Balancing Fraud Prevention and Electoral Participation: Attitudes Towards Voter Identification

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Abstract:

This paper examines public opinion on the effectiveness and consequences of voter identification laws. We focus on the core issue in the Supreme Court's reasoning in the 2008 case that upheld an Indiana photo-ID law, *Crawford v. Marion County Election Board*. We use a unique survey from New Mexico, where voter identification policies have recently undergone important changes. Questions in the survey examine whether voters think that ID laws protect against fraud and prevent legitimate participation, which point of view voters find more compelling, and whether attitudes towards voter identification are related to voter confidence. Although most voters think that voter ID laws prevent fraud, many voters think that ensuring access to the polls is more important than preventing fraud. Among other variables that explain differences among individuals, partisanship plays an important role.

The tension between easy access to the polls for voters and securing the vote against fraud developed into a contentious debate about election administration over the last decade, particularly focused on what kind of, if any, identification voters must show at their polling place. While the federal government has imposed minimum identification standards for newly registered voters, states can impose higher standards or standards for already registered voters.[1] For this paper, we use a unique survey of New Mexico voters from 2008 to explore what may motivate voters when they evaluate the same tensions faced by policymakers between access and security.

By the mid-2000s, several states adopted new laws and required voters to show a government approved photo identification to get a ballot. The Supreme Court upheld Indiana's strict photo-ID law in *Crawford v. Marion County Election Board* (2008).[2] The *Crawford* decision merely insists that state requirements be "slight" and "justified by relevant and legitimate state interests" (Crawford, Stevens, 7). This decision encouraged more states; the National Conference of State Legislatures noted in a 2011 report that they "had never observed so many states take up a single issue in the absence of a federal mandate… Thirteen of the 23 states that started 2011 without a voter ID law considered legislation this year, and 20 of the 27 states with voter ID laws debated bills to strengthen them. So far this year, six states have passed voter ID legislation and four states have had bills vetoed."

New Mexico of 2008 provides an appropriate testing ground for an exploration of public attitudes. The state was an early adopter in 2005 of stronger identification laws but relaxed those rules in 2008; the state debate continues up to the present, with a new law considered but

[1] See section 303(b) of the Help America Vote Act for the specific minimum standards required for voter identification: http://www.fec.gov/hava/law_ext.txt (last accessed September 25, 2008). Although Feinstein et al. argued that HAVA precludes more stringent voter identification rules, the Supreme Court rejected this analysis. http://brennan.3cdn.net/1d8b5f07f050550b9c_93m6bh1fc.pdf

[2] http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/07pdf/07-21.pdf

ultimately not enacted in 2011.[3] In 2008, the state law required voters to either (1) show photo-identification, (2) show evidence of voter registration, or (3) simply verbally state their name, address, and birth year. Opponents of identification requirements tend to believe that these laws are intended to discriminate against racial or ethnic minorities and poorer voters; New Mexico has a large Hispanic population and is not overly wealthy. It is also competitive – in 2006, one Congressional race came down to only 816 votes (Atkeson and Tafoya 2008) and, in 2000, Gore won the state by only 366 votes (Atkeson, Carrillo, and Walker 2006). Manipulating the results at the margins by either suppressing the vote of minority or poorer voters or by committing election fraud could potentially swing important elections, making voter identification laws a more salient public issue. So, while this survey does only include results from one state in one year, these respondents experienced changing identification laws, lived in a state where the debate is relevant, and were likely exposed to the public debate on this issue.

The ostensible purpose of voter identification laws is to prevent election fraud. In a sense, they are a logical extension of the voter registration system. The tension between access and security is not a new development: Harris (1929) observes that most states adopted registration lists to cut down on fraud while Keyssar (2000) argues parties in power used voter registration laws to make it difficult for the opposition party to register their voters.[4] Recent scholarship has examined the effects of voter ID laws on turnout (Hood and Bullock 2008, 2011; Alvarez, Bailey, and Katz 2010; Barreto et al. 2008, Mycoff et al. 2007; Vercellotti and Anderson 2006) and how the implementation of such laws varies across precincts and individuals (Atkeson et al. 2010; 2011; Ansolabehere 2009; Cobb, Greiner, and Quinn 2010).

[3] See NCSL report: http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/elections/voter-id.aspx (last accessed 04/25/13).
[4] Lapp (1909) points out that voter registration used to be a much more complicated process: New York's registration requirements of that time asked a series of personal questions about a voter's residence and signature, as well as possibly questions about their family history and employment.

That is, despite the ostensible purpose of the laws, what are the other effects? Nevertheless, what voters think about the photo-identification policies remains largely unanswered. Public attitudes towards these laws affect issues of legitimacy (in a more general sense, see Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001).

