

Enhancing Voter Participation in the Redistricting Muddle

Presentation to the

CAN Community Council

Monday, January 23, 2012

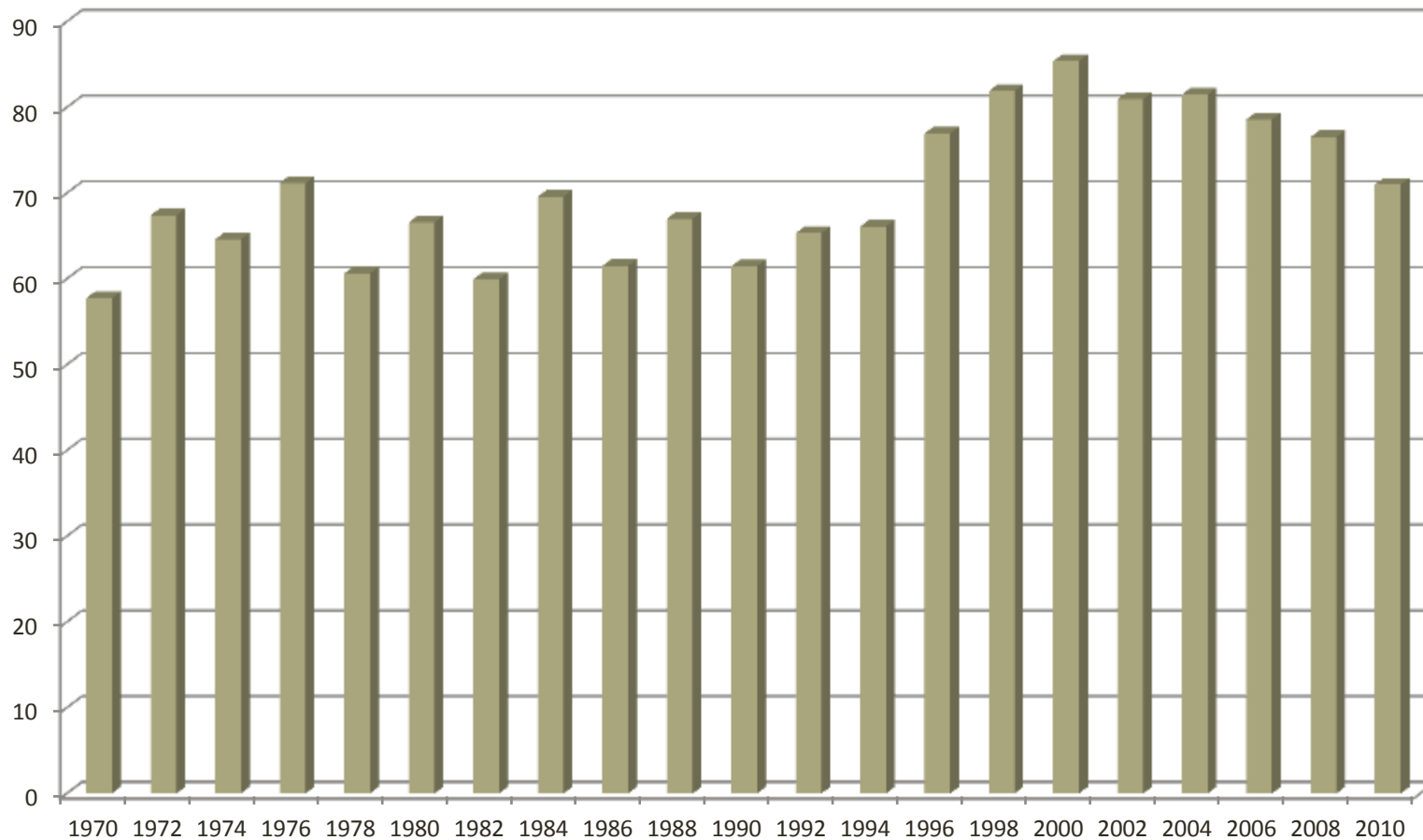
Deece Eckstein

Intergovernmental Relations Officer, Travis County

Voter Participation Is Always Tricky in Texas

- Population
- Voting Age Population (VAP)
- Turnout
- Turnout as a Percentage of Population
- Turnout as a Percentage of VAP

