



# IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

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## NEWS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

### **Latino New Americans Move the Political Dial in Indiana, North Carolina and Virginia** *Immigration Concerns Swing Latino Immigrant Vote*

**November, 12, 2008**

**Washington, DC**—Latinos weren't the only group that flexed its muscles this past Election Day. *New Americans*—naturalized citizens *and* the U.S.-born children of immigrants who were born during the current era of immigration that began in 1965—make up another important demographic group that demonstrated its ability to swing an election. While complete data on *New Americans* is not yet available, exit polling among Latinos and Latino immigrants tell two important stories.

First, Latino immigrants voted for Obama at a higher margin than native-born Latinos. While Obama made an impressive gain among native-born Latino voters, capturing 67% of the Latino vote compared to Kerry's 56% in 2004, the records were smashed with Latino *immigrant* support coming in at a whopping 78%. What charged the immigrant vote? Immigration.

Meanwhile, these *New American* Latino voters made a difference in districts we've never detected their presence in before. In unprecedented fashion, they provided the critical, extra push for Obama in **North Carolina and Indiana**, without which victory would have been impossible; and played a significant role in winning **Virginia**. These findings suggest that immigrants are having a tsunami impact beyond the Sunshine and Rocky Mountain states and throughout the country.

A [preliminary analysis](#) conducted for the Immigration Policy Center (IPC) by Rob Paral and Associates explores the electoral power that was exhibited on Election Day by Latino *New Americans* and shows:

#### **Indiana and North Carolina Latino New American Voters Helped Push Obama to Victory.**

- In **North Carolina**, Obama won by approximately 14,000 votes and received the votes of nearly 26,000 more Latino *New Americans* than McCain—nearly double the margin of victory.
- In **Indiana**, Obama won by roughly 26,000 votes, and received the votes of nearly 24,000 more Latino *New Americans* than John McCain. The additional votes that Obama received from Latino *New Americans* who chose him over McCain **equals more than 90% of his margin of victory.**

#### **Virginia's Latino New American Voters Amounted to a Fifth of Obama's Margin of Victory.**

- In **Virginia**, Obama won by roughly 156,000 votes, and received the votes of approximately 35,000 more Latino *New Americans* than McCain. The number of additional votes that Obama received from Latino *New Americans* who chose him over McCain was equal to **one-fifth (more than 20%) of his margin of victory.**
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**Immigrants Voted for Obama Largely Due to Their Concerns About Immigration.**

[Interviews](#) conducted by Bendixen & Associates among Latino immigrant voters just before the election found that “a rise in discrimination against Hispanics because of the tone of the immigration debate contributed to the rejection of the Republican nominee for President.”

President-elect Barack Obama and the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress cannot afford to disregard the needs and future of the fastest growing part of the American electorate without facing a backlash in 2012. These stunning election results represent a clear mandate to work towards enacting reform that restores the rule of law, renews confidence in America’s immigration system and realistically tackles illegal immigration.

To read more about the *New American* Electorate [click here](#).

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