Policymakers and scholars frame the debate about ID laws in the context of tension between access and integrity (e.g., Overton 2006; Liebschutz and Palazzolo 2005). As our first hypothesis, we extend this debate into public opinion, hypothesizing that voters with greater personal resources will find the "fraud" frame more compelling and those with less resources will find the "participation" or "access" frame more compelling. Given the arguments in *Crawford*, we expect that minority voters, older voters, less well educated voters, and less wealthy voters will be more sympathetic to the difficulties of acquiring the correct ID or concerned about uneven and biased enforcement. For our second hypothesis, we expect that voters will view the debate through the lens of partisanship, with Democrats focused on participation/access and Republicans focused on integrity/fraud, mirroring the messages of political elites of each party (following Zaller 1992).

Framing Expectations

Most recent literature on voter identification laws falls into two categories. First, scholars have described and analyzed the implementation of the laws. The implementation details matter; poorly trained poll workers unfamiliar with state law may implement the rules differently across or within precincts (Atkeson et al. 2010; Hall, Monson, and Patterson 2008). Second, researchers have focused on how these laws affect turnout; in this area, results remain mixed. Our contribution to the literature and policy debate is to add the perspective of voters to the argument.

It is difficult to say with any certainty how voter ID laws ultimately affect turnout. Lott (2006) and Mycoff, Wagner, and Wilson (2007) conclude the requirements had no effect on turnout. Ansolabehere (2007) uses survey data from the 2006 general election to argue that a very small percentage of voters – one-tenth of one percent – may have been affected by voter identification laws. Alvarez, Bailey, and Katz (2010) found that the strictest types of voter identification laws (in particular, photo identification) reduce voter participation in contrast to less strict requirements. Nevertheless, not all voters can easily satisfy strict ID laws. Hood and Bullock (2007), for example, find that younger, older, and minority voters were less likely to possess the state identification card or driver's license to vote at the polls in Georgia. Barreto, Nuno, and Sanchez (2008) find that minority, low income, and less educated Indiana residents are less likely to have the necessary identification.

The literature on implementation directly affects our study. Research based on experiences in Boston, Los Angeles, and during the 2008 Super Tuesday elections identified a bias in voter identification implementation, with minority voters more likely to be asked for a physical form of identification when it is not required (Ansolabehere 2009; Cobb, Greiner, and Quinn 2010; Barreto, Cohen-Marks, and Woods 2009). Hall, Monson, and Patterson (2009) note poll workers in election exhibit many of the characteristics of street level bureaucrats and the nature of the voter identification law being implemented can exacerbate the discretion they have. Their own biases can affect the implementation of the law. Atkeson et al. (2010) found that Hispanics and men were more likely to end up showing some kind of identification in New Mexico than non-Hispanics and women; observational data collected in 2008 confirmed that voter identification laws were often ignored, with precincts using many different methods to determine voter identity (e.g. Atkeson et al. 2011). Different application of the law on different

groups of citizens may undermine the legitimacy of government (e.g., Mitchell and Scott 1987). Voters in New Mexico should be particularly well-suited, then, to understand the possible implications of voter ID laws.

The emphasis on the access against integrity frames derives not just from the literature but also from the courts. In the appellate decision in the *Crawford* case the majority upheld the law, arguing "voting fraud impairs the right of legitimate voters."[5] In a dissent, Judge Evans supported the participation frame and provided a partisan motive: "The Indiana voter photo identification law is a not-too-thinly-veiled attempt to discourage Election Day turnout by certain folks believed to skew Democratic."[6] The Supreme Court Justices similarly framed their arguments; Justice Stevens noted that, "the application of the statute to the vast majority of Indiana voters is amply justified by the valid interest in protecting 'the integrity and reliability of the electoral process.'"[7] Justice Scalia argued that "Ordinary and widespread burdens, such as those requiring 'nominal effort' of everyone, are not severe."[8] Similarly, we can see these themes in Justice Souter's dissenting opinion when he states, "the state interests fail to justify the practical limitations placed on the rights to vote, and the law imposes an unreasonable and irrelevant burden on voters who are poor and old."

We also explore one of the notions from *Crawford* – that the burdens are slight and offset by an increase in some measure of confidence in the electoral system. That is, fraud does not have to be prevented for the benefit to accrue; voters only need to feel more confident. We use an available measure of "voter confidence" that we argue likely correlates with the ambiguous notion of belief in the "integrity and reliability of the electoral process" cited in *Crawford*.

[5] William Crawford, et al. v. Marion County Board of Elections, January 4, 2007, 6. http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/electionlaw/litigation/documents/Rokita-Judgment.pdf
[6] http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/electionlaw/litigation/documents/Rokita-Judgment.pdf
[7] http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/07pdf/07-21.pdf, Stevens page 3.
[8] http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/07pdf/07-21.pdf, Scalia, page 2.

