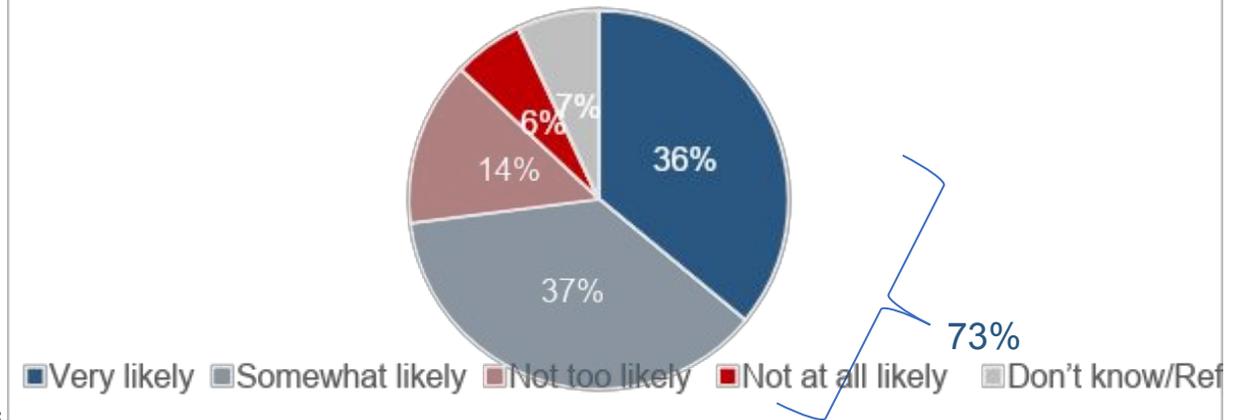
COVID and Protest are expected to have an equal impact on who participates in this election

How likely do you think it is that the coronavirus crisis will affect who votes in the 2020 presidential election in November?



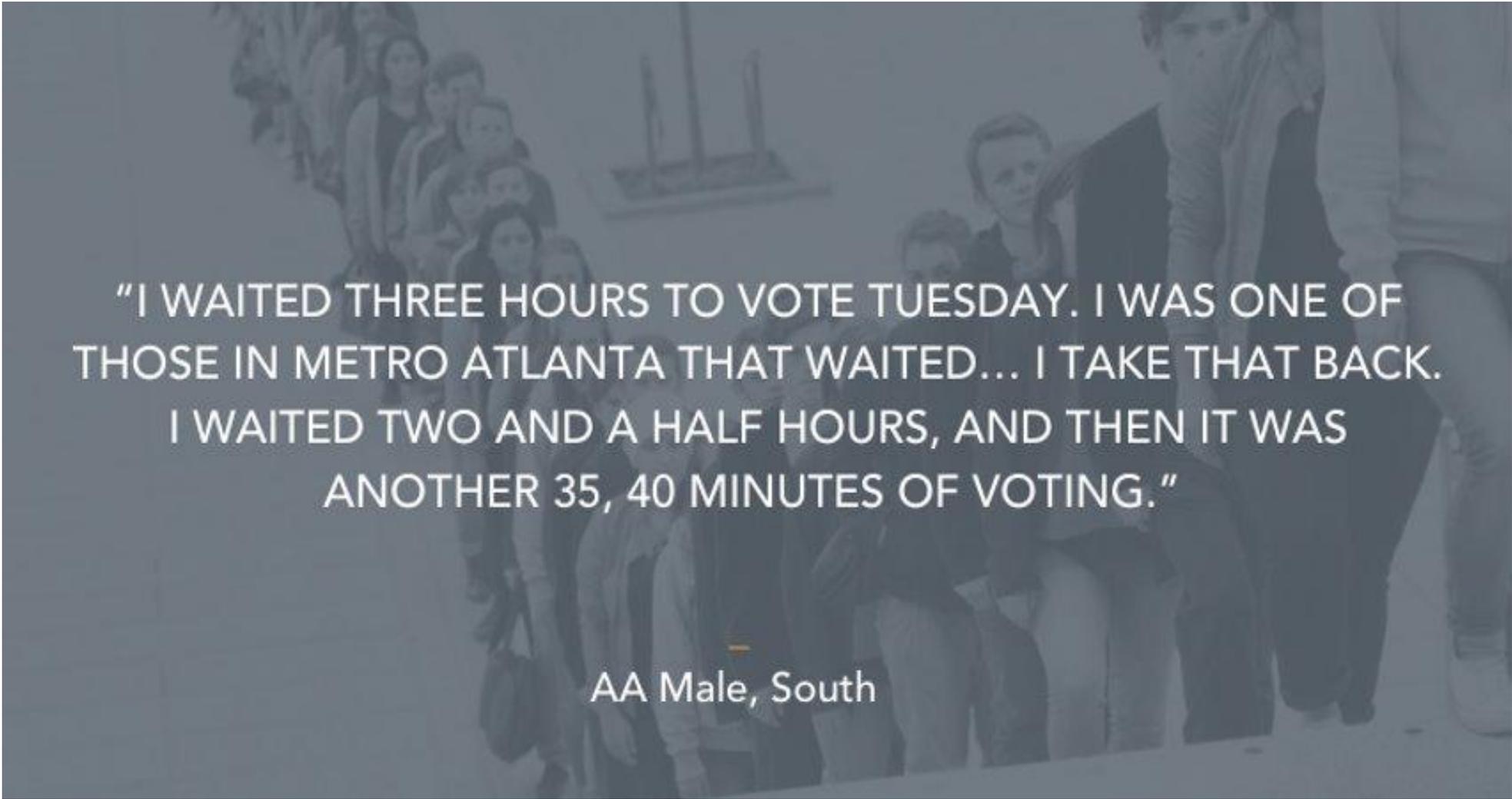
	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Likely	76%	75%	76%	78%	76%
Less likely	19%	20%	20%	15%	21%
Don't know/Ref	6%	5%	4%	8%	3%

How likely do you think it is that the current protest following the death of George Floyd will affect who votes in the 2020 presidential election in November?



