

# California's Ballot Tracking Service: Who is Using it and How does it Impact Voter Confidence and Behavior?

Thank you for joining us.

Webinar will begin at Noon PT



**PART OF CID'S WEBINAR SERIES ON VOTER TURNOUT AND  
OUTREACH IN CALIFORNIA**

**Will Voters Turn Out in November?: Opportunities and  
Challenges to Conducting Voter Outreach in 2024**

# California's Ballot Tracking Service: Who is Using it and How does it Impact Voter Confidence and Behavior?

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## Why Study Ballot Tracking?

Vote-by-Mail (VBM) ballot locator and notification systems are intended to inform voters of the status of their VBM ballots regarding when they were mailed, received, and either accepted or rejected

Possible increased levels of confidence in the voting process

Impact on rejections rates

## Study Examines

Vote-by-Mail ballot tracking (BallotTrax) use rates and how ballot tracking impacts ballot rejection

- In-depth quantitative assessment of Ballottrax data provided by the CA Secretary of State's office

Impact of ballot tracking on voters' trust and confidence

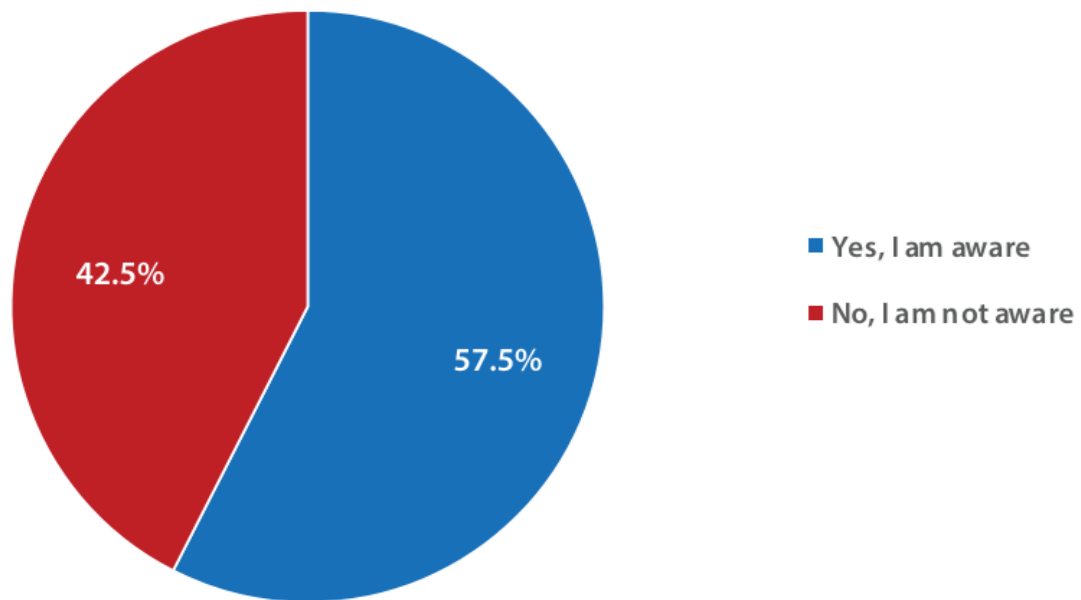
- CID California Voter Experience Survey – questions on ballot tracking awareness and usage

# Californians' Awareness and Views of BallotTrax

# The majority of eligible voters surveyed were aware of BallotTrax

**FIGURE 1**

Are you aware that in California you have the ability to sign up for a service called BallotTrax that will allow you to receive notifications via text message, phone call or email notifying you of the status of your ballot throughout the election process?

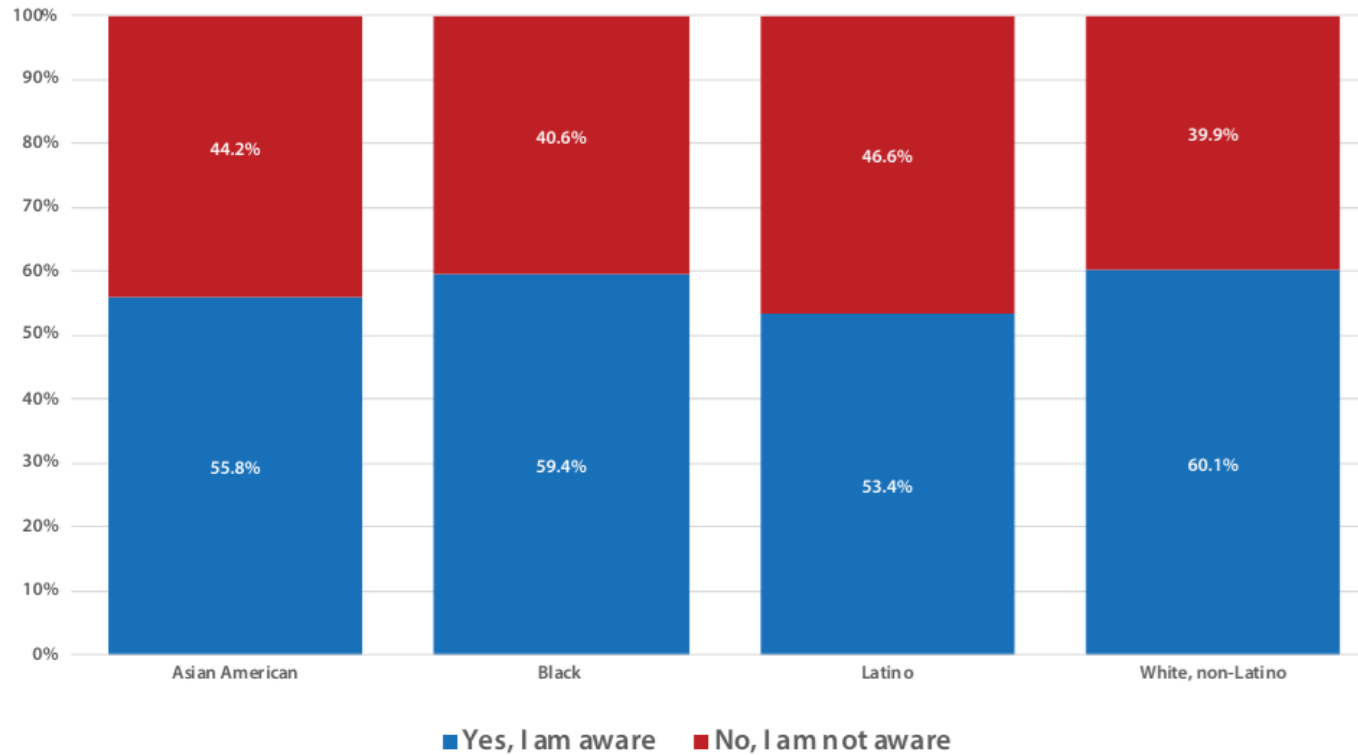


Data Source: 2023 CID California Voter Experience survey

# Awareness of BallotTrax varied by race and ethnicity

**FIGURE 2**

Are you aware that in California you have the ability to sign up for a service called BallotTrax that will allow you to receive notifications via text message, phone call or email notifying you of the status of your ballot throughout the election process?  
By Race and Ethnicity



Data Source: 2023 CID California Voter Experience survey



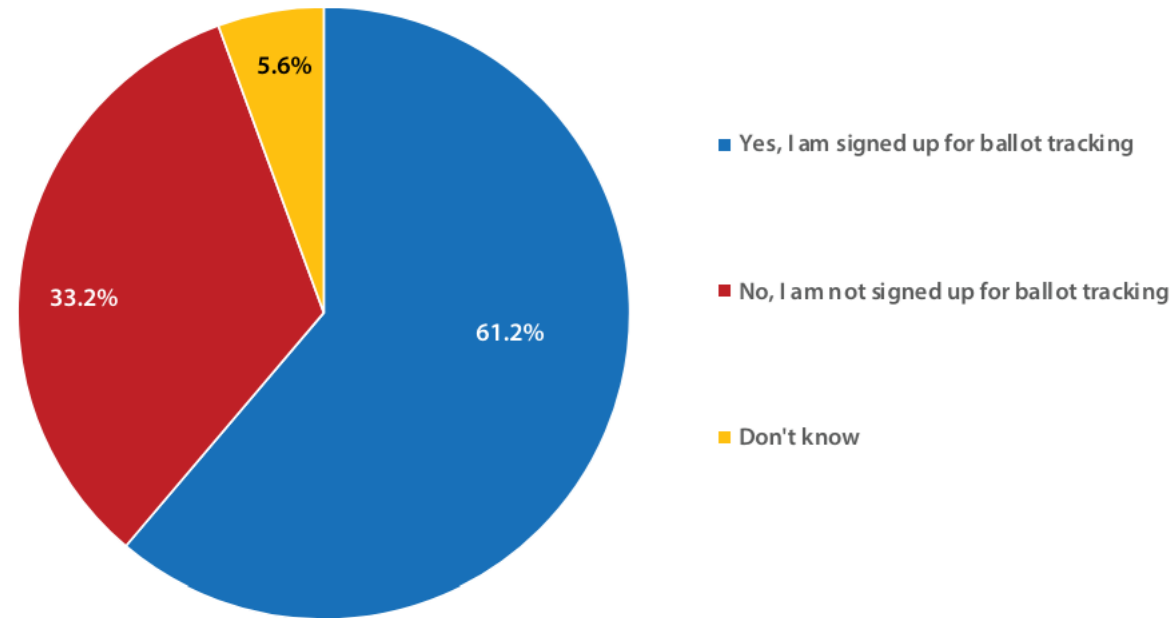
**Awareness of BallotTrax peaked among respondents aged 25 to 44, while older respondents had lower awareness levels**