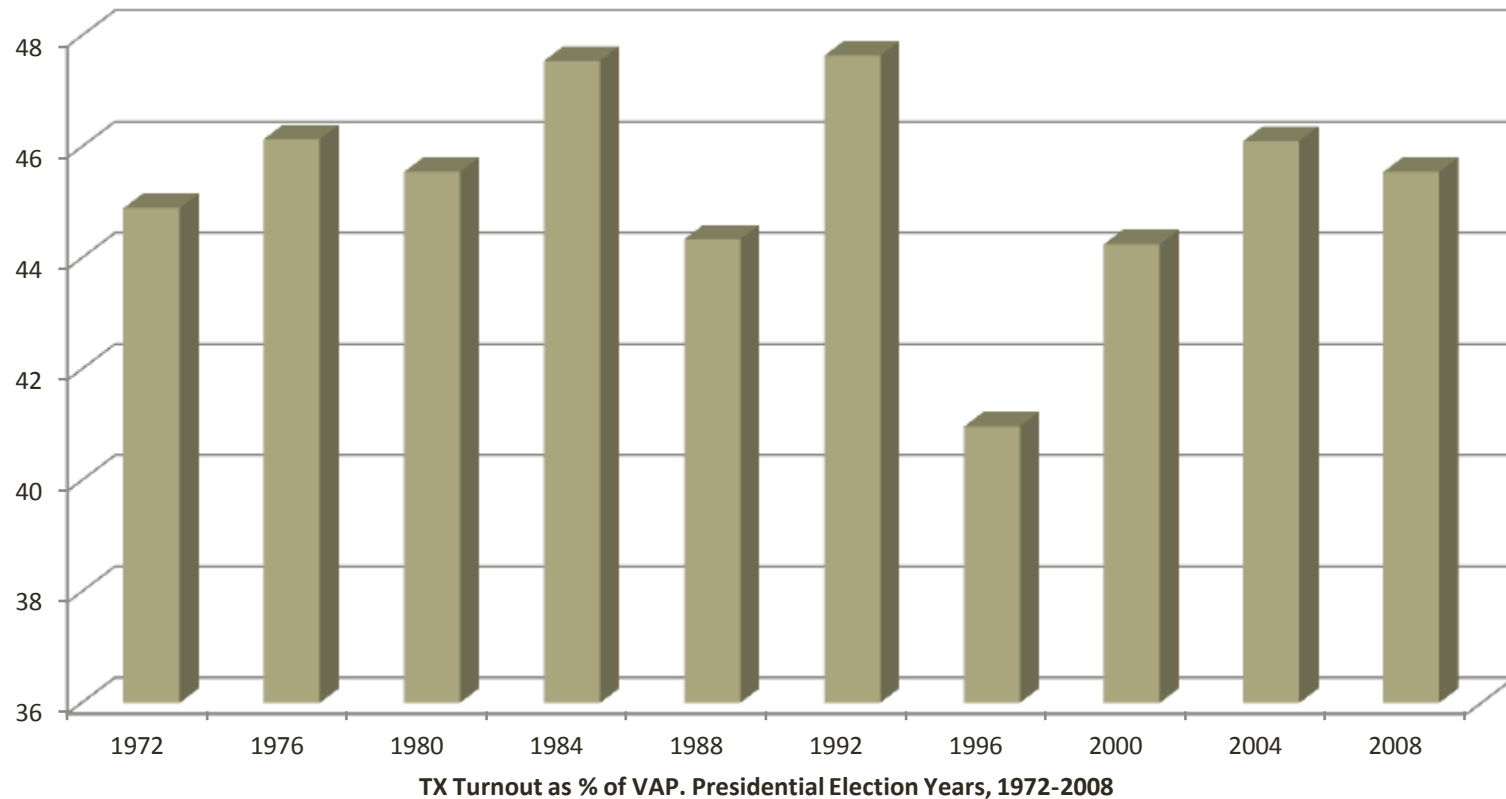
Voter Participation Is Always Tricky in Texas



