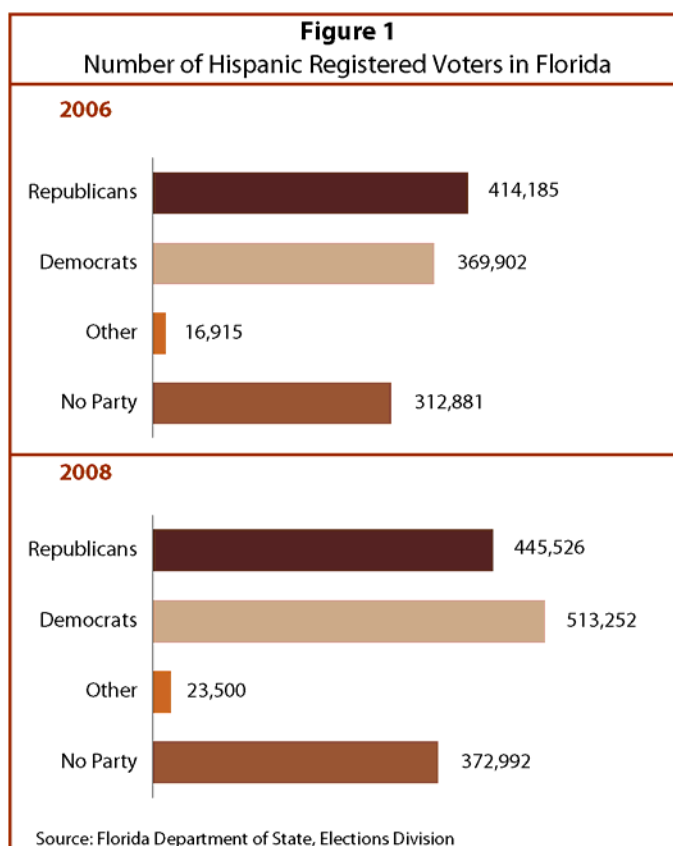


## Among Hispanics in Florida, 2008 Voter Registration Rolls Swing Democratic

The Hispanic vote in Florida has long been an anomaly. It has tended to be heavily Republican, while the Latino vote in the rest of the country has tended to be heavily Democratic. In 2004 President Bush carried 56% of the Latino vote in Florida, but just 40% of the Latino vote nationwide.<sup>1</sup> Among Florida's Cuban-American voters, support for Bush was even stronger – 78% versus 21% for the Democratic presidential candidate, Sen. John Kerry.<sup>2</sup>

However, the final 2008 general election voter registration figures from Florida, along with recent data from the U.S. Census, show significant changes in both the political leanings and the demographics of Latinos in the electoral-rich Sunshine State.

This year more Hispanics in Florida are registered as Democrats (513,252) than



<sup>1</sup> There is continuing uncertainty over whether President Bush received 40% of the Hispanic vote in 2004, as indicated by exit polls in the 50 states and the District of Columbia conducted on Election Day, or 44%, as indicated by the nationwide National Election Pool exit poll. Reasons for the differing estimates are spelled out in "[Hispanics and the 2004 Election: Population, Electorate and Voters](#)," by Roberto Suro, Richard Fry and Jeffrey Passel (2005).

<sup>2</sup> Based on Pew Hispanic Center analysis of the 2004 Florida Exit Poll from the National Election Pool.