	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Likely	73%	78%	72%	67%	76%
Less likely	19%	16%	21%	25%	17%
Don't know/Ref	7%	6%	8%	8%	7%





"I WAITED THREE HOURS TO VOTE TUESDAY. I WAS ONE OF THOSE IN METRO ATLANTA THAT WAITED... I TAKE THAT BACK. I WAITED TWO AND A HALF HOURS, AND THEN IT WAS ANOTHER 35, 40 MINUTES OF VOTING."

AA Male, South

"THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE IN LINE FOR LIKE EIGHT HOURS OR MORE WAITING TO VOTE...AND THIS IS LIKE A TEST FOR WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IN NOVEMBER"

Male, LGBTQ

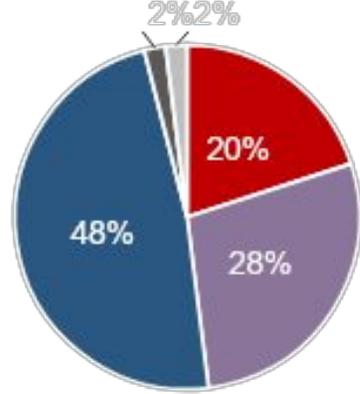
"AS A WAY TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO VOTE, I HAVE NEVER SEEN A SITE SAYING, 'PEOPLE WILL VOTE HERE ON A CERTAIN DATE'. THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE IN THIS AREA VOTE IN THIS ZIP CODE. I MEAN—IT'S NOT EASY FOR PEOPLE TO DO IT."

Latino

- 1 Political climate
- 2 Vote By Mail Attitudes
- 3 Message Testing
- 4 Conclusion

Upcoming vote type and VBM support

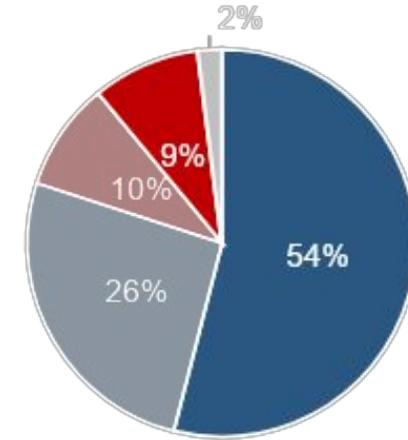
How do you plan on voting in the upcoming 2020 general election?



- Voting in person early, before election day
- Voting in person on election day
- Voting absentee by mail
- Other
- Will not vote

	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Voting in person early, before election day	20%	22%	20%	12%	18%
Voting in person on election day	28%	30%	27%	23%	32%
Voting absentee by mail	48%	44%	48%	59%	43%
Other	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Will not vote	3%	2%	3%	3%	5%

Would you favor or oppose your state allowing all voters the option to vote by mail or absentee ballot in this year's presidential election?



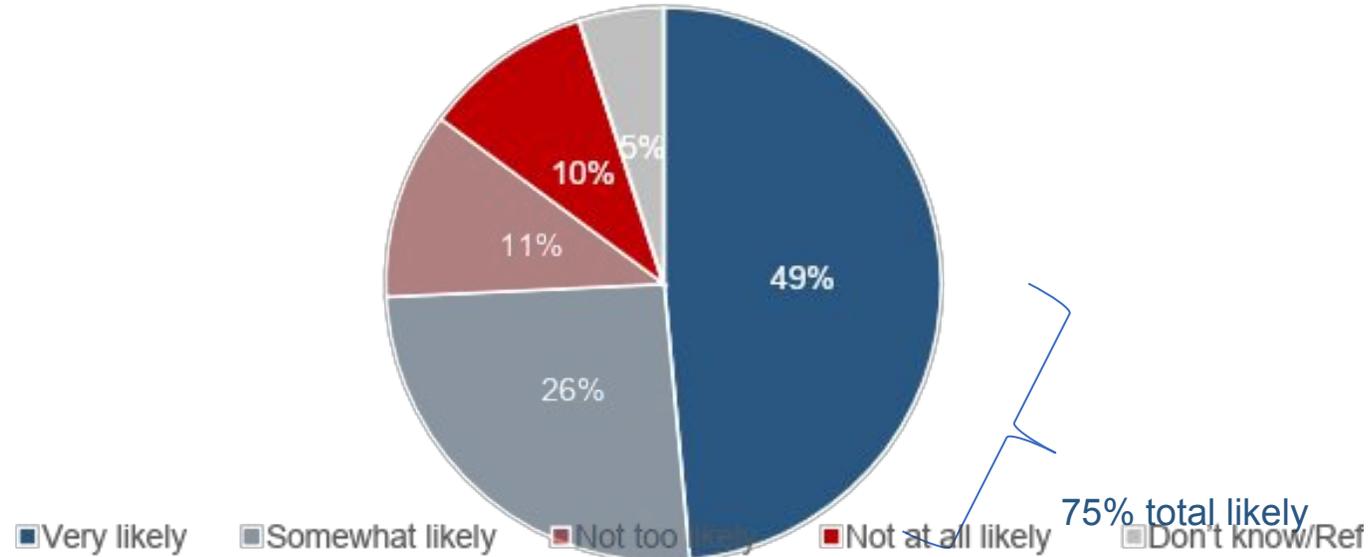
- Strongly favor
- Somewhat favor
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Don't know/Ref

	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Strongly favor	54%	58%	51%	52%	57%
Somewhat favor	26%	26%	26%	30%	23%
Somewhat oppose	10%	9%	10%	10%	10%
Strongly oppose	9%	6%	11%	7%	6%
Don't know/Ref	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%



Vote By Mail Likelihood

How likely would you be to vote by mail in the November election if we still do not have a cure or vaccine for coronavirus?



