

Voter Turnout Brief: Ohio 2008

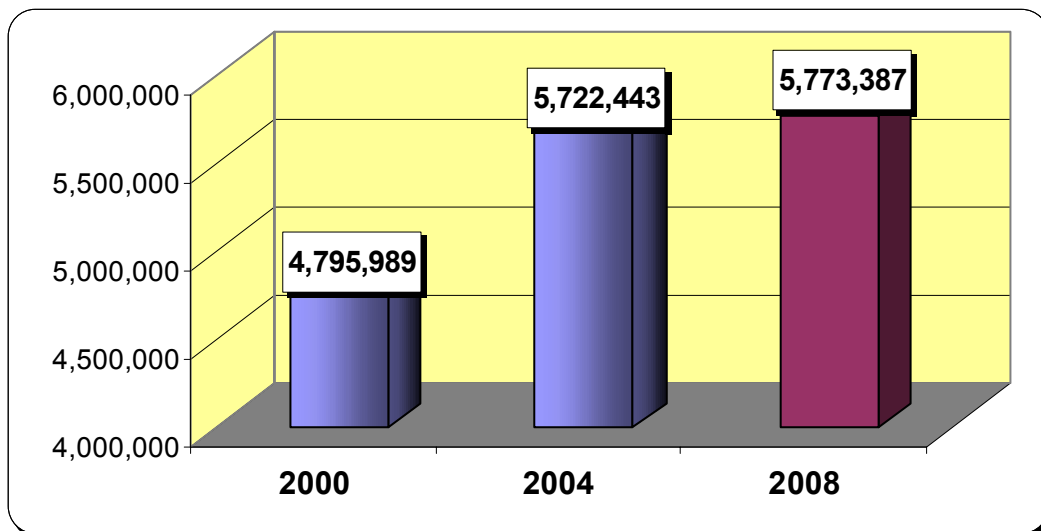
*Based on total number of voters casting ballots. Official returns from the Secretary of State
Prepared for OhioVOTES www.ohvotes.org*

Like 2004, Ohio was a central battleground in the presidential campaign. There was more early voting, good weather on Election Day and improved election administration. Voter registration reached an all-time high. Intense voter mobilization both partisan and nonpartisan helped turnout match and slightly exceed 2004.

At the same time, one in three Ohio voters still did not cast a ballot. The primary season brought in new voters but appeared to turn off others. Both major candidates suffered the consequences of highly charged primaries where many supporters of losing candidates (Clinton, Huckabee, Romney) stayed home November 4th. Another factor challenging participation in Ohio are the most burdensome voter registration and provisional voting laws in the nation. Ohio's 30 day advance registration deadline is one of the longest in the nation. Ohio does not benefit from Election Day registration used in 10 other states. Universal voter registration and improved early voting are key to future increases in participation

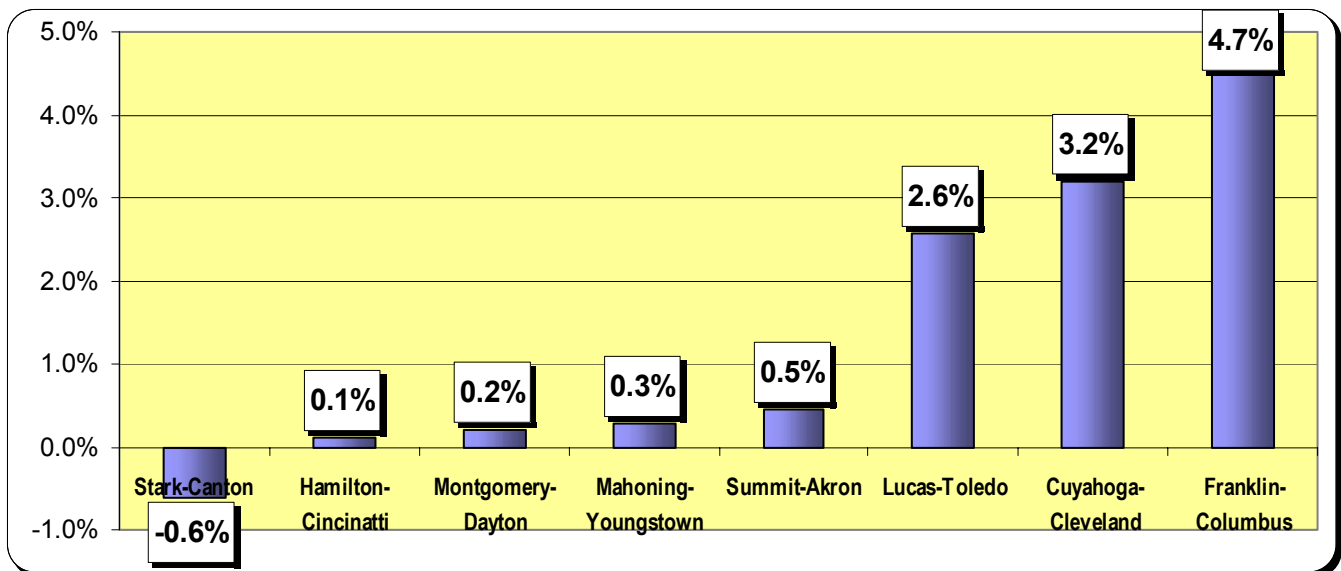
- ★ **Ohio achieved its fourth consecutive year of voter growth** in a presidential election, albeit only a small increase over 2004.
- ★ **67.7% of eligible voters turned out, putting Ohio** above the national average but below Election Day registration states like Minnesota and Wisconsin.
- ★ **An estimated 180,950 Ohio voters ended up using a provisional ballot**, usually because of a problems with their voter registration or driver's license.
- ★ **A record 1.5 million Ohioans requested an absentee ballot.** There were many reports of both applications and submitted ballots being rejected.