Examining Voter Identification Attitudes in New Mexico

We use data from the 2008 "New Mexico Voters Election Administration Survey," administered by the University of New Mexico. The survey asked voters an array of questions about the election that year.[9] A telephone survey (*N*=800) was conducted in both English and Spanish between November 6th and November 24th, 2008 and a mixed mode (mail/Internet survey, N=636) probability study was in the field between November 24th and December 20th. The overall response rate to the telephone survey was 17.4% using Response Rate 2 (RR2) as defined by the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR 2008). The response rate for the mail/Internet survey was 13.9%, after a three reminder contact model, using Response Rate 2 (RR2) as defined by the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR 2008), with 4 in 5 of respondents (81%) chose to answer the Internet survey and the remaining 1 in 5 respondents (19%) chose to answer the mail option. Post-election analysis of the sample suggests our study accurately reflected many voter sample population characteristics including gender, region, partisanship, years since registration, age, and the election outcome (Atkeson and Adams 2009; Atkeson, Adams, and Alvarez 2009).[10]

In this study, we examine responses to both the access and participation frames, the comparison between them, and the relationship between perceptions of fraud, voter identification, and the more general question of voter confidence. We use several questions to examine these issues. First, respondents answered the question, "Do you think voter identification rules prevent some voters from casting their ballot at the polls?"[11] Second, the

[9] For a full analysis of the sample, see Atkeson et al.2010.
[10] For those interested in more about the use of mixed mode surveys, please see: Atkeson et al. 2011 and Dillman 2009).
[11] There's some risk here that respondents interpreted this question as "prevented some *fraudulent* voters from casting their ballot at the polls," or interpreted it in some other fashion. All survey work should be read with that caution in mind: respondents may not always interpret questions as the authors intended.

respondents were asked "Do you think voter identification rules help prevent voter fraud?" Third, voters responded to a comparative question to assess the respondents' policy preference: "Some people argue that voter identification rules prevent some voters from going to the polls, while others argue that voter identification rules help prevent voting fraud. Which is more important?" Finally, voters responded to a question about their confidence in their vote being counted correctly. We begin by examining cross-tabulations of these survey questions with important covariates. Here we test competing hypotheses about what commonly measured demographic and political variables influence public perceptions of voter identification laws and voter confidence in the electoral system.

Perceptions of Consequences and Voter Confidence

Overall, respondents can see both the advantages and disadvantages of identification laws. They tend to believe the laws work to prevent fraud. The majority does not believe the laws prevent legitimate voting. Nevertheless, most tend to think that ensuring participation trumps preventing fraud as well. The bivariate tables presented here suggest that partisanship, rather than personal demographic, social, and economic characteristics, drive the differences in opinions across respondents. We document here how much more suspicious of voter identification laws are Democrats than Republicans.

TABLE 1 HERE

The majority (51%) of respondents replied that voter ID laws did not restrict access to the polls, although a sizeable fraction of the electorate (31%) believed they did. The remainder, 17%, did not have an opinion or did not know. In the theoretical framing – for example, in *Crawford* – there is little discussion about the relationship between uncertainty over policy

effects and the extent the laws satisfied a "legitimate state interest." We focus in the more detailed analysis, below, mostly on those that have an opinion one way or the other.

Ironically, those who vote by mail, and are not required to show identification, are actually more likely (36%) than polling place voters (26%) to believe that voter ID laws prevent access to the polls. Unsurprisingly, respondents who think the laws are insufficiently strict also tend to discount the assertion that the current laws prevent access (67%). Contrary to our hypothesis, the most highly educated are also the most likely to believe laws prevent access (37%). Not also that while it may appear that there are large differences between "other race" respondents and the white or Hispanic categories, the "other race" category has only 69 respondents as opposed to 306 Hispanic respondents and 1024 white respondents. The more curious result, again opposed to our first hypothesis, is the similarity between Hispanics and whites.

Voters generally agree that ID laws prevent fraud (70%). Only 10% did not give an answer and 20% disagreed. Again, those voters with less experience with the voter identification law as it is applied on Election Day (early and mail voters) expressed less confidence that it prevented fraud, although the relationship is weak.[12] There is a clear correlation between thinking that the laws are ineffective at controlling fraud and believing that the laws are too strict; twenty percentage points fewer respondents believe that the laws are too strict agreed that they prevented fraud than those that said the laws were "about right." Cynicism as to the law's effectiveness increased with levels of education and income. Republicans were more likely (77%) to think that the law was effective than Democrats (66%), a result all the more surprising

[12] The chi-square value here is actually quite low, 6.38, with a p-value of 0.17.

as Hispanics were much more likely (77%) to think that the law was effective than were Whites (68%).[13]

Multivariate regression analysis can provide more compelling evidence than the bivariate tables for some of these relationships. For each of those questions described in Table 1, we performed a simple logistic regression. We have dropped the "don't know" responses to focus on what explains the differences between the "yes" and "no" respondents.[14] The bivariate tables foreshadowed these results, although partisanship absorbs most of the variance in outcomes (see Table 2).