	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Very likely	49%	45%	51%	56%	52%
Somewhat likely	26%	30%	23%	26%	27%
Not too likely	11%	11%	10%	9%	9%
Not at all likely	10%	9%	12%	5%	6%
Don't know/Ref	4%	4%	4%	4%	6%

Reasons to oppose Vote By Mail

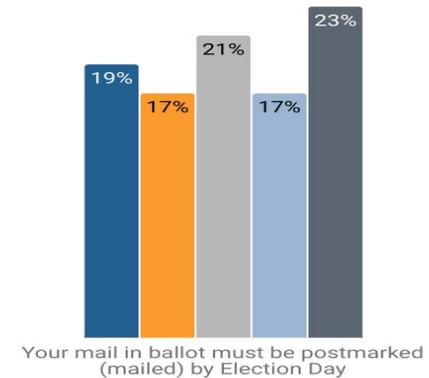
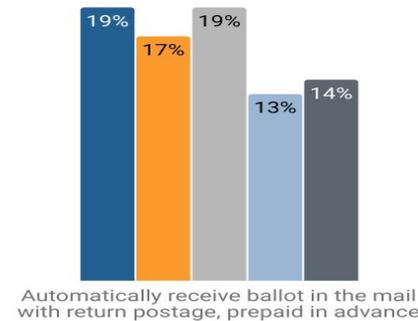
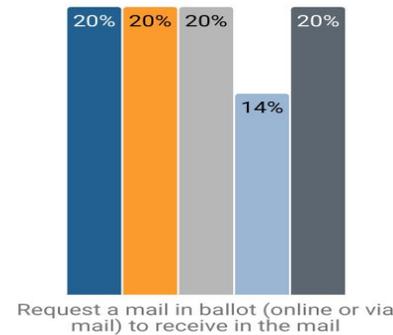
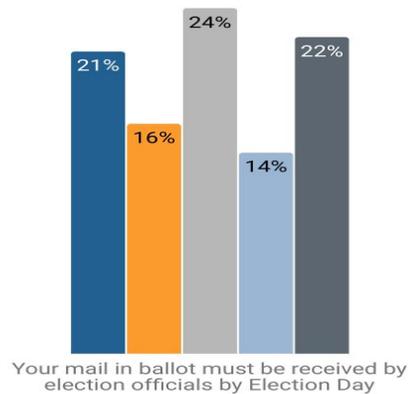
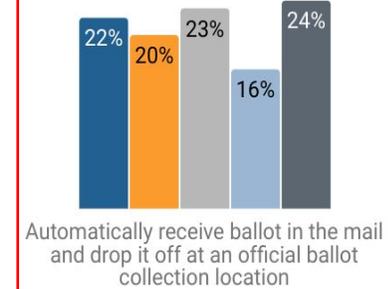
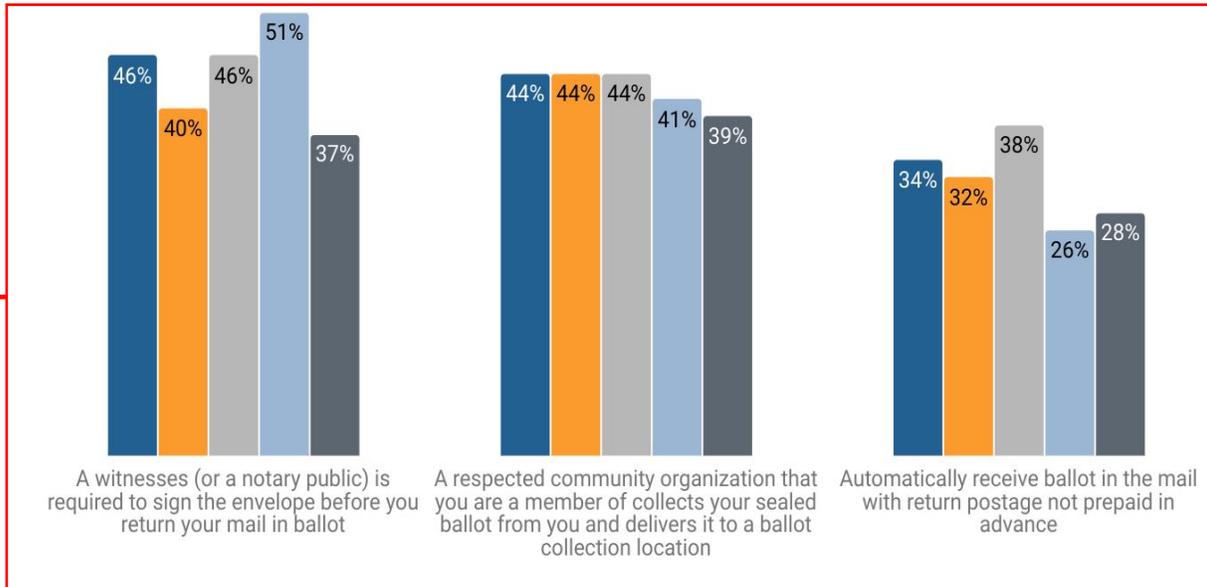
Reasons that give you pause or make you oppose vote-by-mail in your state.	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Vote by mail could result in votes being lost or not counted	47%	43%	47%	51%	40%
Vote by mail might increase voter fraud of people casting votes that should not be	33%	28%	35%	31%	36%
Vote by mail could extend the vote-counting process	31%	34%	29%	29%	32%
I prefer the experience of voting in person	27%	36%	21%	18%	22%
Paying for postage to mail a ballot is the same as making people pay to vote	17%	16%	17%	21%	19%
Vote by mail process is complicated or confusing	7%	6%	8%	7%	6%
I don't use the mail	4%	2%	5%	5%	5%