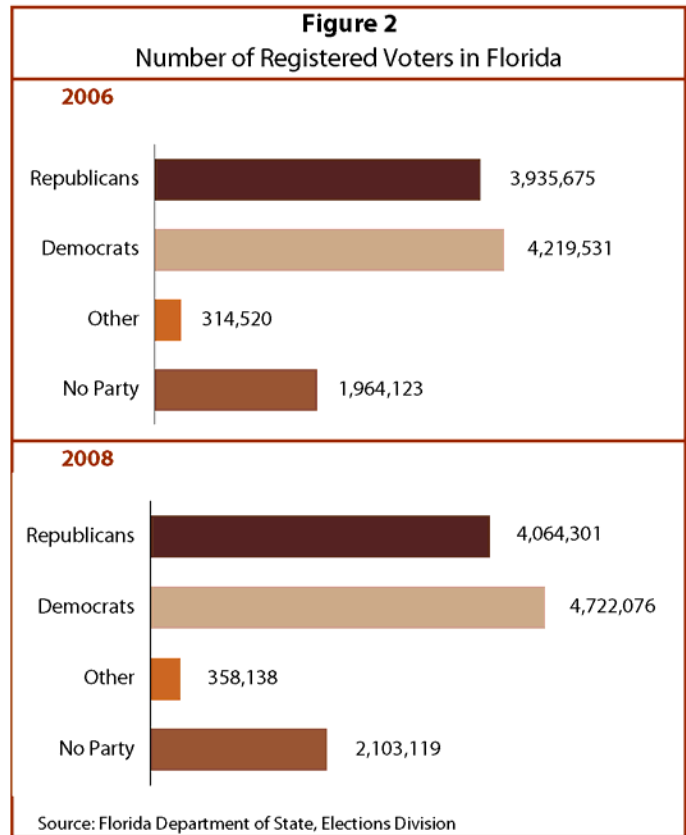
as Republicans (445,526). As recently as 2006, the reverse was true: among Latino registered voters in Florida, more were Republican (414,185) than Democratic (369,906).<sup>3</sup>

According to the Florida Department of State Division of Elections, Latinos make up 12% of all registered voters in Florida this year, up from 11% in 2006. Their move toward the Democratic Party is part of a broader realignment among the overall electorate of the state. Today, there are 657,775 more registered Democrats than registered Republicans in Florida. In 2006, the Democrat registration advantage was smaller – just 283,856.

As the partisan affiliation of Florida Hispanics has shifted in recent years, so too have their demographic characteristics – especially their patterns of ancestry. Today, Hispanics of Cuban ancestry represent a smaller share (34%) of eligible Hispanic voters than they did in 1990 (46%).

Meanwhile, Puerto Ricans and Hispanics of other ancestry represent a greater share of Hispanic eligible voters today compared to 1990. In 2007, 29% of Hispanic eligible voters were of Puerto Rican ancestry, up from 24% in 1990. And the share of Hispanic eligible voters of other ancestry was 37% in 2007, up from 30% in 1990.<sup>4</sup>

In 2004 Hispanic voters accounted for 11% of all voters in Florida and 6% of all voters nationwide.<sup>5</sup> Nationally today, 18.5 million Latinos are eligible to vote, accounting for 9% of all eligible voters.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Voter registration statistics for Florida are published by the Department of State, Division of Elections. For more information, see <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/>. Information on the number of Hispanic voter registrations in Florida for years prior to 2006 is not available.

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the demographic characteristics of Florida’s Hispanic eligible voters, see the [Florida eligible voter fact sheet](#).

<sup>5</sup> Based on Pew Hispanic Center analysis of the 2004 Current Population Survey November Supplement.

<sup>6</sup> Based on Pew Hispanic Center analysis of the 2007 American Community Survey.

With 27 electoral votes, the battleground state of Florida is once again playing an important role in a presidential election. And, in a year when interest in the election is running high across the country, more Floridians are registered to vote than ever. According to the Division of Elections, 11.2 million Floridians are registered to vote, 8% more than in 2006. Voter registrations among Hispanics in Florida are also higher this year than in 2006. More than 1.36 million Florida Hispanics are registered to vote, up 22%.

<b>Table 1</b>			
Demographics of Hispanics in Florida			
<i>(%)</i>			
	HISPANIC ANCESTRY		
	Cuban	Puerto Rican	Other
<b>All</b>			
1990	43	16	41
2000	32	18	50
2007	30	19	51
<b>18 and older</b>			
1990	47	14	39
2000	36	17	47
2007	32	19	49
<b>Eligible Voters</b>			
1990	46	24	30
2000	38	27	35
2007	34	29	37

Source: Pew Hispanic Center analysis of 1990 and 2000 statistics based on 1% Census PUMS; 2007 statistics based on 2007 ACS.