**Democrats had the highest awareness of BallotTrax among all party affiliations**

# The majority of respondents who were aware of BallotTrax said they were signed up for the tool

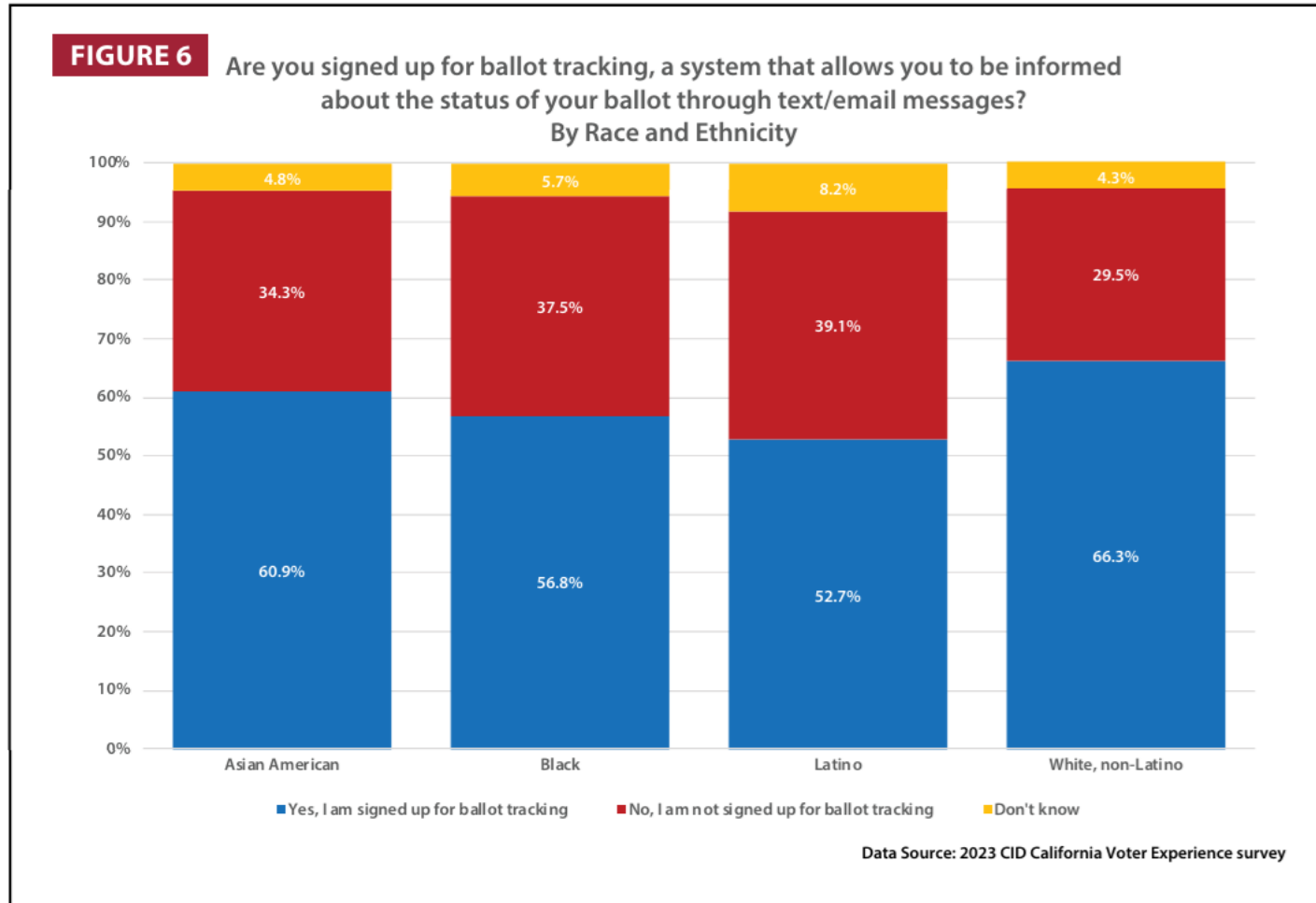
**FIGURE 5**

Are you signed up for ballot tracking, a system that allows you to be informed about the status of your ballot through text/email messages?



Data Source: 2023 CID California Voter Experience survey

# White, non-Latino respondents reported signing up for BallotTrax at notably higher rates than Black and Latino respondents



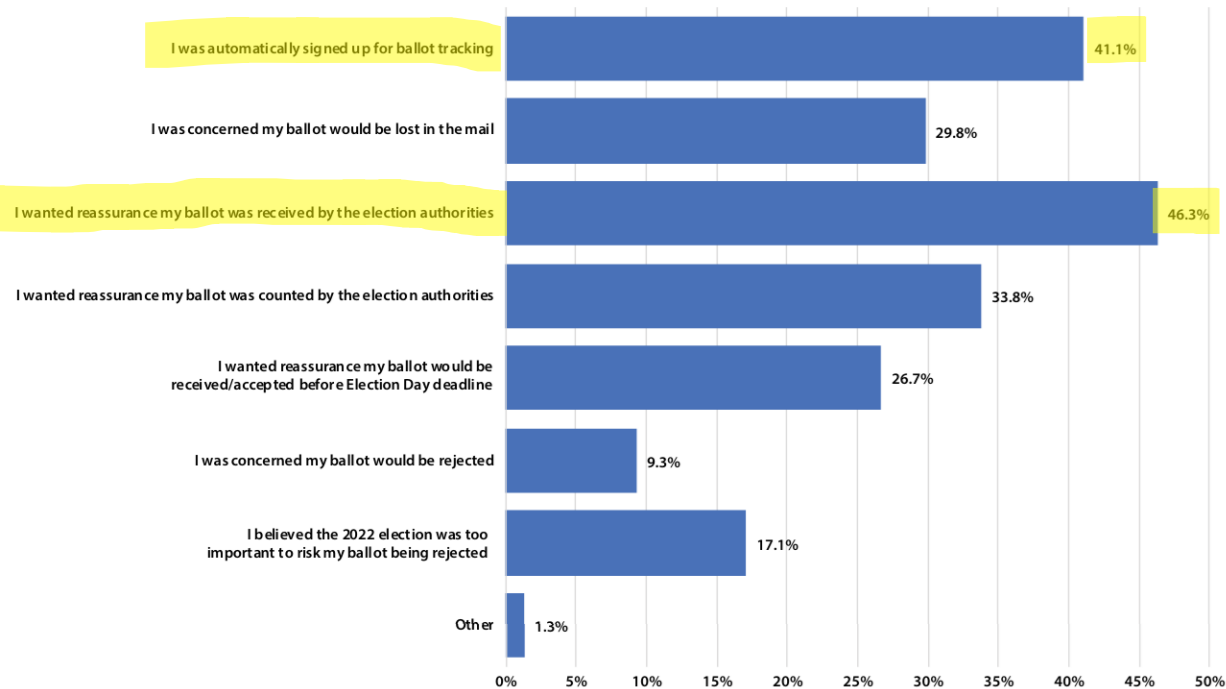
**Young respondents aged 18 to 24 reported the lowest BallotTrax sign up rate**

**Democratic respondents had the highest reported sign-up rate for BallotTrax across all party affiliations**

# Concerns about ballots being received was the top reason respondents reported they signed up for BallotTrax

**FIGURE 9**

Which of the following describe reasons you chose to track your ballot? Select all that apply.