Voter Registration As Percentage of VAP, Texas, 1970-2010

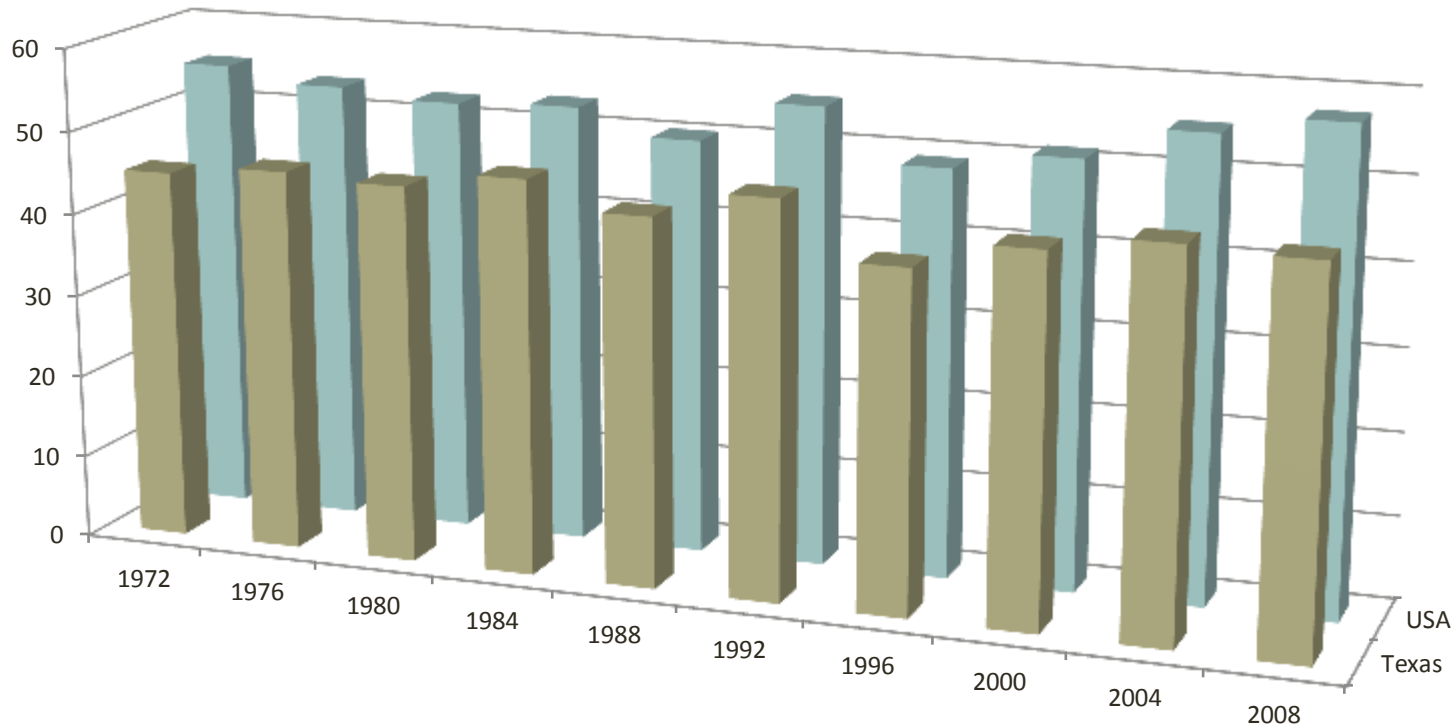
Voter Participation Is Always Tricky in Texas

Less Than Half of Eligible Voters Participate in Presidential Elections in Texas



Voter Participation Is Always Tricky in Texas

Voter Participation Is Lower in Texas Than Nationwide



Turnout as Percentage of VAP in Texas and USA, 1972-2008

Redistricting Litigation

Three courts now have jurisdiction over pieces of the Texas redistricting puzzle

- Three-judge panel in Washington, DC
 - State filed preclearance lawsuit (vs. seeking it from DoJ)
 - Trial January 17-26, 2012; ruling expected mid-February
- Three-judge panel in San Antonio, TX
 - Various groups (incl. Travis County) filed lawsuit
 - Ordered Interim Plans, Interim Schedule for 2012 elections
 - Status Conference set for Friday, January 27, 2012
- Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS)
 - State appealed San Antonio court's orders, sought stay
 - Ordered San Antonio court to re-draw maps, January 20th

The Muddle in a Minute

S.A. Court: “Here, try these maps and have a primary on April 3rd.”

State: “SCOTUS, make them use our maps.”

SCOTUS: “Nope, but they do have to be redrawn.”

SA Court: “OK. Let’s get together in February and see what’s happening with the DC Court.”

State: “No! We need to keep the primary dates.”

SA Court: “We can try, but only if all you kids can learn how to play together. See you this Friday!”

Options for the Primaries

- Single Primary on April 3rd
- Single Primary, but later in April
- Single Primary, but in June
- Split Primary, for presidents and precinct chairs, on April 3, with a Second Primary to follow
- Split Primary, with presidents, precinct chairs and certain other offices, on April 3, with a Second Primary to follow
 - Statewide offices
 - Multi-county offices that do not cut county lines
 - Countywide offices
 - County commissioner and JP/Constable precincts