Total Ballots Cast in Last 3 Presidential Elections



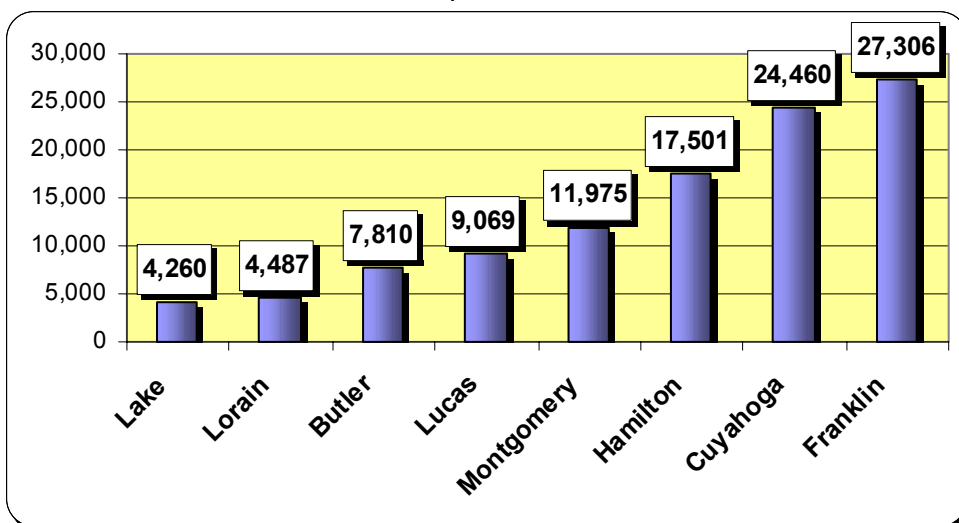
- ★ **Franklin County (Columbus) and Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) led urban counties in increasing voting turnout over 2004, when adjusted for change in the number of eligible voters.**
- ★ **Turnout stayed the same or went down in counties like Stark and Hamilton where higher numbers of voters than expected had no presidential preference and stayed home.**