Data Source: 2023 CID California Voter Experience survey

# Reasons for signing up for BallotTrax varied across racial and ethnic groups

**Table 1 - Which of the following describe reasons you chose to track your ballot? Select all that apply.  
By Race and Ethnicity**

	<b>Asian American</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Latino</b>	<b>White, non-Latino</b>
<b>I was automatically signed up for ballot tracking</b>	36.4%	47.1%	38.5%	41.9%
<b>I was concerned my ballot would be lost in the mail</b>	35.8%	38.3%	30.5%	27.7%
<b>I wanted reassurance my ballot was received by the election authorities</b>	37.7%	33.9%	39.4%	51.3%
<b>I wanted reassurance my ballot was counted by the election authorities</b>	30.2%	23.3%	24.3%	39.0%
<b>I wanted reassurance my ballot would be received/accepted before Election Day deadline</b>	25.3%	25.6%	21.3%	28.8%
<b>I was concerned my ballot would be rejected</b>	11.1%	8.4%	8.2%	9.8%
<b>I believed the 2022 election was too important to risk my ballot being rejected</b>	12.3%	11.9%	13.3%	19.5%
<b>Other</b>	0.6%	0.4%	0.6%	1.6%

Data Source: 2023 CID California Voter Experience survey

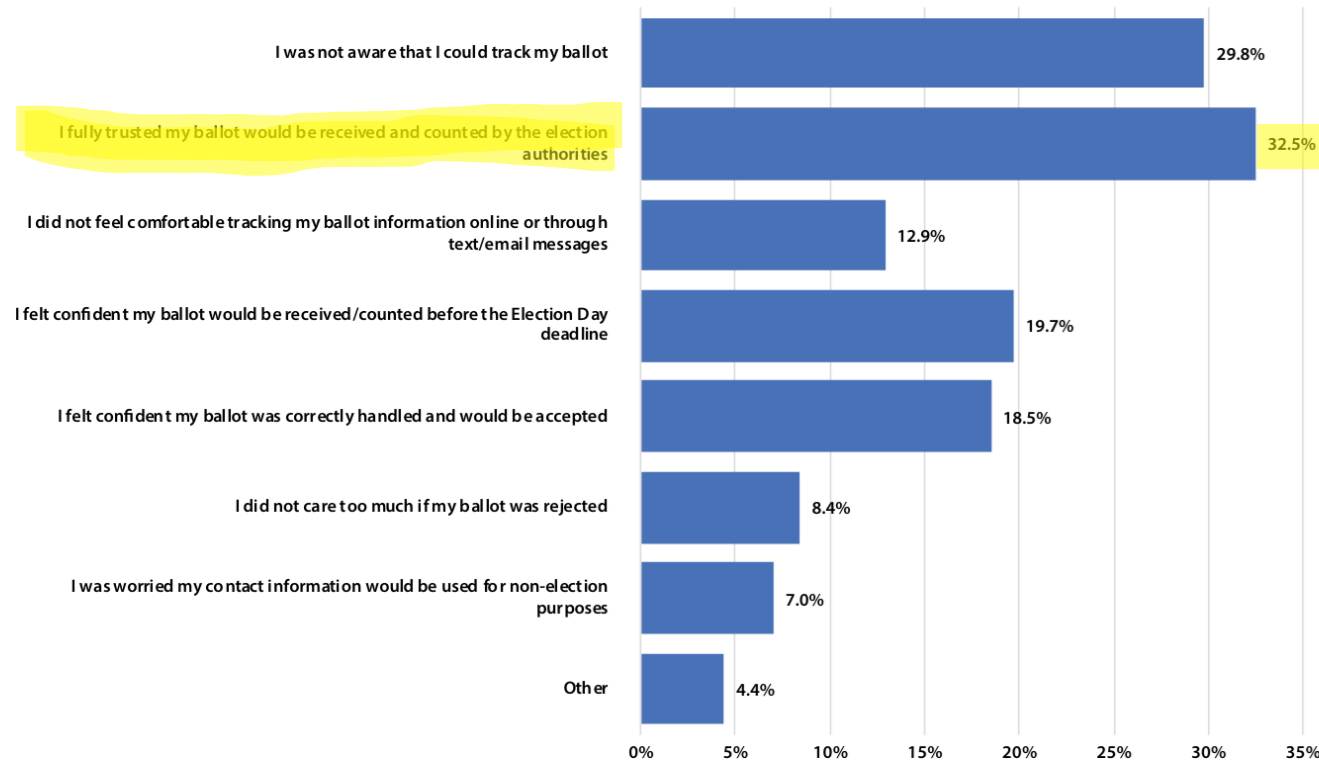
**Respondents under the age of 45 had higher concerns about their ballot being rejected, while older respondents were concerned about their ballot not being received**

**Democrats signed up for BallotTrax for reassurance their ballot was received and counted at higher rates than Republicans**

# The most common reason respondents said they did not sign up for BallotTrax was trust in the process

**FIGURE 10**

Which of the following describe reasons you chose not to track your ballot? Select all that apply.



Data Source: 2023 CID California Voter Experience survey



# Asian-American respondents said they did not sign up for BallotTrax over security concerns at the highest rates

**Table 4 - Which of the following describe reasons you chose not to track your ballot? Select all that apply. By Race and Ethnicity**

	<b>Asian American</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Latino</b>	<b>White, non-Latino</b>
<b>I was not aware that I could track my ballot</b>	32.1%	39.1%	35.1%	25.7%
<b>I fully trusted my ballot would be received and counted by the election authorities</b>	28.4%	28.3%	29.2%	36.1%
<b>I did not feel comfortable tracking my ballot information online or through text/email messages</b>	23.5%	13.0%	12.9%	11.6%
<b>I felt confident my ballot would be received/counted before the Election Day deadline</b>	18.5%	18.1%	16.9%	20.9%
<b>I felt confident my ballot was correctly handled and would be accepted</b>	13.6%	10.1%	14.2%	22.1%
<b>I did not care too much if my ballot was rejected</b>	11.1%	8.0%	10.2%	7.2%
<b>I was worried my contact information would be used for non-election purposes</b>	11.1%	7.2%	7.5%	5.9%
<b>Other</b>	1.2%	2.9%	3.5%	5.4%

Data Source: 2023 CID California Voter Experience survey



**Young respondents aged 18 to 24 were the least aware of the tracking tool across all age groups**

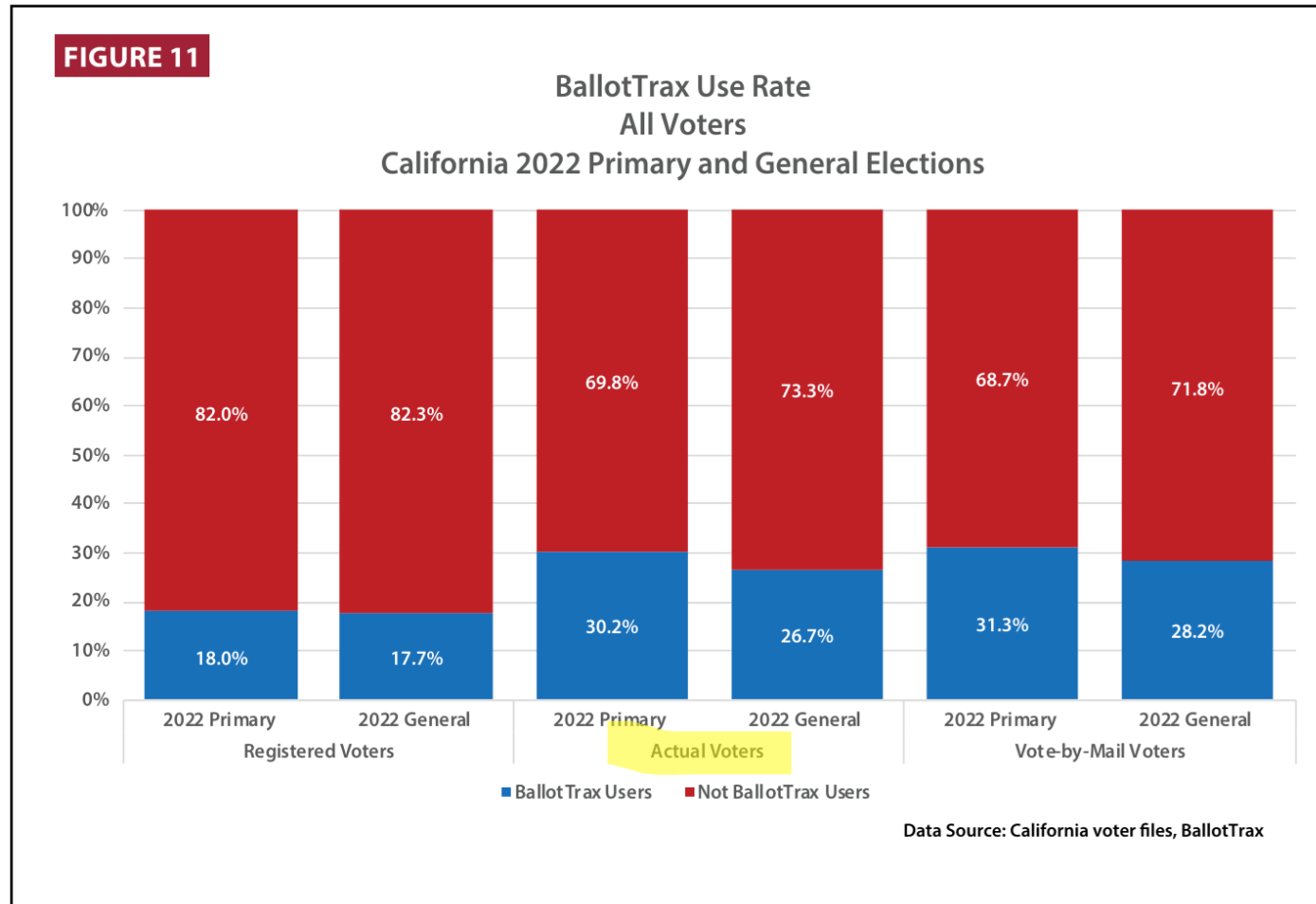
**Democrats stated trust in the process as a reason they did not sign up for BallotTrax at higher rates than Republicans**

# Actual BallotTrax Use

## BallotTrax Sign Ups in CA

- Currently, approx. five million Californians are signed up for BallotTrax out of 22 million registered voters.
- Numbers of accounts have stayed stable since 2020.