Reasons to support Vote By Mail

Reasons that give you confidence or make you support vote-by-mail in your state.	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Vote by mail is a safer, healthier alternative to vote during COVID-19	66%	70%	61%	69%	62%
Vote by mail offers flexibility for people who work, have children, or other obligation that prevent them from voting	55%	61%	48%	57%	52%
Vote by mail prevents the long lines, broken machines, changed locations and other tactics used to suppress votes in underrepresented communities	52%	60%	44%	51%	53%
Vote by mail prevents the intimidation of crowded polling locations	42%	51%	32%	44%	43%
Vote by mail makes it easy to research candidates on the ballot while voting from the comfort of your home	40%	43%	37%	42%	42%
Vote by mail saves taxpayer money that is usually spent to administer physical polling locations	34%	34%	33%	38%	31%
Vote by mail allows for the opportunity to vote with friends and family	18%	20%	19%	16%	26%

Would not vote by mail if the process required...

VBM processes with greatest barriers



■ Total ■ Black ■ Latinx ■ AAPI ■ LGBTQ



- 1 Political Climate
- 2 Vote By Mail Attitudes
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Messaging Battery | Top Ranked

Here are some reasons that others have given for why they prefer to vote by mail. Rate each one on a scale of 0 - 10, where 10 means it is an extremely convincing reason for you to vote by mail, a 5 means it's a somewhat convincing reason, and a 0 means it is not at all a convincing reason to vote by mail.

[COVID-19] COVID 19 has disrupted every part of society for the foreseeable future, including our elections. No matter what is happening with this pandemic, November 3 will be election day in America. While COVID-19 could add some risk to voting in person, vote by mail is a safe and secure alternative to voting without putting yourself or anyone else at risk. If we have to vote early, vote by mail, or stand in line wearing gloves and masks, all of our votes will be counted.

Rate 0-10	Top Box % (8 - 10)	Top Box % Black	Top Box % Latinx	Top Box % AAPI	Top Box % POC LGBTQ
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6.9	53%	57%	47%	58%	51%
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[INCREASED TURNOUT] States like Washington, Colorado, and Oregon that allow everyone to vote by mail have reported increases in voter participation. According to the Colorado's Secretary of State during the 2014 election, voting by mail increased overall turnout by 3.3% among young voters and people of color. Voting by mail levels the playing field for working people that cannot always take off in the middle of the week and gives us all an equal opportunity to exercise our civic duty from the comfort of our home.

6.6	48%	51%	46%	47%	47%
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[LESS FRAUD] While some leaders want to cast doubts on the vote by mail process because it makes it easier for voters to vote, the truth is that voter fraud is almost nonexistent and even lower in states that have 100% vote by mail. In Washington officials reported 142 suspected improper votes during the 2018 election, out of more than 3.1 million votes cast. Vote by mail is not only a more secure voting option that reduces voter fraud, during COVID 19 it is the most secure voting option.

6.4	46%	49%	42%	46%	37%
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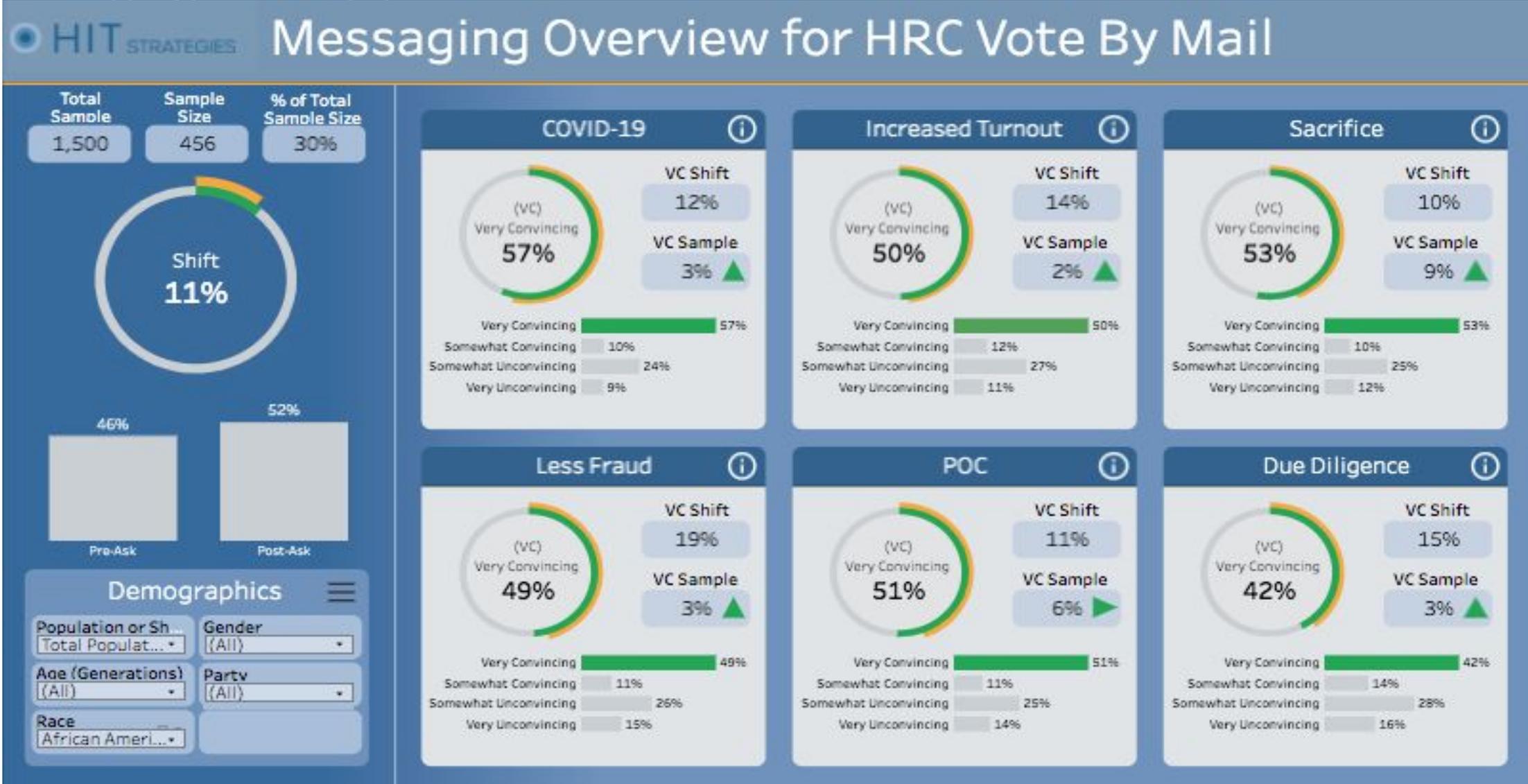