TABLE 2 HERE

For the "restrict access" question, absentee (mail) voters are significantly more likely to respond that the laws prevent access than early (in person) voters; changing a typical respondent from an early voter to an absentee voter increases the probability of a "yes" response by 8 percentage points. Partisanship has a bigger effect; changing a strong Democrat to a Republican results in a 29 percentage point drop in the probability of agreeing that voter identification laws prevent access to the polls. There is a similar, and significant, but lower magnitude effect for independents. The partisanship story emerges forcefully in this analysis: Democrats are simply more concerned about access than are Republicans. The independent variables that should affect the ability of an individual to acquire the necessary identification – age, income,[15] and education – do not have effects significant at the conventional .05 level. Gender and race also do not

[13] The chi-square value for party identification (sorted into three categories: Democratic, Independent, and Republican) is 16.97 with a p-value of less than 0.01. The chi-square value for race (sorted into three categories: White, Hispanic, and Other) is 11.91, with a p-value of 0.02.

[14] Using multinomial logit and including the "don't know" responses as an alternative does not substantively change the argument we make here. The findings are not terribly surprising; those with only a high school education and those with no party preference (independents) were more likely to say "don't know" than answer affirmatively that ID laws prevent fraud, for example.

[15] The models all contain a variable "Income: Missing" because a reasonably large number of respondents refused to reply to the income questions. Instead of just dropping the respondents, they have been included. In most cases, the variable of missing income is insignificant, indicating that the missingness is not problematic.

appear to have an effect. In addition, the coefficients are not significant for the variables that control for survey response mode.

The "prevent fraud" question represents the other side of the argument. Here all party orientations are more likely than strong Democrats to agree that the laws prevent fraud, including weak Democrats. More demographic variables also possess significant coefficients in this model. For example, individuals who had attained only "some college" education were more likely than individuals who had a college degree to think that VID laws prevented fraud.[16] On the other hand, individuals with the highest incomes were less likely than respondents with incomes between $42-60,000 to think these laws prevent fraud, as were younger relative to middle-aged respondents. Additionally, respondents who answered the survey over the internet were less likely than phone respondents to think the laws prevented fraud; the survey response effects are on the same order of magnitude as many of the others in this analysis. The most surprising result here is the significant coefficient on Hispanic respondents. Hispanic respondents are significantly more likely than White respondents to think that voter identification laws prevent fraud, as was presaged by the results presented in Table 1.

Since it is possible for someone to think that voter identification laws prevent fraud but also hinder turnout, we directly asked voters to pick between these two frames. Specifically, respondents were asked: "Which is more important Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote or protecting the voting system against fraud?" This survey question was identical across survey formats but many phone respondents volunteered "both." Tables 3 and 4 show the results of the multivariate analysis for both sets of permissible answers. In Table 3, we

[16] The "some college" category tends to correlate well with Republican-type attitudes and beliefs. For an example from this data set, those with "some college" were more likely than all others to find Sarah Palin ready to be vice president (chi-square 13.61, p-value of 0.03) and a much percentage of Republicans (23%) falls in this category than do Democrats (17%). However, there are strictly more Democrats in this category (as there are many more Democrats overall).

report the results of a logistic regression for the binary mixed mode survey respondents. In Table 4, we report results from an ordered logit, which captures the responses for those who indicated both and placed "both" in the middle category.[17]

TABLE 3 HERE

Among the mixed mode (e.g., not on the telephone) respondents, a majority preferred ensuring access (54%) to preventing fraud (46%). Interestingly this suggests that, when the debate is framed as a conflict between two competing policy positions, voters appear less supportive of policies that might reduce turnout. Partisanship matters a great deal here; a strong Republican is much more likely to favor preventing fraud over ensuring access compared to a strong Democrat. The partisanship effects are large; the first difference for moving from being a strong Democrat to being a strong Republican indicates that this lowers the probability the respondent chooses access rather than security by over fifty percentage points. The independent variables one might expect to be significant from the arguments made in *Crawford* are not significant: non-white race or ethnicity, lower income, and less education do not significantly affect selecting "ensuring access" over "preventing fraud." A somewhat counterintuitive result, given their greater personal resources, is that respondents with postgraduate degrees are more likely to prefer ensuring access over preventing fraud.