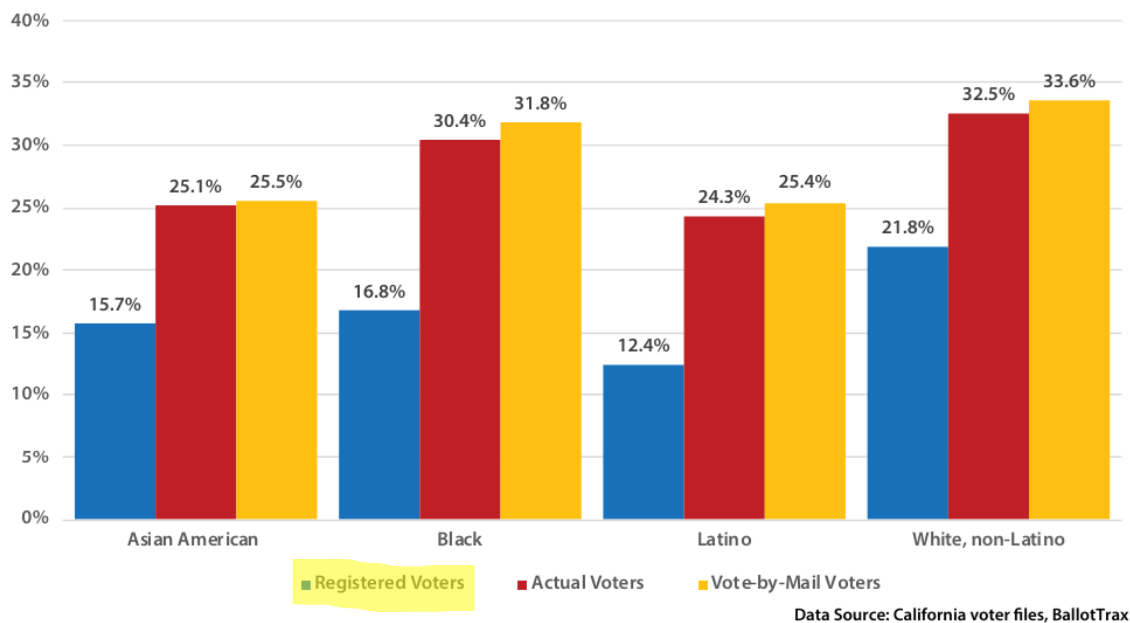
# A larger share of voters used BallotTrax to track their ballots in the 2022 primary election than in the 2022 general election



