



TEN THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN AMERICAN VOTE

1. The Asian American Vote is rising – While the number of votes cast by whites in the presidential election rose by 4.3% between 1996 and 2000, the number of AAPI votes rose by 22%.¹
2. Asian Americans play a crucial role in swing states – In swing states such as Nevada and Washington, Asian Americans make up more than 5% of potential voters. In the city of Wausau, Wisconsin, Hmong Americans comprise close to 4% of the total population.
3. Asian Americans are less likely to register to vote than whites and blacks – Asian Americans would have 500,000 additional voters if they had registered at the same rate as white citizens.
4. Poverty is on the rise for Asian American families – Recent Census reports indicate that Asian Americans are also experiencing increased poverty rates. For those who indicated Asian as their only race, 11.8% lived in poverty in 2003, up from 10.1% in 2002.
5. There are over 1.8 million Southeast Asian Americans according to the 2000 Census.
6. Southeast Asian Americans are NOT the model minority – For the overall population of people aged 25 or over, 24.4% hold bachelor's degrees but only 9.1% of Cambodian Americans, 7.4% of Hmong Americans and 7.6% of Laotian Americans in this age group hold bachelor's degrees.
7. Southeast Asian Americans also lag behind in income – According to the 2000 Census, Cambodian Americans' per capita income was \$10,215, while for Hmong Americans the per capita income was even lower at \$6,613. This is compared to a per capita income of \$21,587 for the overall U.S. population.
8. Many Southeast Asian Americans struggle to learn English – According to the 2000 Census, 45% of Vietnamese American households reported that they were linguistically isolated while 35% of Hmong American households reported that they were linguistically isolated.
9. Southeast Asian Americans hold diverse political affiliations – In research done by the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, 31% of Cambodian American registered voters in Long Beach identified themselves as Democrats while 39% identified themselves as Republicans.
10. In Long Beach, large numbers of Cambodian American voters voted by absentee ballot – Research carried out by the Asian Pacific American Legal Center showed that 36% of Cambodian American voters in Long Beach voted via absentee ballot in the 2000 Presidential election.

¹ From the Urban Institute Immigration Studies Program, "Election 2004: Latino and Asian Vote."