The phone survey results – where the "both" response is included – are somewhat different. Over one-quarter of respondents (28%) volunteered "both" while 37% replied "ensure the right to vote" and 35% replied "protect against fraud." Of the 778 telephone respondents that gave one of those three answers, this more or less represents a tie, although there are still strong

[17] We picked the ordered logit because of the theoretical frame we have in mind: these are contrasting objectives along a single dimension of "permissiveness," with "don't know" somewhere in the middle. Using an alternative method like multinomial logit (without such an assumption) yields substantively similar, although slightly more complicated (for presentation) results.

trends about which type of respondents select which answer. We see much the same story emerging in the ordered logit (Table 4) as is evident in binary logit (Table 3): for comparing "preventing fraud only" to "ensuring access only." Again, strong Republicans are less likely to select "ensure access" compared to Democrats. Furthermore, Hispanic voters come out in favor of preventing fraud, contrary to expectations.[18] Nevertheless, the magnitude of the effects for strong Republicans is striking; changing the strong Republican variable from zero to one increases the probability that a respondent selects "prevent fraud" by 35 percentage points. This is clearly an issue that is strongly structured by partisanship.

TABLE 4 HERE

In the *Crawford* decision, both the majority and dissenting opinions linked some notion of voter confidence to voter identification laws. This survey includes a measure of voter confidence, confidence that the voter's own ballot was counted at the polls. This is slightly different than what the courts may have intended but it also likely correlates with a more general notion of confidence in the electoral process, however measured. The idea here is to test to see if attitudes towards voter ID laws relate to this notion of voter confidence; in particular, since New Mexico had a moderate ID law in 2008, we would expect that those who think ID laws prevent fraud would be slightly more confident.[19] Of course, there must be some concern about simultaneity here (attitudes about the VID law and confidence are determined by the same thing)

[18] This point deserves additional elaboration. Among Democratic Hispanic respondents *from all modes*, ensuring access is preferred over preventing fraud by 42% to 35%; in addition, 74% of Hispanic telephone mode respondents were Democrats (143 Democrats, 16 Independents, and 34 Republicans). Of the Hispanic Republicans (Strong and Weak combined) *from all modes* 57% preferred "protect against fraud" while 24% preferred the "access" frame. Of course, at this level, the numbers of individuals can be quite small; the aforementioned 24% represents the opinions of only 12 individuals. Restricting this to the telephone mode drops out about another 20 from the sample. Since, at this level, partisanship and Hispanic identification are so closely related and the number of individuals is so small, this estimate of Hispanic opinion should be treated with some caution.

[19] Compare this to California: voters just have to give their name and sign a poll book. The minimum New Mexico requirement required voters to give their name, their address, and their birth year. This is obviously less of a requirement than a strict photo-ID law; in those states, we would hypothesize that there would be a larger effect.

or reverse causality (attitudes about voter confidence determine attitudes towards the ID laws). Nevertheless, merely modeling voter confidence without including the attitudes about access and integrity would miss an opportunity to at least examine the evidence for an important claim in Crawford.[20] In Table 5 we present the results of the voter confidence model, using ordered logistic regressions, both including and excluding the fraud and integrity frames; as measures of those attitudes, we use the questions detailed in Table 1.

TABLE 5 HERE

In the first model, including the attitudes about VID laws, we observe the expected results. Those who think the laws prevent fraud are more confident. Those that think ID laws restrict access are less likely to have higher levels of confidence. These variables do not have a sizeable effect on the dependent variable, though; thinking that the laws restrict access decreases the probability that a respondent will have the highest level of voter confidence ("very confident") by eight percentage points and thinking that the laws prevent fraud increases the probability of selecting "very confident" by six percentage points. Generally speaking, in this model, lower incomes and voting by mail also decrease the probability an individual has the highest level of confidence. Nevertheless, the strongest effects are once again reserved for party identification: Republicans are less confident than Democrats.

The model that excludes the identification law attitudes (right hand column of Table 5) reports generally the same results. Early voters are more confident than mail or election-day voters, there is a smattering of income results, a small result for the group representing age 30 to 50 (relative to age 50-65), and some reasonably large survey mode effects (phone respondents are the most confident). This likely represents social desirability effects we have seen before

[20] We would like to second the opinion of an anonymous reviewer: this would be something useful to test in an experimental setting in future research.

between modes (see Atkeson, Adams, and Alvarez 2010). Additionally, those that refused to give their income were also somewhat less confident. Nevertheless education, gender, and race once again do not play a significant role and partisanship does.

As for the direct correlations between voter confidence and opinions on fraud, of the more than 700 respondents that were "very confident" their vote counted, 65% thought that voter identification requirements did not unfairly limit access and 81% thought voter identification laws prevented fraud. However, almost all voters were either "very confident" or "somewhat confident" that their votes counted; of the 1396 respondents to the voter confidence question only 69 (5%) replied that they were "not too confident" and a mere 41 (3%) replied that they were not at all confident.[21] Republicans are less confident than Democrats; altogether, roughly 13% of Republicans selected "not too confident" or "not at all confident." So there appears to be a link between partisanship, attitudes on voter confidence, and attitudes on voter identification laws. Of course, it is always possible that Republicans reported less confidence in the electoral system because Democrats did very well in the 2008 election cycle in New Mexico, winning the Presidential ticket, the Senate seat and all three Congressional races.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have argued that the voter identification policy revolves around the fraud prevention and the ensuring access frame. In examining public attitudes toward these frames, we find that a slight majority of respondents do not see voter identification as a barrier to participation although respondents generally accept that identification laws prevent fraud.