# Registrants of color had lower BallotTrax use rates than white, non Latino registrants

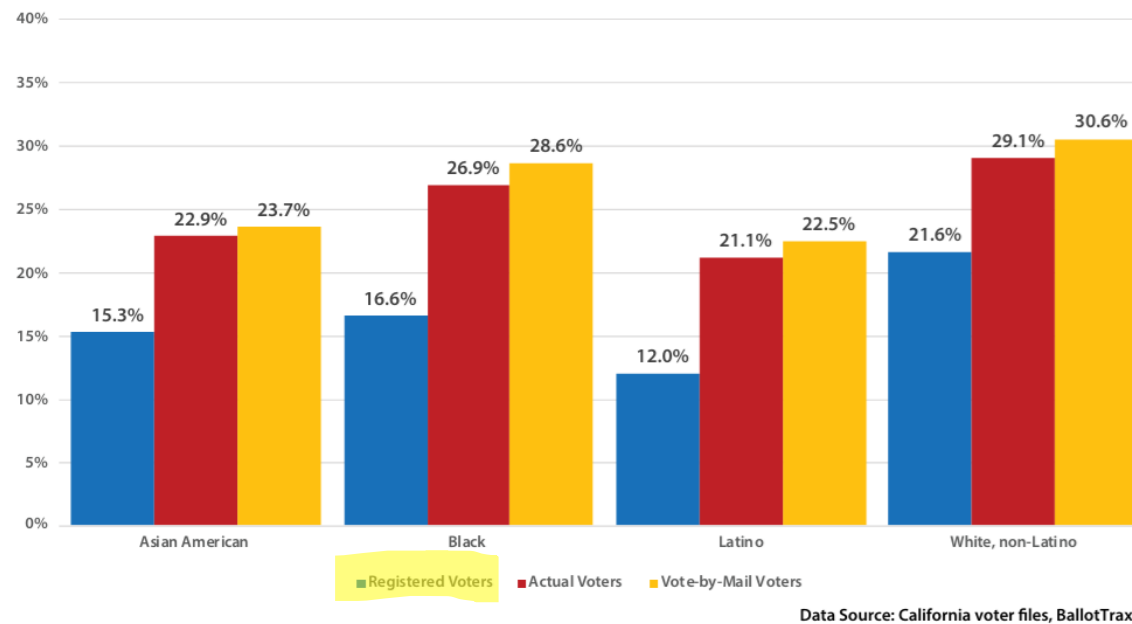
**FIGURE 12**

**BallotTrax Use Rates  
Race and Ethnicity  
California 2022 Primary Election**



**FIGURE 13**

**BallotTrax Use Rates  
Race and Ethnicity  
California 2022 General Election**



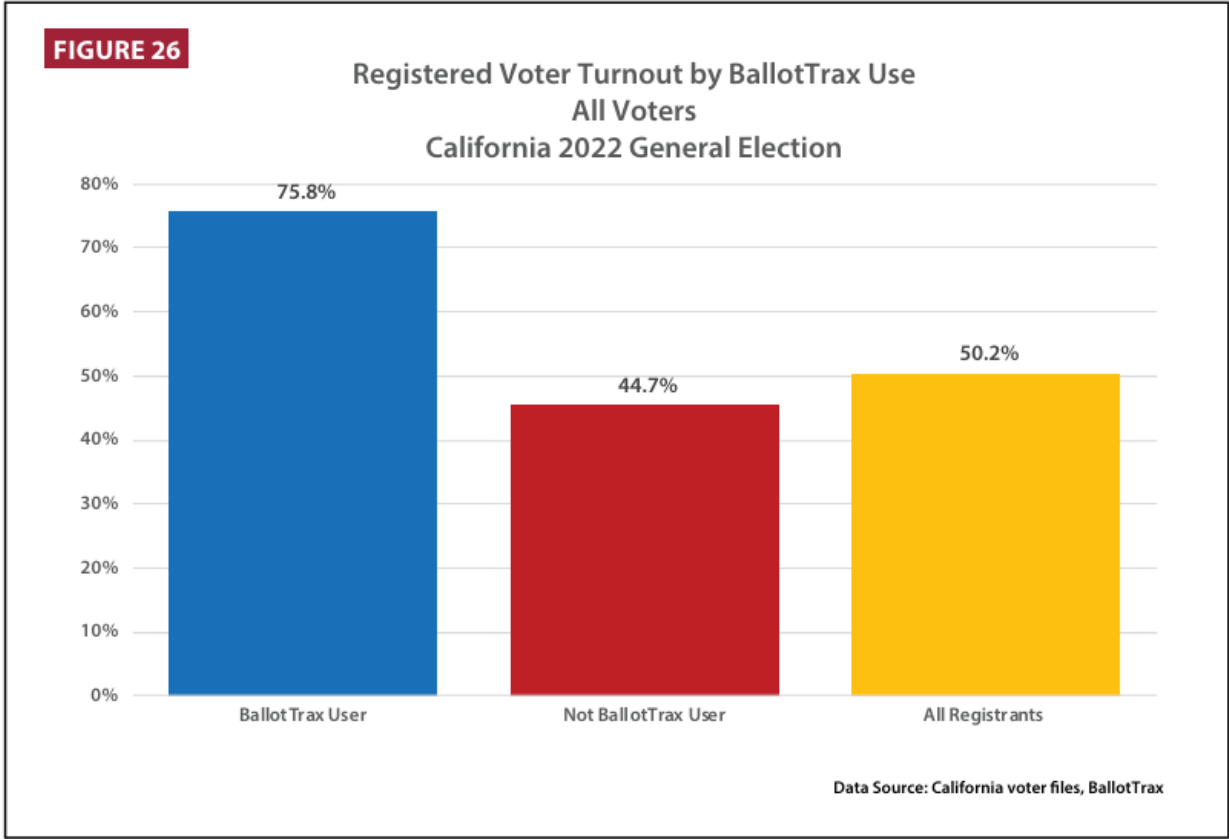
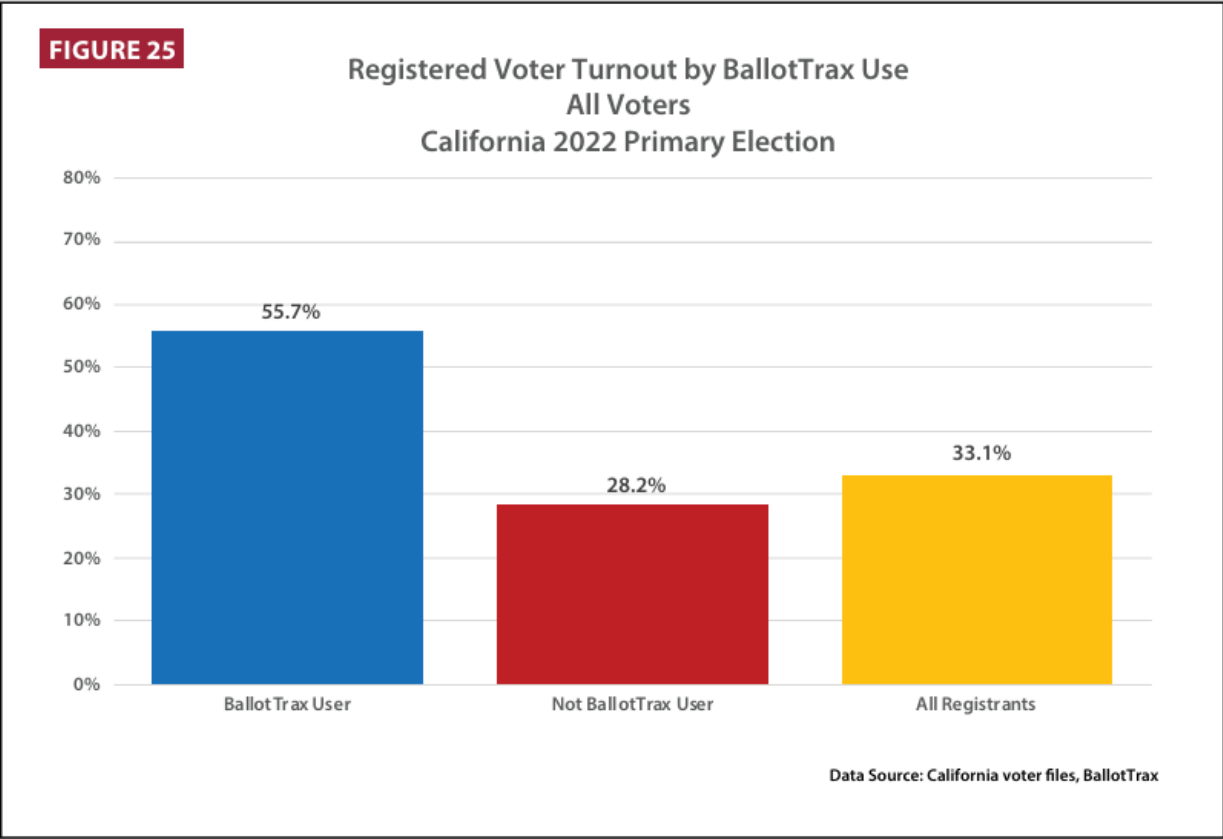
**BallotTrax use in both elections increased with age, peaking among mid-aged registrants and voters**