Messaging Battery | Bottom Ranked

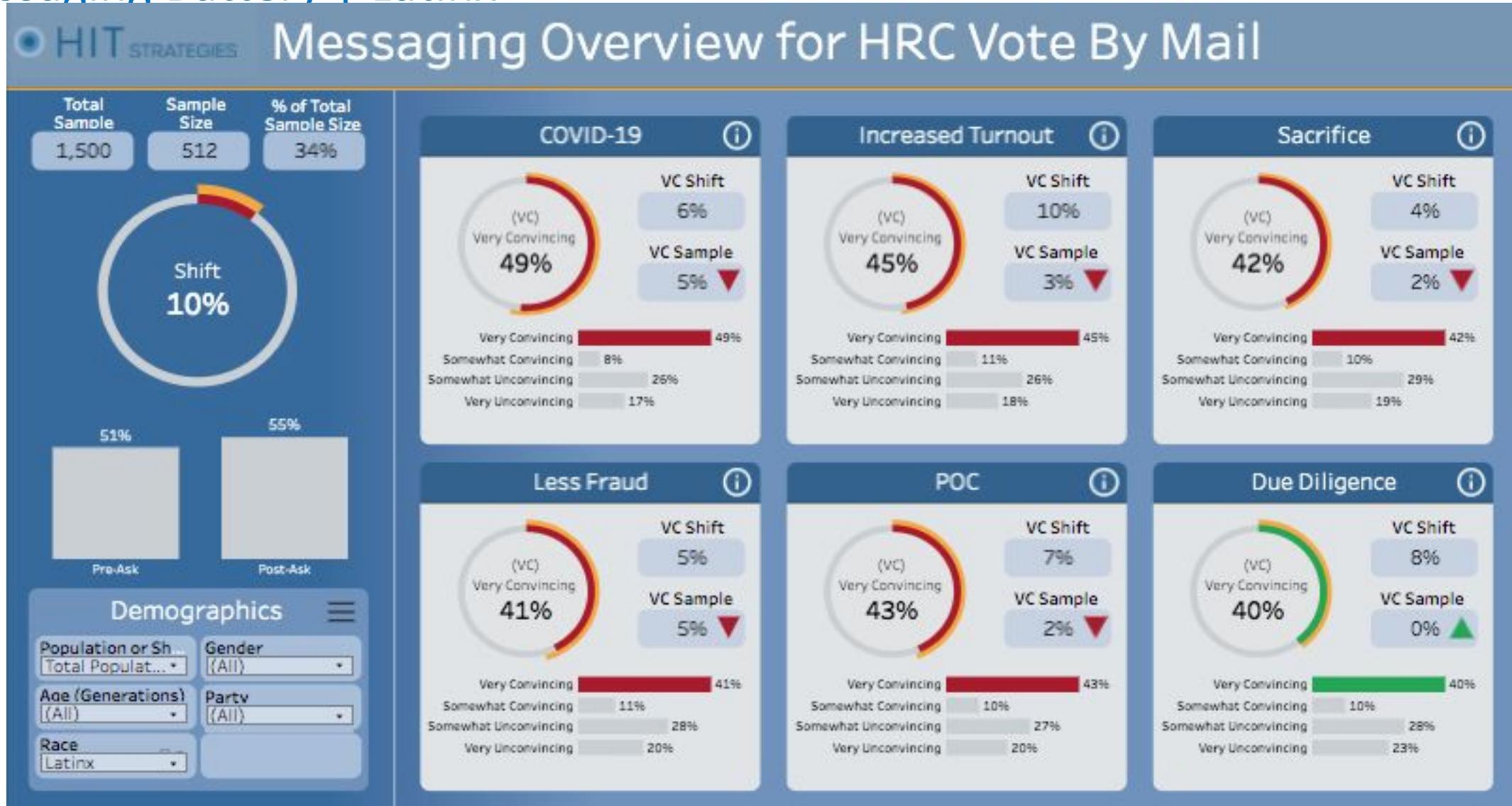
	Rate 0-10	Top Box % (8 - 10)	Top Box % Black	Top Box % Latinx	Top Box % AAPI	Top Box % POC LGBTQ
<p>[POC] During the primary election we saw how COVID-19 was used by some politicians to change voting days and locations and resulted in 2 to 8 hour lines in some urban communities where many people of color vote. Vote by mail will prevent those kinds of tactics by evening the playing field so that we all have the same access to voting from the comfort of our own homes.</p>	6.2	44%	49%	42%	42%	47%
<p>[SACRIFICE] From our ancestors to the people taking to the street to protest daily, everyday people are making tremendous sacrifices to protect and expand our rights. That is why we must exercise our responsibility to vote, especially during these tumultuous times. The sacrifices of so many are why we have the right to vote and why it is important to expand vote by mail so that barriers like COVID-19, scheduling conflicts and busy schedules do not prevent our communities from being counted on election day.</p>	6.3	43%	49%	41%	40%	44%
<p>[DUE DILIGENCE] For too long politicians that take our votes for granted and neglect our communities coast into re-election because we aren't familiar with who they are. Vote by mail allows us the opportunity to do our due diligence, research candidates, or even phone a friend before completing your ballot and putting it in the mail. Vote by mail allows us to start holding politicians accountable because it gives us a better chance to look up their record when we are ready to vote, which is harder to do when you step into the voting booth..</p>	6.1	41%	43%	41%	35%	32%