[21] Since so few respondents selected the lower categories – "not at all confident" and "not too confident" – the models presented in Table 5 were estimated both combining the lower categories and keeping them separate. The results were substantively the same. The results presented in Table 5 use the 4-category dependent variable.

Merely examining these questions separately could induce a policymaker to think that the fraud frame is more persuasive than the participation frame. Nevertheless, when presented with a statement asking which is more important, most voters (54% in the case of a forced choice and a plurality of 37% if "both" is allowed) prefer the participation frame.

Party identification largely accounts for the differences in responses. Taken together, all these results indicate that the Republicans have slightly lower levels of confidence and a higher demand for voter identification laws. This explains why states that have adopted strong voter identification laws tend to be under Republican political control. Especially in states that frequently experience highly competitive statewide elections, these results indicate that we should expect the debate on voter identification to continue with a partisan divide.

Nevertheless, partisanship is not the only factor that is important in this debate. The significance of the coefficient on absentee voting in Table 2, indicating a belief that voter identification laws drop turnout, is of particular note, as is the significance of the coefficient on postgraduate education in Table 3, indicating a belief that ensuring access is more important than preventing fraud. Given the arguments made in the dissent in *Crawford*, we expect the groups most likely to be hindered by the voter identification laws to voice those objections in these questions. They largely do not; low income and less education does not cause a notably higher level of thinking that voter identification laws prevent turnout. Instead, the objections come from those with the means to acquire the identification or those who do not actually vote in polling places. This suggests that to gain broader acceptance of these laws, a policymaker could try to better acquaint groups that may worry about the disenfranchisement of others that all is well.

It is important to observe that the models of voter confidence (Table 5) demonstrate not only the partisan effects shown for attitudes towards voter identification but also meaningful income effects. In both specifications represented in Table 5, the lowest income group was less likely to have confidence in the electoral process. When combined with the consistently negative effects on voter confidence for voting by mail, this indicates that voters remain unconvinced that the process is at it should be. Further research on this question is necessary, since the questions asked about voter confidence in this survey focused on the individual's own vote being counted rather than all the votes generally. Especially since it appears from Tables 1-4 that many who worry about the loss of access to the polls are those who themselves are unlikely to lose it, one possibility is that the voters are less confident that others' votes will count in the aggregate at the county and state level (see Atkeson 2011).

Of course, public opinion is only one angle from which to view this issue. While it may appear to be largely a partisan debate from a public opinion perspective, voter identification laws may in fact erect barriers to participation that are not evident in survey responses such as these. Considering the varying implementation of these laws within states and between states, this study of a single state in a single election year should be considered more of a starting point than a final answer. Further research is needed not only to continue to examine public opinion on this issue but also to investigate the effects on turnout of these laws.

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Table 1: Bivariate tables for the questions "do voter identification laws prevent access?" (Q54) and "do voter identification laws prevent fraud?" (Q55). Numbers represent the row percentage for each question. For each question, n=1436.[22]

	VID Laws Restrict Access			VID Laws Prevent Fraud		
Variable	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Overall	31	51	17	70	20	10
Early Voter	33	52	15	69	21	10
Mail Voter	36	42	22	66	22	11
Election Day Voter	26	58	17	75	17	8
VID Law Too Strict	54	39	7	50	41	9
VID Law Just Right	36	47	16	70	20	10
VID Law Too Lax	20	67	13	77	18	5
HS Edu. (Or Less)	30	52	18	73	16	12
Some College	29	53	18	77	16	7
Trade/Associates	23	62	15	77	15	8
College Degree	33	52	15	67	25	8
Post Graduate Edu.	38	48	14	68	24	8
White	30	52	18	68	21	11
Hispanic	33	52	16	77	16	7
Other Identity	42	41	17	70	23	7
Democratic PID	41	39	20	66	23	11
Independent PID	27	58	15	71	20	8
Republican PID	20	68	13	77	15	8
Income under 21k	32	47	21	65	21	14
Income 21k-42k	27	52	21	71	16	13
Income 42k-60k	32	52	16	75	17	8
Income 60k-80k	28	58	14	76	20	3
Income 80k-100k	36	54	10	76	19	4
Income over 100k	36	51	14	64	26	9
Age 18-30	35	53	13	69	23	8
Age 30-50	31	53	16	68	24	8
Age 50-65	33	50	17	70	19	11
Age 65+	29	50	21	72	16	11
Female	33	47	20	72	18	10

[22] While on Q55 (prevent fraud) and on Q56 (restrict access) respondents could choose "don't know" or "unsure," a very small number of respondents did not answer the question. For Q54 eighteen people did not give an answer and on Q55 twenty individuals did not answer. Instead of dropping these respondents or imputing a possible answer, these non-responses were recoded as "don't know/unsure." Therefore, the number of respondents represented in this table is 1436 for both questions.