**BallotTrax was notably more common among registered Democrats than any other party affiliation**

# Registered Voter Turnout

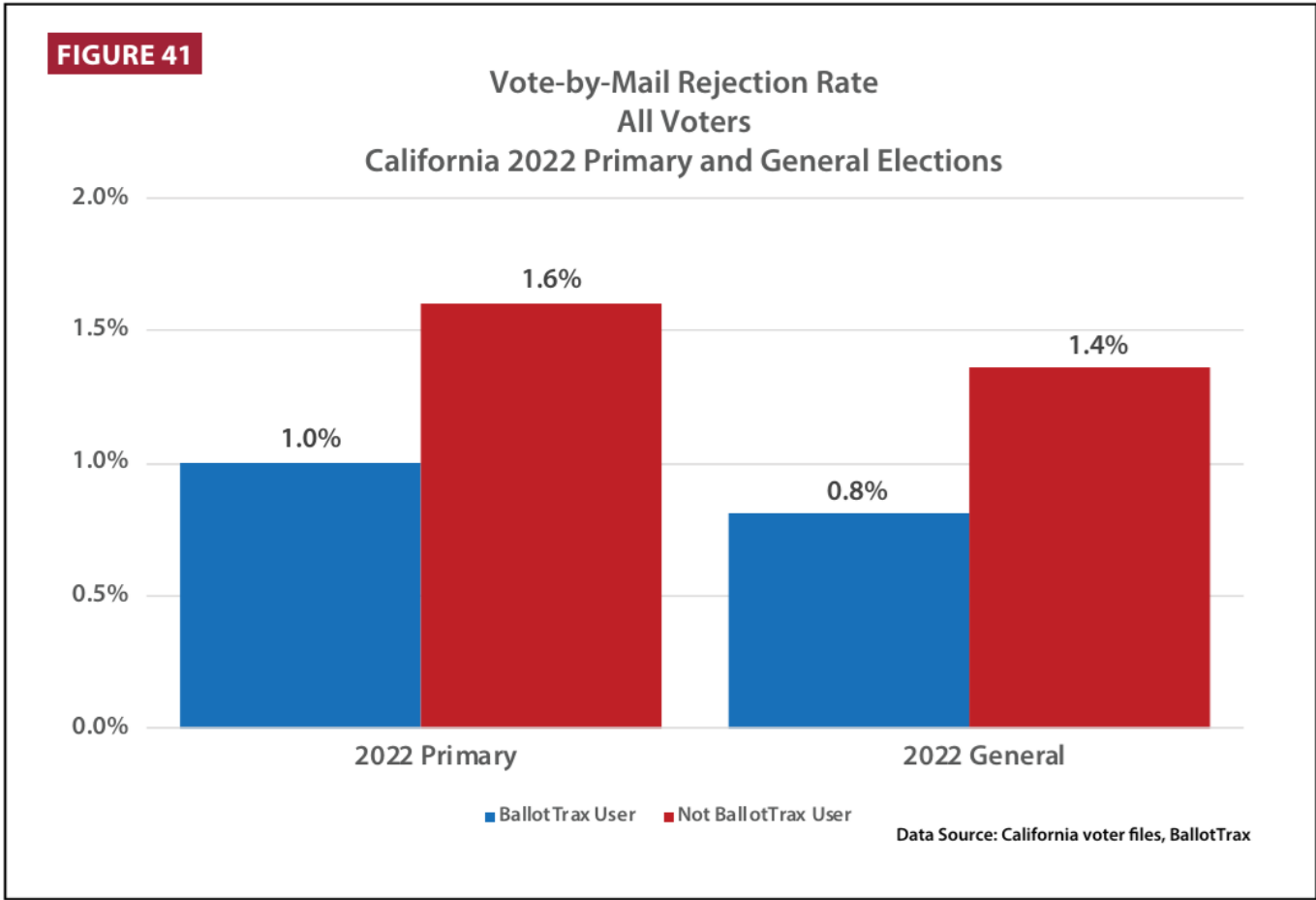


# BallotTrax users had notably higher registered voter turnout rates than non-BallotTrax users in both elections

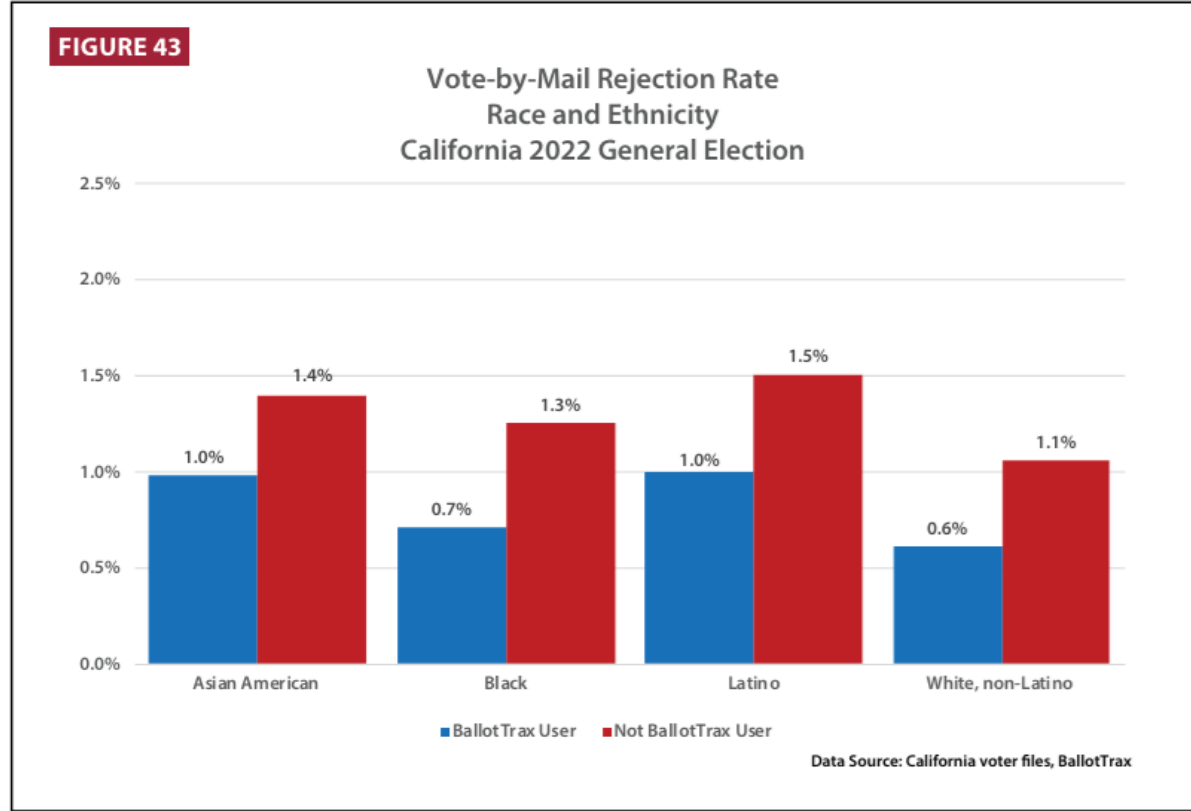
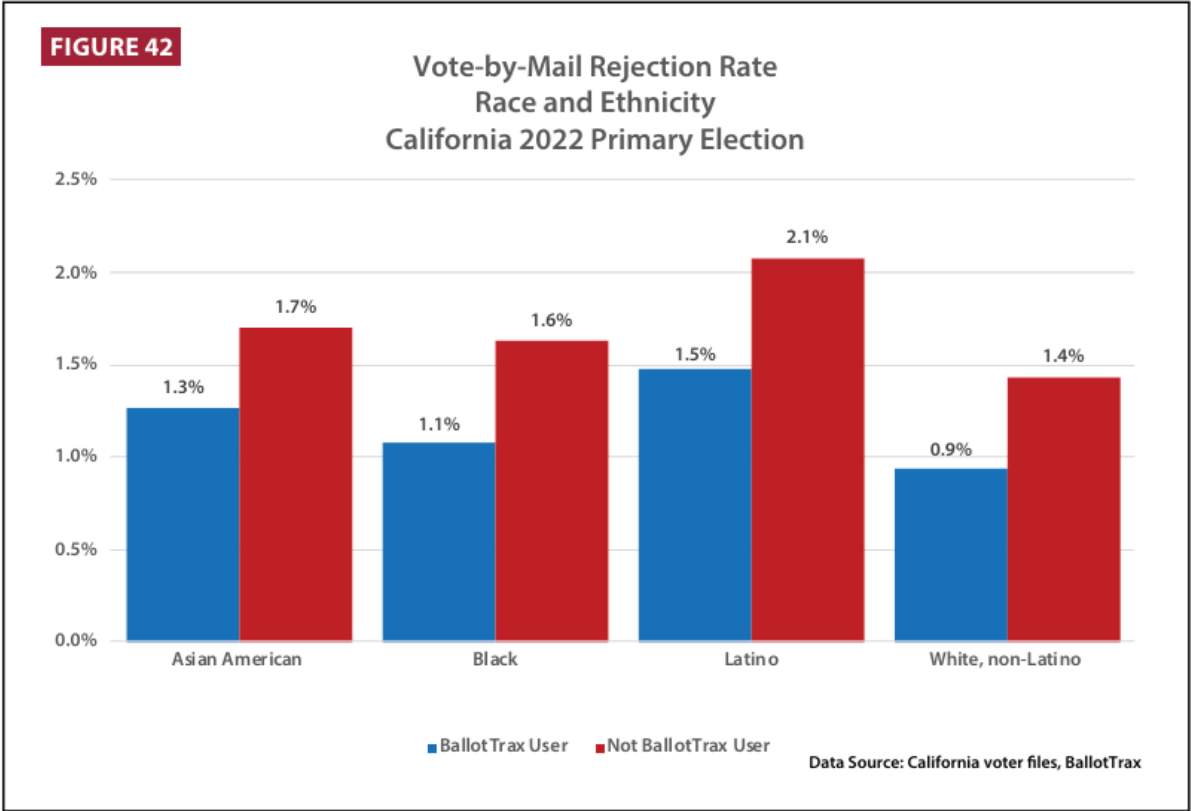


# Vote-by-Mail Ballot Rejection

# In the 2022 primary and general elections, the vote-by-mail rejection rate was at least fifty percent higher among non-BallotTrax users than among BallotTrax users



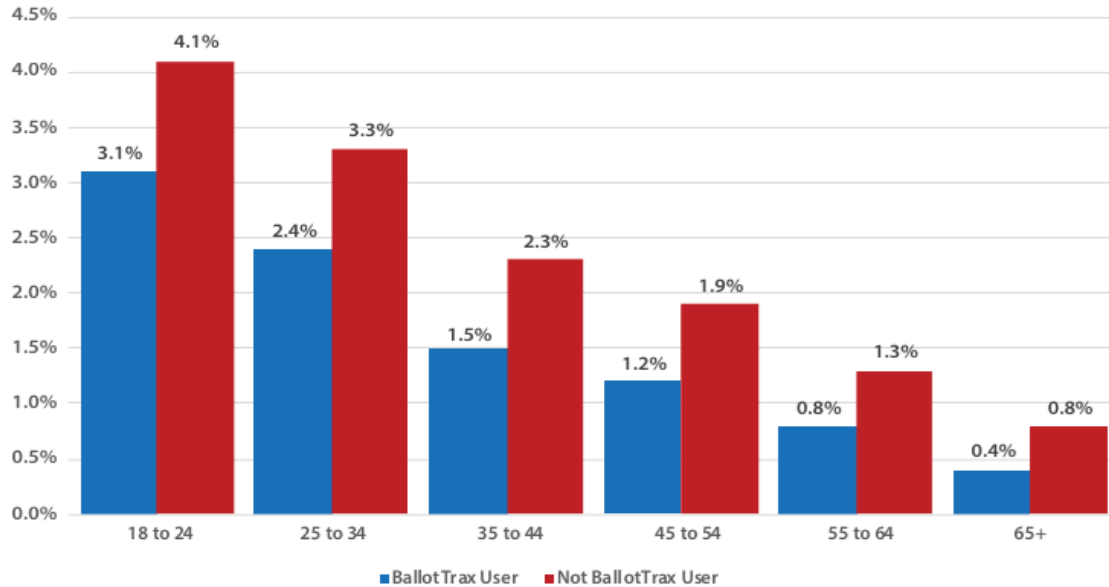
# BallotTrax users of color had similar vote-by-mail rejection gaps from white, non-Latino BallotTrax users as their counterparts not using the tracking tool



# BallotTrax users aged 18 to 24 had a smaller difference in vote-by-mail rejection rates from BallotTrax users aged 65 and older compared to non-BallotTrax users

**FIGURE 44**

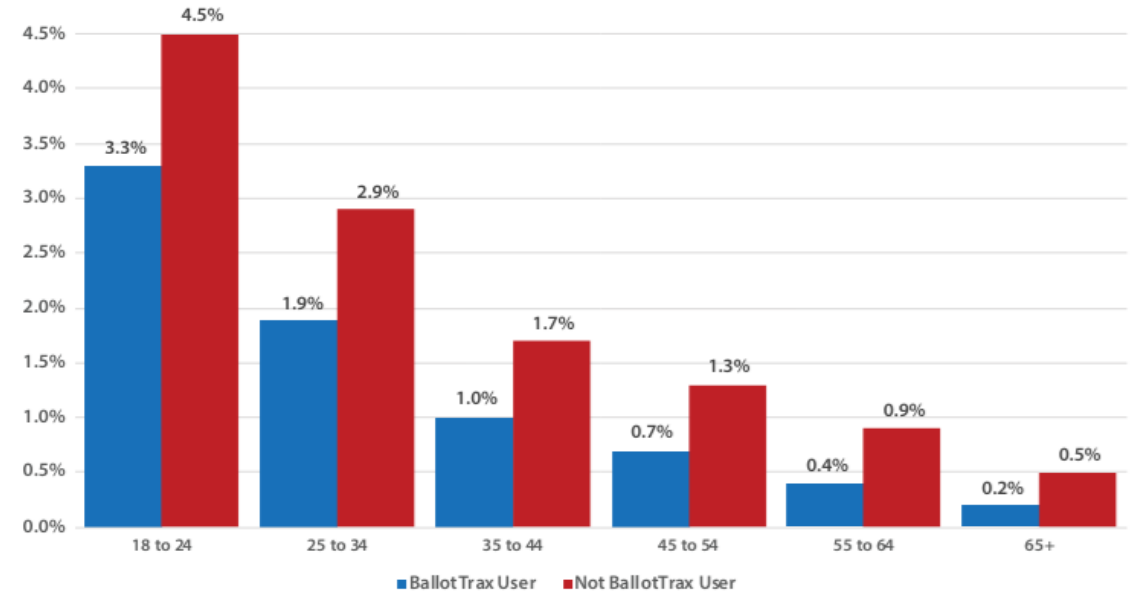
**Vote-by-Mail Rejection Rate  
Age Groups  
California 2022 Primary Election**