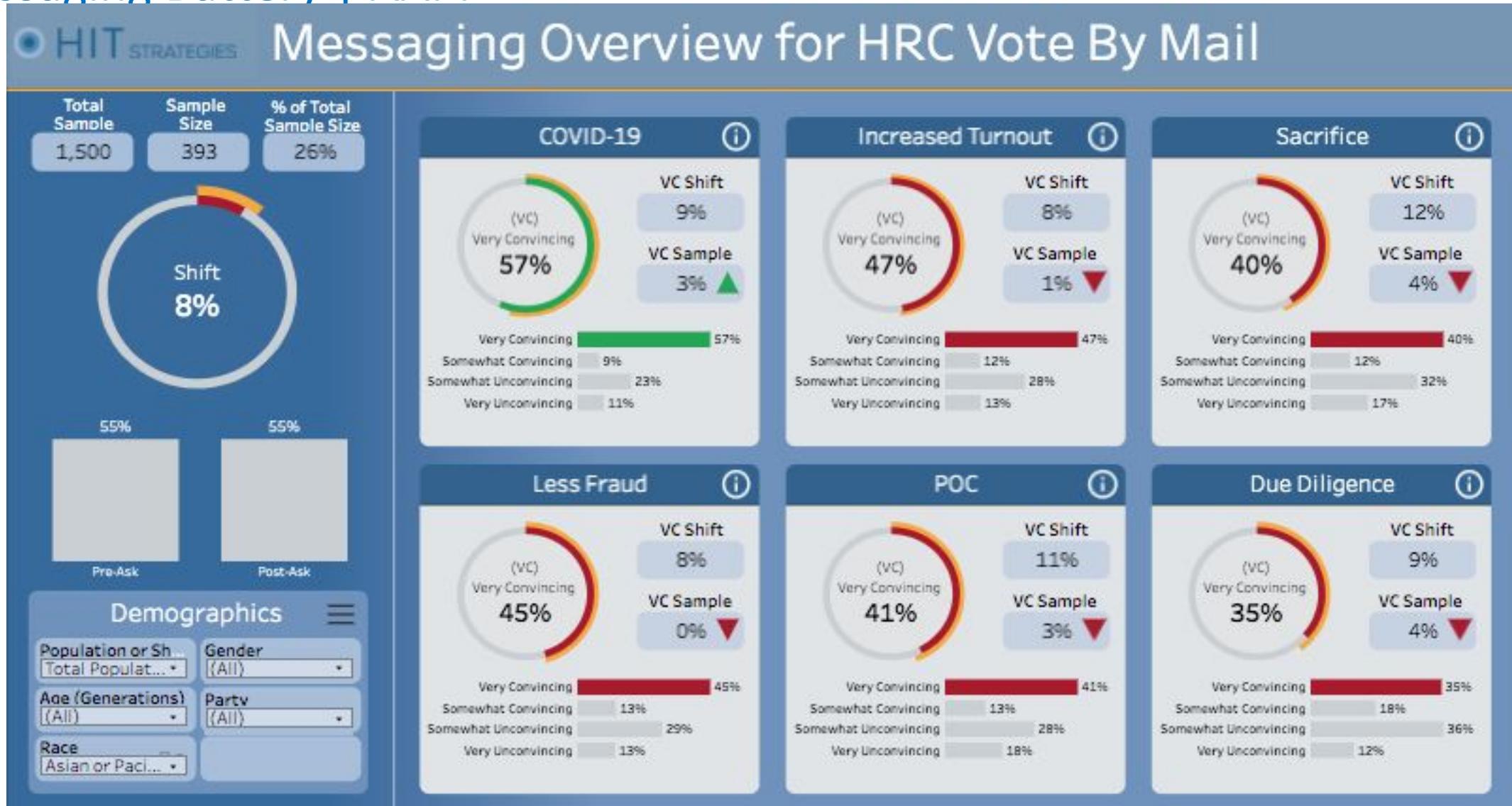
Messaging Battery | African Americans



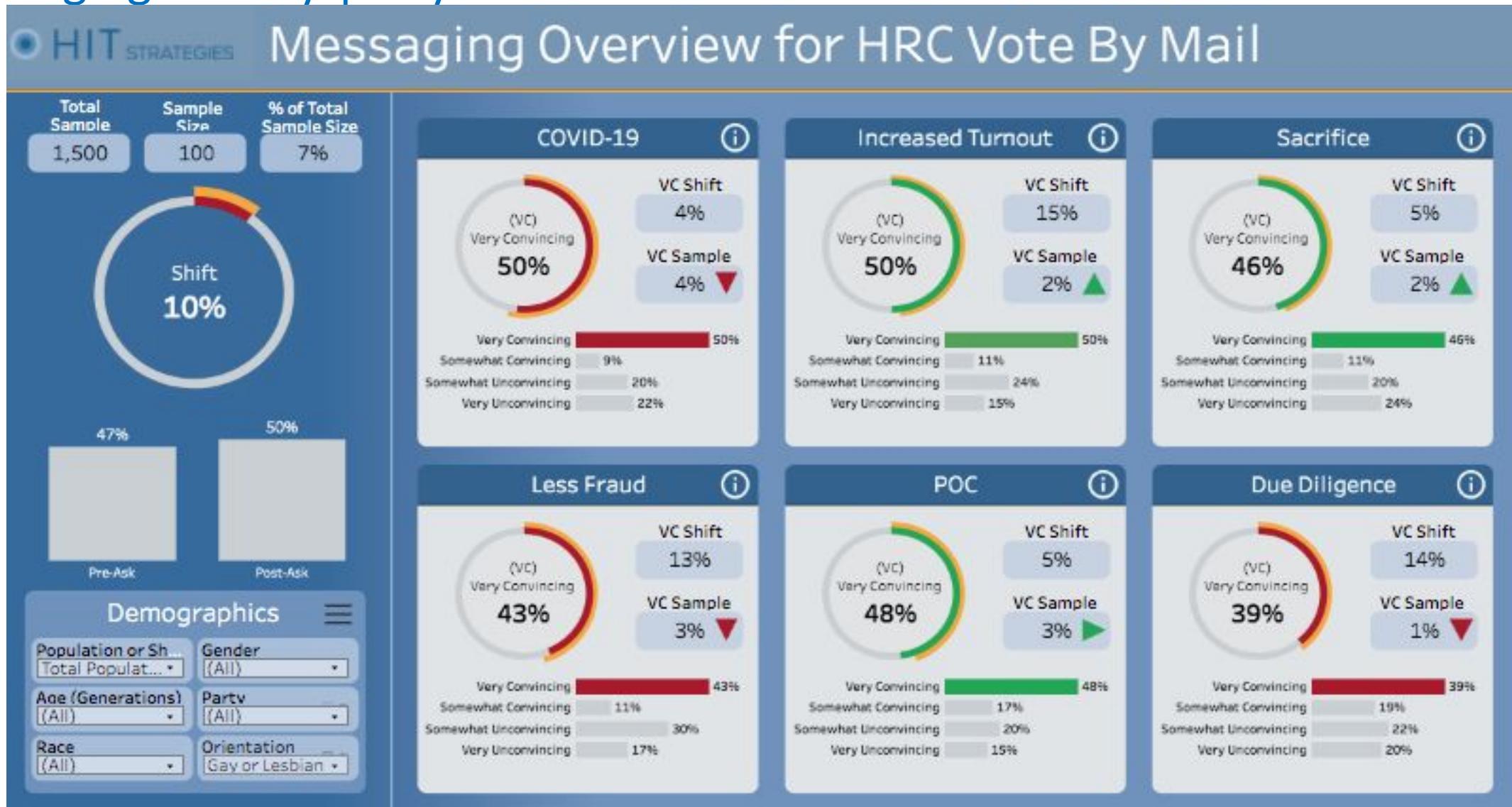
Messaging Battery | Latinx



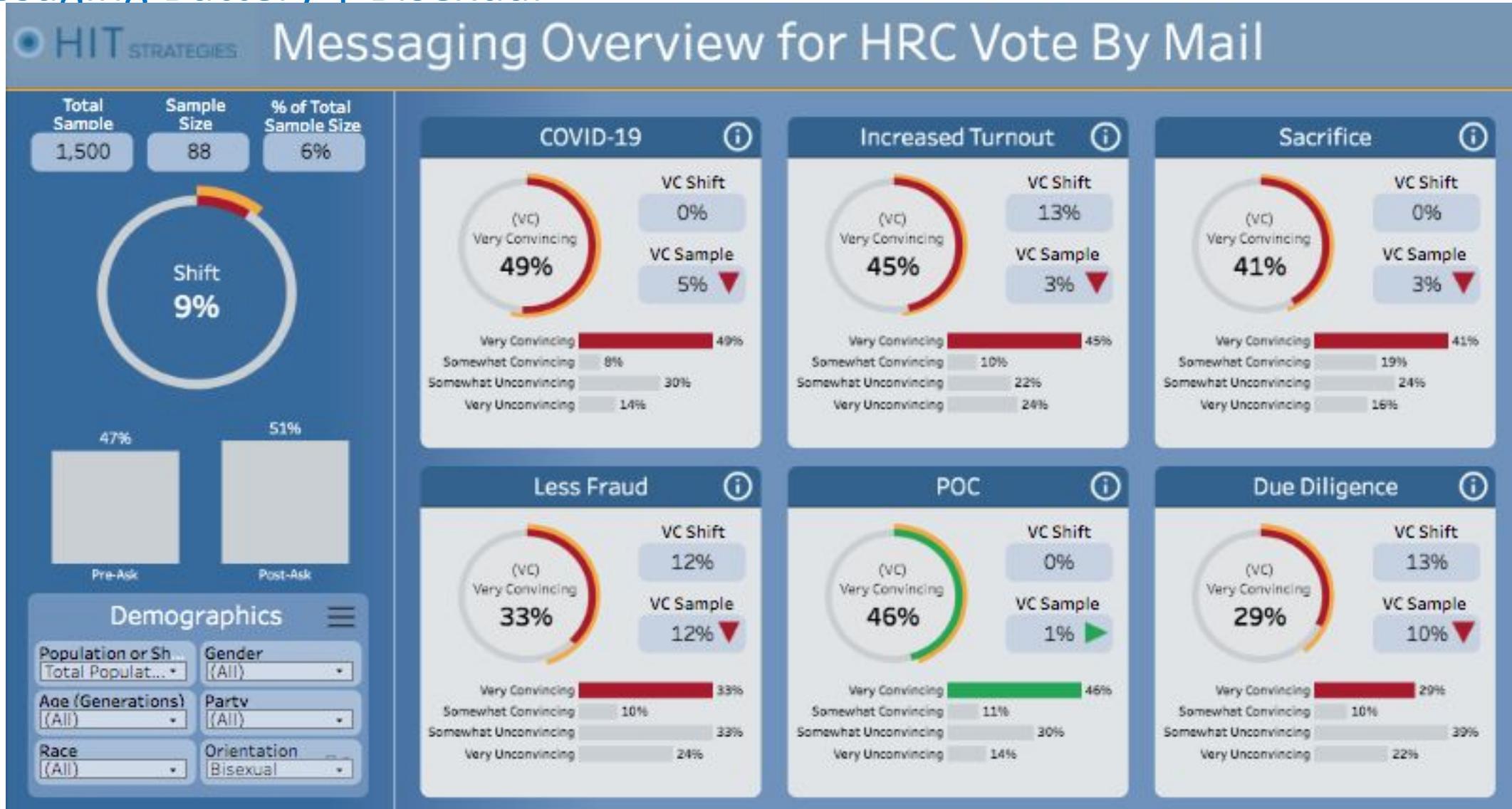
Messaging Battery | AAPI



Messaging Battery | Gay or Lesbian



Messaging Battery | Bisexual



Messaging Guidance

Anchor to COVID-19 and the safety/security that voting by mail creates.

Harness the increasing hope, optimism, and resilience of minority communities.

Demonstrate how the accessibility of voting by mail has already increased participation of under- represented communities.

Demonstrate how vote by mail has already reduced voter fraud.

When referencing how vote by mail has already improved voting use locations, statistics, and dates.

Sample Messaging

COVID 19 has disrupted every part of society for the foreseeable future, including our elections. But that has not stopped so many of us from making our voices heard through protest and it will not stop us from doing it again on Election Day. That is why we have to take advantage of vote by mail because it is a safest and most secure way to cast your vote without putting yourself or anyone else at risk. If we have to vote early, vote by mail, or stand in line wearing gloves and masks, all of our votes will be counted.