Table 2: Results for two logistic regressions. First, do VID laws restrict access? N=1065. Second, do VID laws prevent fraud? N=1178.[23]

	VID Laws Restrict Access (=1)			VID Laws Prevent Fraud (=1)		
Variable	Coef.	Std. Err.	First Diff.	Coef.	Std. Err.	First Diff.
Mail Voter	0.37*	0.17	0.08	-0.05	0.19	
Election Day Voter	-0.14	0.17		0.09	0.18	
HS Edu. (Or Less)	-0.15	0.21		0.36	0.24	
Some College	-0.13	0.20		0.49*	0.23	0.07
Trade/Associates	-0.49	0.27		0.42	0.29	
Post Graduate Edu.	0.17	0.18		0.15	0.20	
Hispanic	-0.06	0.18		0.49*	0.20	0.07
Other Race/Ethnicity	0.44	0.31		-0.06	0.32	
Weak Dem. PID	-0.32	0.21		0.72*	0.24	0.10
Ind. PID	-0.90*	0.19	-0.22	0.45*	0.21	0.07
Weak Rep. PID	-1.31*	0.27	-0.30	1.18*	0.32	0.14
Strong Rep. PID	-1.26*	0.19	-0.29	0.86*	0.21	0.11
Income under 21k	0.33	0.27		-0.52	0.31	
Income 21k-42k	-0.38	0.24		-0.08	0.28	
Income 60k-80k	-0.35	0.25		-0.10	0.28	
Income 80k-100k	-0.04	0.27		-0.20	0.31	
Income over 100k	-0.03	0.25		-0.59*	0.28	-0.11
Income (Missing)	-0.23	0.25		-0.44	0.28	
Age 18-30	0.05	0.22		-0.53*	0.24	-0.10
Age 30-50	0.04	0.17		-0.57*	0.19	-0.11
Age 65+	-0.12	0.18		-0.03	0.21	
Female	0.21	0.13		0.18	0.15	
Internet Svy. Mode	-0.11	0.15		-0.49*	0.16	-0.11
Mail Svy. Mode	0.27	0.27		-0.18	0.30	

First Differences are only produced here for variables that are statistically significant at the .05 level, also indicated by a *. The first differences represent the change in probability of selecting "yes" to the dependent variable if the independent variable is changed from 0 to 1 and the other variables are left at their median value.

[23] The total number of survey respondents is 1436. However, as mentioned in the text of the paper, there is little reasoning in the court decision about why someone might be unsure. We are only interested in the "yes" or "no" answers here, and so we have dropped the "don't know" respondents. Therefore, these regressions have *different* numbers of respondents and they also have *fewer* respondents than the total number for the survey.

Table 3: Internet and Mail Respondents Choosing Between Preventing Fraud (=0) and Ensuring Access (=1), simple logistic regression with N=542.[24]

Variable	Coef.	Std. Err.	First Diff.
Mail Voter	0.46	0.24	
Election Day Voter	-0.05	0.26	
HS Edu. (Or Less)	0.19	0.32	
Some College	0.23	0.30	
Trade/Associates	-0.13	0.37	
Post Graduate Edu.	0.64*	0.28	0.07
Hispanic	-0.25	0.29	
Other Race/Ethnicity	-0.10	0.47	
Weak Dem. PID	-1.08*	0.32	-0.19
Ind. PID	-1.59*	0.28	-0.31
Weak Rep. PID	-2.56*	0.39	-0.53
Strong Rep. PID	-2.50*	0.30	-0.52
Income under 21k	0.32	0.41	
Income 21k-42k	-0.29	0.35	
Income 60k-80k	-0.24	0.38	
Income 80k-100k	0.39	0.43	
Income over 100k	-0.71	0.39	
Income (Missing)	-0.47	0.39	
Age 18-30	-0.30	0.38	
Age 30-50	-0.32	0.28	
Age 65+	-0.46	0.25	
Female	0.35	0.21	
Internet Svy. Mode	-0.41	0.28	

First Differences are only produced here for variables that are statistically significant at the .05 level. The first differences represent the change in probability of selecting "yes" to the dependent variable if the independent variable is changed from 0 to 1 and the other variables are left at their median value.

[24] This model could use a binary logistic regression because the respondents were forced to choose between these two responses on the mail and internet portions of the survey. In the telephone mode part of the survey, though, the surveyors accepted a volunteered response of "both." Therefore, the telephone mode portion is analyzed separately (see Table 4). There were only 583 mail and internet respondents who answered this question, of whom 41 were dropped here because of other missing data. Of the 583 respondents to this question, 116 answered it by mail and 467 answered by internet.

