

Liberalizing American Voting Laws: Institutionally Increasing Voter Turnout

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Liberalizing American Voting Laws: Institutionally Increasing Voter Turnout

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Abstract:

This paper expands previous research analyzing the impact voting laws have on voter turnout in national elections in the United States. I analyzed voter turnout in the 2008 Presidential Election and the 2010 off year election in all fifty states to see if voting restrictions declined turnout. My results show evidence that the further away from Election Day voter registration ends, the lower voter turnout a state can expect. I also found laws requiring employers to allow employees time off work to vote on Election Day had lower voter turnout rates than the states allowing employer discretion to determine whether an employee can take time off work to vote. Lastly, my paper shows evidence allowing anyone to vote by mail had a significant increase in the 2008 Presidential Election voter turnout rates compared to states requiring an excuse. However, I did not find any statistical significance in the 2010 off year election.

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