While some leaders want to cast doubts on the vote by mail process because it makes it easier for voters to vote, the truth is that voter fraud is almost nonexistent and even lower in states that have 100% vote by mail. In Washington officials reported 142 suspected improper votes during the 2018 election, out of more than 3.1 million votes cast. Vote by mail is not only a more secure voting option that reduces voter fraud, during COVID 19 it is the most secure voting option.



Programming Guidance

Because 20% of voters prefer to vote in person early and 28% prefer to vote on election day, we must promote accessibility of all three options

Early public education to target audiences explaining the process in vivid detail (requesting a ballot, purchasing postage, tracking your ballot, postmark deadline)

Amongst young voters, emphasis must be provided on the cost and locations to order postage in person and online

Emphasize the security of ballot Tracking. Use testimonials (with images of people holding up their mail-in ballot) of member from target community describing how easy the process is

Display images of the ballot, postage, and websites that provide mail in ballot services



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Political Climate

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Vote By Mail Attitudes

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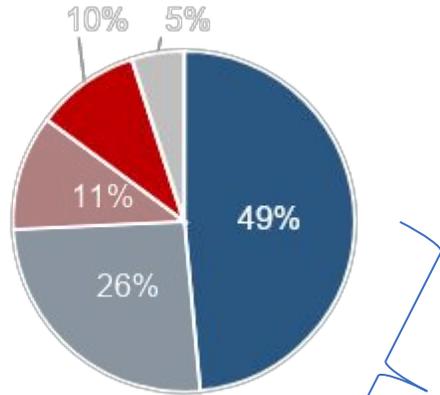
Message Testing

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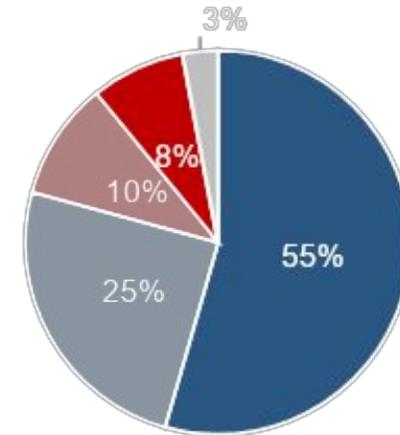
Conclusion

Shift in Vote By Mail Likelihood

How likely would you be to vote by mail in the November election if we still do not have a cure or vaccine for coronavirus?



75% total likely



80% total likely

■ Very likely
 ■ Somewhat likely
 ■ Not too likely
 ■ Not at all likely
 ■ Don't know/Ref

	Total	Black	Latinx	AAPI	POC LGBTQ
Shifted to Very Likely	10%	10%	11%	7%	10%
Total More Likely	79%	79%	78%	84%	81%
Total Less Likely	18%	18%	18%	14%	15%
Very likely	55%	51%	56%	56%	56%
Somewhat likely	25%	28%	22%	28%	26%
Not too likely	10%	11%	9%	9%	9%
Not at all likely	8%	7%	9%	5%	6%
Don't know/Ref	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%

Tracker Research Timeline

Phase III: Tracking Polls		
DEADLINE	TASK	OWNER
September 16 th	Tracker #1 out of the field and toplines/crosstabs submitted to HRCF	HIT
October 16 th	Tracker #2 out of the field and submitted to HRCF	HIT