Data Source: California voter files, BallotTrax

**FIGURE 45**

**Vote-by-Mail Rejection Rate  
Age Groups  
California 2022 General Election**



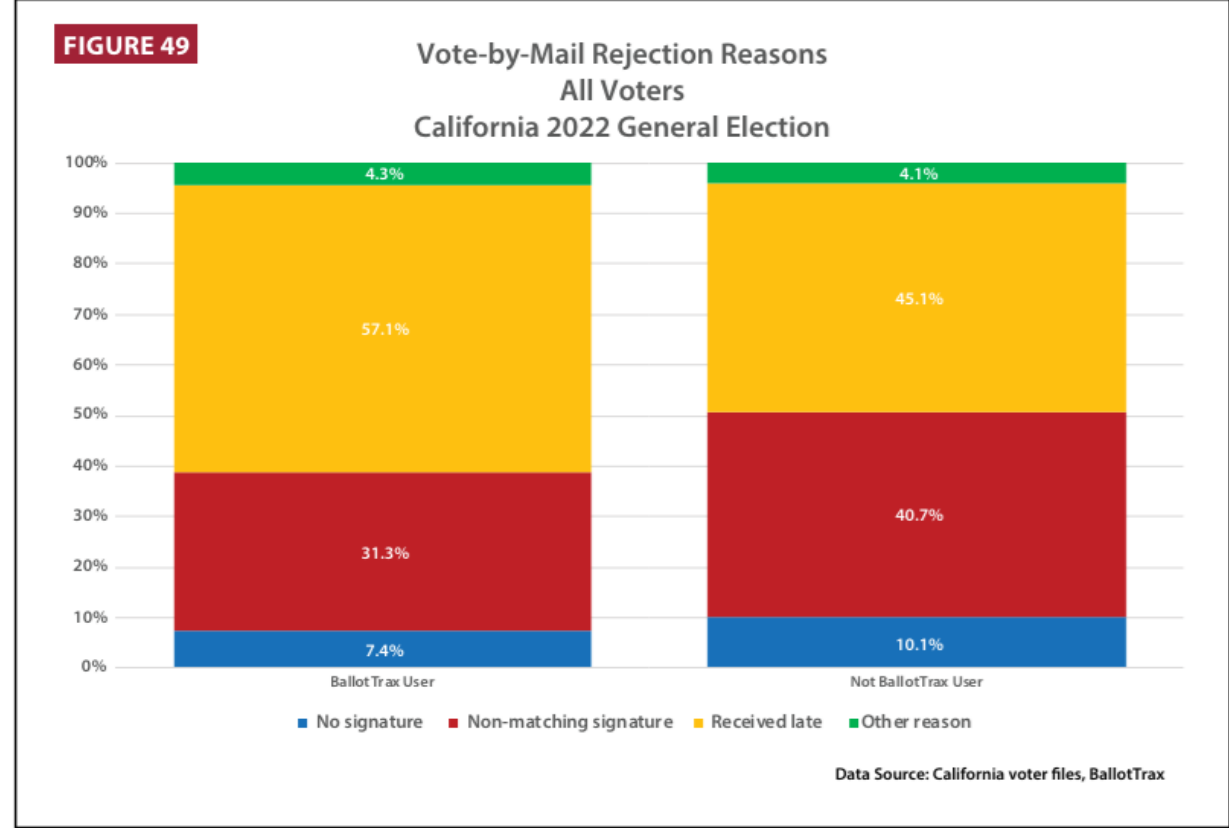
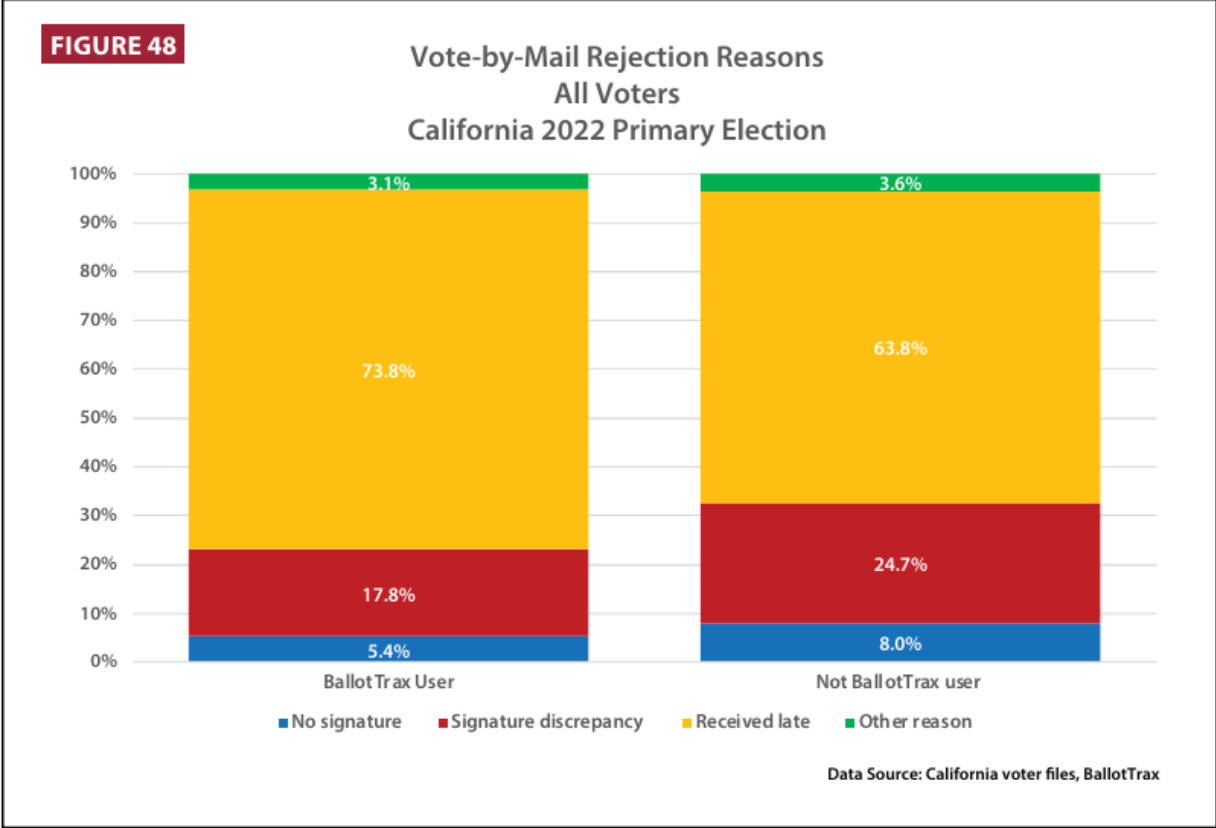
Data Source: California voter files, BallotTrax