Table 4: Phone Respondents Choosing Between "Prevent Fraud" (=0), "Both" (=1), and "Ensure Access" (=2); Ordered Logistic Regression with N= 699.[25]

			First Differences		
Variable	Coef.	Std. Err.	Ensure Access	Don't Know	Prevent Fraud
Mail Voter	0.31	0.21			
Election Day Voter	0.01	0.17			
HS Edu. (Or Less)	0.04	0.23			
Some College	0.28	0.22			
Trade/Associates	0.60*	0.28	0.15	-0.05	-0.10
Post Graduate Edu.	0.27	0.21			
Hispanic	-0.61*	0.19	-0.14	0.01	0.13
Other Race/Ethnicity	-0.17	0.35			
Weak Dem. PID	-0.01	0.23			
Ind. PID	-0.73*	0.23	-0.16	0.00	0.16
Weak Rep. PID	-0.49	0.27			
Strong Rep. PID	-1.52*	0.21	-0.29	-0.06	0.35
Income under 21k	0.50	0.30			
Income 21k-42k	0.04	0.25			
Income 60k-80k	-0.13	0.27			
Income 80k-100k	0.13	0.30			
Income over 100k	0.15	0.27			
Income (Missing)	-0.01	0.26			
Age 18-30	-0.03	0.23			
Age 30-50	-0.23	0.19			
Age 65+	0.01	0.20			
Female	-0.05	0.15			

First Differences are only produced here for variables that are statistically significant at the .05 level. The first differences represent the change in probability of selecting the answer to the dependent variable if the independent variable is changed from 0 to 1 and the other variables are left at their median value (note that these sum to zero, since there are only three choices).

[25] A total of 778 phone respondents answered this question, 79 were dropped here because of missing data. See the previous table for an analysis of the mail and internet mode respondents.

Table 5: Ordered Logistic Regressions for Level of Confidence that Vote Was Counted, including opinion on VID Law (n=1019) and excluding it (n=1266).[26]

	Including VID Law Opinion			Excluding VID Law Opinion		
Variable	Coef.	Std. Err.	First Diff.	Coef.	Std. Err.	First Diff.
Laws Prevent Fraud	0.49*	0.16	0.06	-	-	-
Laws Restrict Access	-0.57*	0.15	-0.08	-	-	-
Mail Voter	-0.42*	0.17	-0.05	-0.43*	0.15	-0.07
Election Day Voter	-0.28	0.16		-0.38*	0.14	-0.06
HS Edu. (Or Less)	-0.29	0.21		-0.24	0.19	
Some College	-0.17	0.20		-0.14	0.17	
Trade/Associates	0.26	0.26		0.21	0.23	
Post Graduate Edu.	0.20	0.19		0.26	0.17	
Hispanic	0.14	0.18		0.27	0.16	
Other Race/Ethnicity	0.14	0.33		0.17	0.29	
Weak Dem. PID	-0.10	0.23		-0.12	0.19	
Ind. PID	-0.76*	0.20	-0.11	-0.49*	0.17	-0.08
Weak Rep. PID	-0.77*	0.25	-0.11	-0.45*	0.22	-0.08
Strong Rep. PID	-1.00*	0.19	-0.15	-0.70*	0.16	-0.12
Income under 21k	-0.65*	0.28	-0.09	-0.77*	0.24	-0.14
Income 21k-42k	-0.49*	0.24	-0.06	-0.30	0.21	
Income 60k-80k	-0.25	0.25		-0.26	0.23	
Income 80k-100k	-0.62*	0.27	-0.08	-0.65*	0.24	-0.11
Income over 100k	0.00	0.26		0.01	0.23	
Income (Missing)	-0.42	0.25		-0.45*	0.22	-0.08
Age 18-30	-0.23	0.22		-0.12	0.20	
Age 30-50	-0.32	0.17		-0.36*	0.15	-0.06
Age 65+	-0.03	0.18		0.04	0.16	
Female	-0.17	0.13		-0.03	0.12	
Internet Svy. Mode	-0.35*	0.15	-0.05	-0.42*	0.13	-0.07
Mail Svy. Mode	-0.41	0.26		-0.69*	0.21	-0.12

First Differences reported for variables that are statistically significant at the .05 level. Additionally, the only first difference reported represents the change in probability of attaining the highest level of confidence ("very confident"=4) when the listed independent variable is changed from 0 to 1 and all other variables are set to their median values.

[26]The disparity in the number of respondents between the two models is the result of the specification of the opinion about voter fraud variables. The variables used here are binary; that is, they are assigned a value of 1 if the respondent agreed and a value of 0 if the respondent disagreed. That excludes the respondents who answered "don't know" completely from the analysis. The reasoning here is that the most interesting discussion does not focus on the respondents without an opinion.