% Increase in Voters in Large Counties 2008 vs. 2004



Counties with highest #s of Provisional Ballots Cast

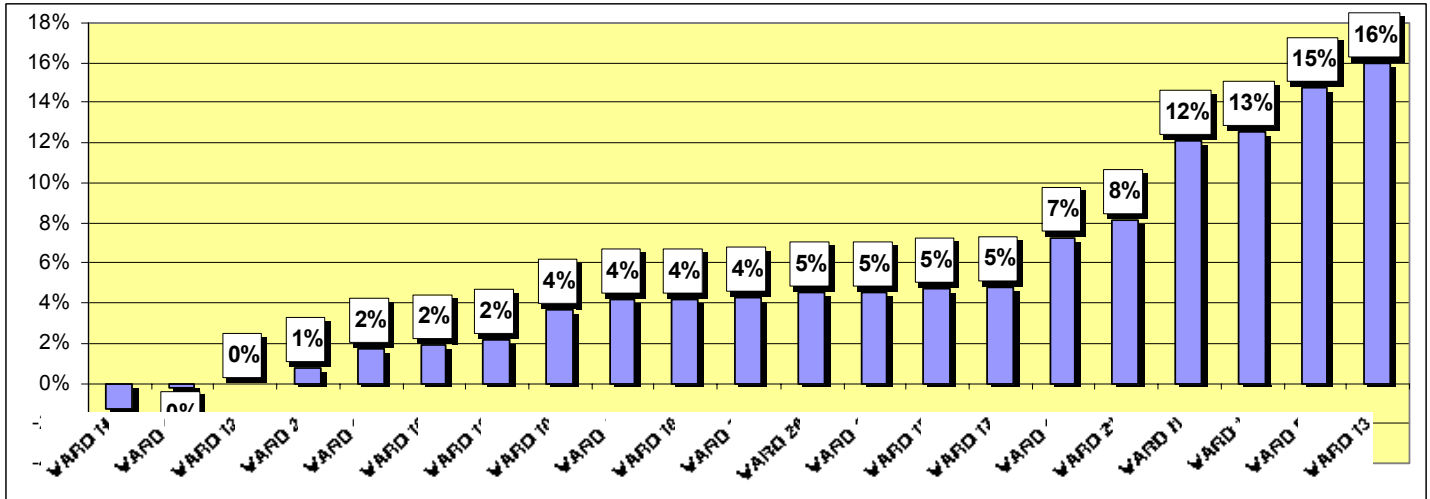
As reported 11/5/08



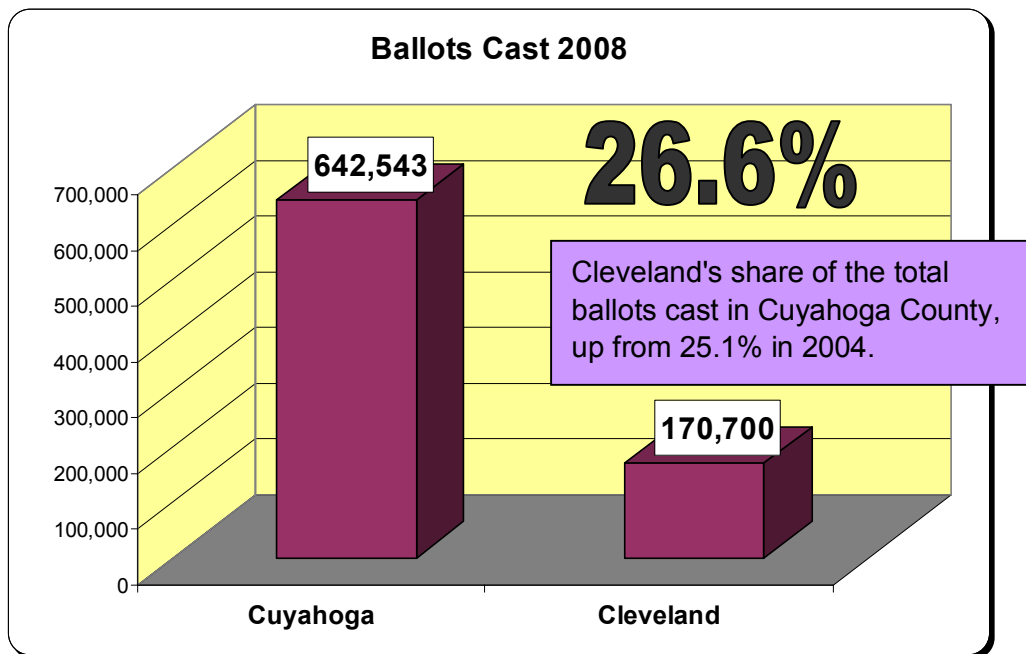
(Ohio's) provisional ballots ... present a quagmire of intricate and imprecisely stated requirements, including internal inconsistencies and multiple affirmations and declinations"
Ohio Supreme Court
12/2/2008

- ★ Turnout increased across Cleveland. It's share of the overall vote county wide also went up over 2004. The percent increases are surprising given the city's slight loss of eligible voters

Voter Turnout Increase by Ward – City of Cleveland



Cleveland Increases Its Share of the Vote in Cuyahoga County



Note: We are still compiling comparative figures for other counties like Franklin and Mahoning.

For more information, please contact Julian Johannesen, Research Director julian@nonprofitvote.org

Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network

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