**Vote-by-mail rejection rates were similar between Democratic and Republican BallotTrax users**

**Democratic non-BallotTrax users had higher rejection rates than their Republican counterparts**

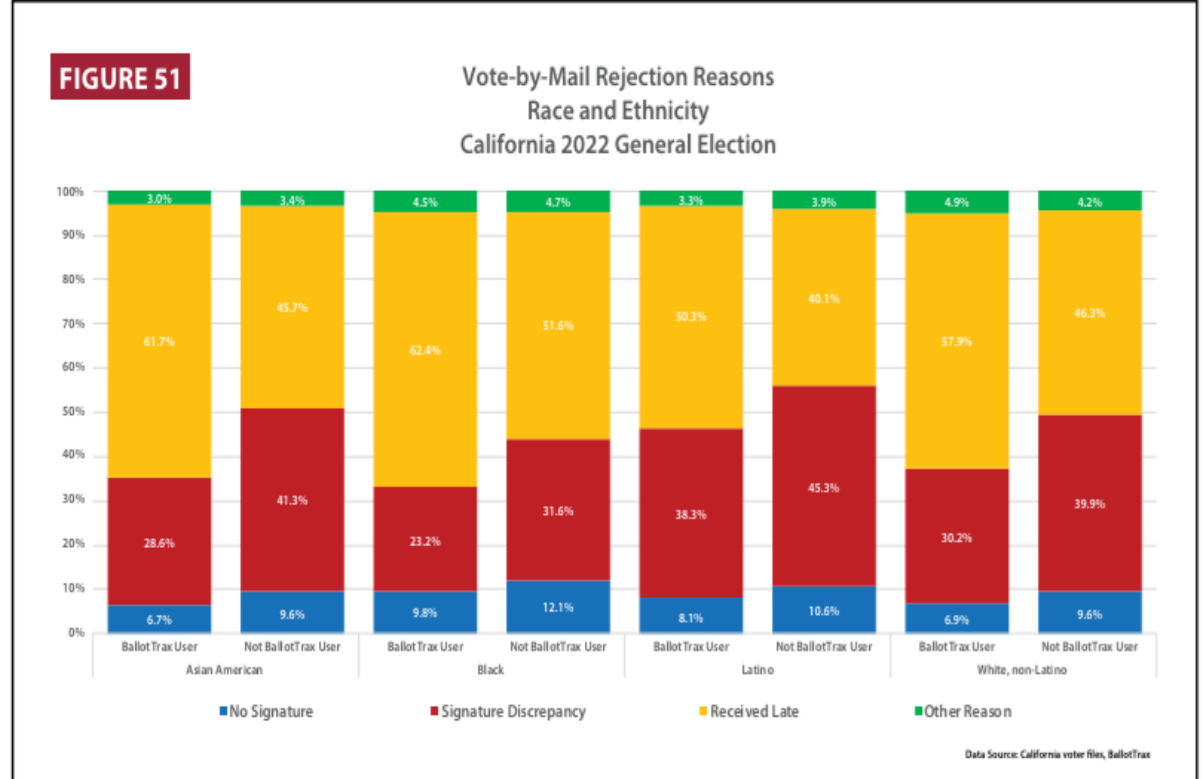
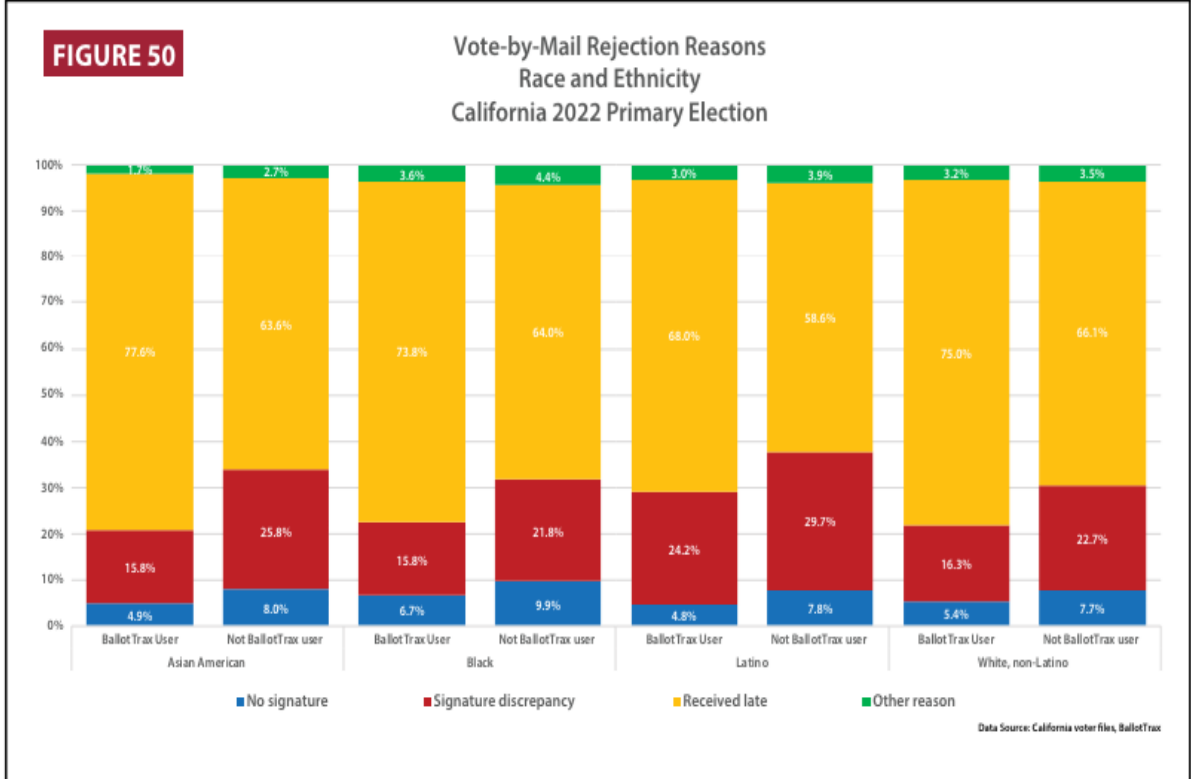
# Reasons for Vote-by-Mail Ballot Rejection

# Rejected ballots cast by BallotTrax users had lower rates of signature issues than those cast by non-BallotTrax users





# Late vote-by-mail ballots were more common among BallotTrax users of all racial and ethnic groups than among nonBallotTrax users



**While BallotTrax users of all ages had lower rates of signature issues than non-BallotTrax users, young voters had the largest difference**

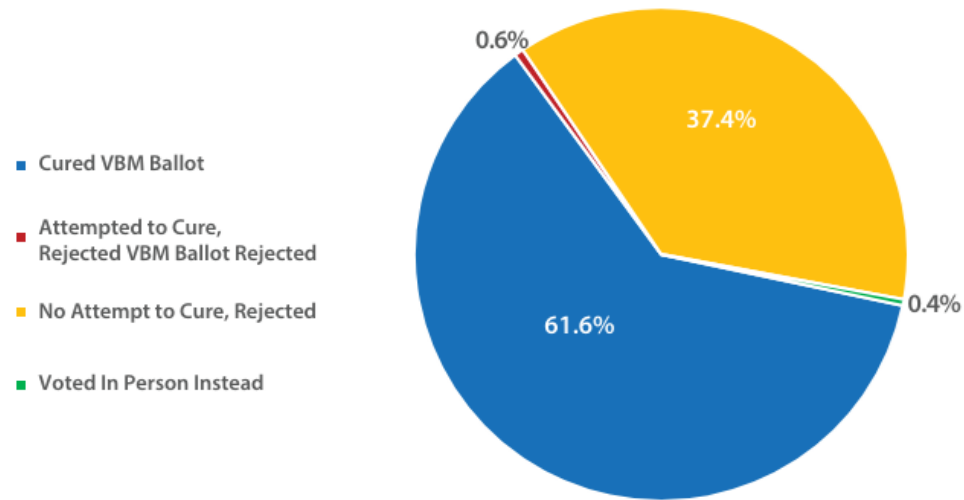
**Republican BallotTrax and non-BallotTrax users had smaller differences in vote-by-mail rejection reasons than Democrats**

# Vote-by-Mail Ballot Cure Rates

# The majority of curable vote-by-mail ballots cast by BallotTrax users were corrected and counted in the 2022 primary election

FIGURE 56

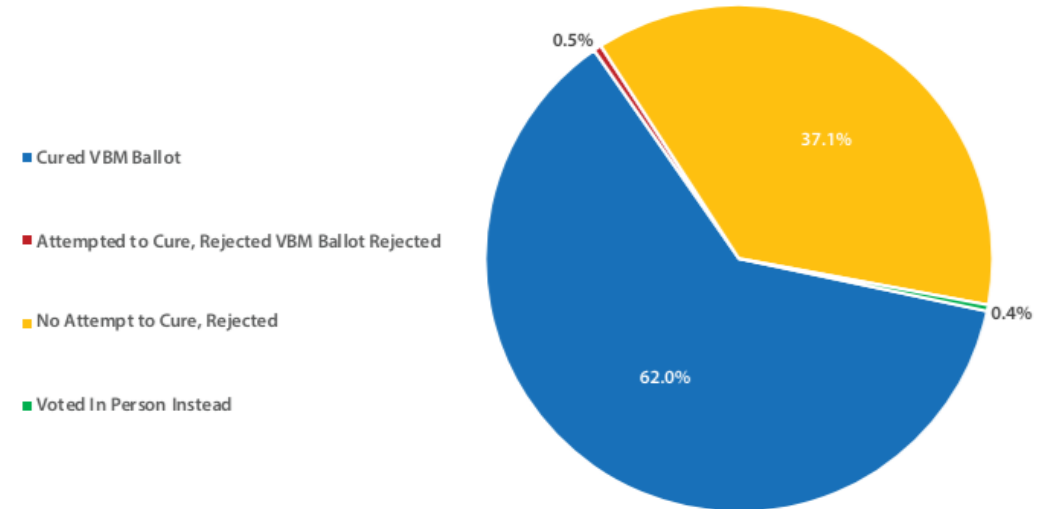
Curable Vote-by-Mail Ballots - BallotTrax Users  
All Voters  
California 2022 Primary Election



Data Source: California voter files, BallotTrax

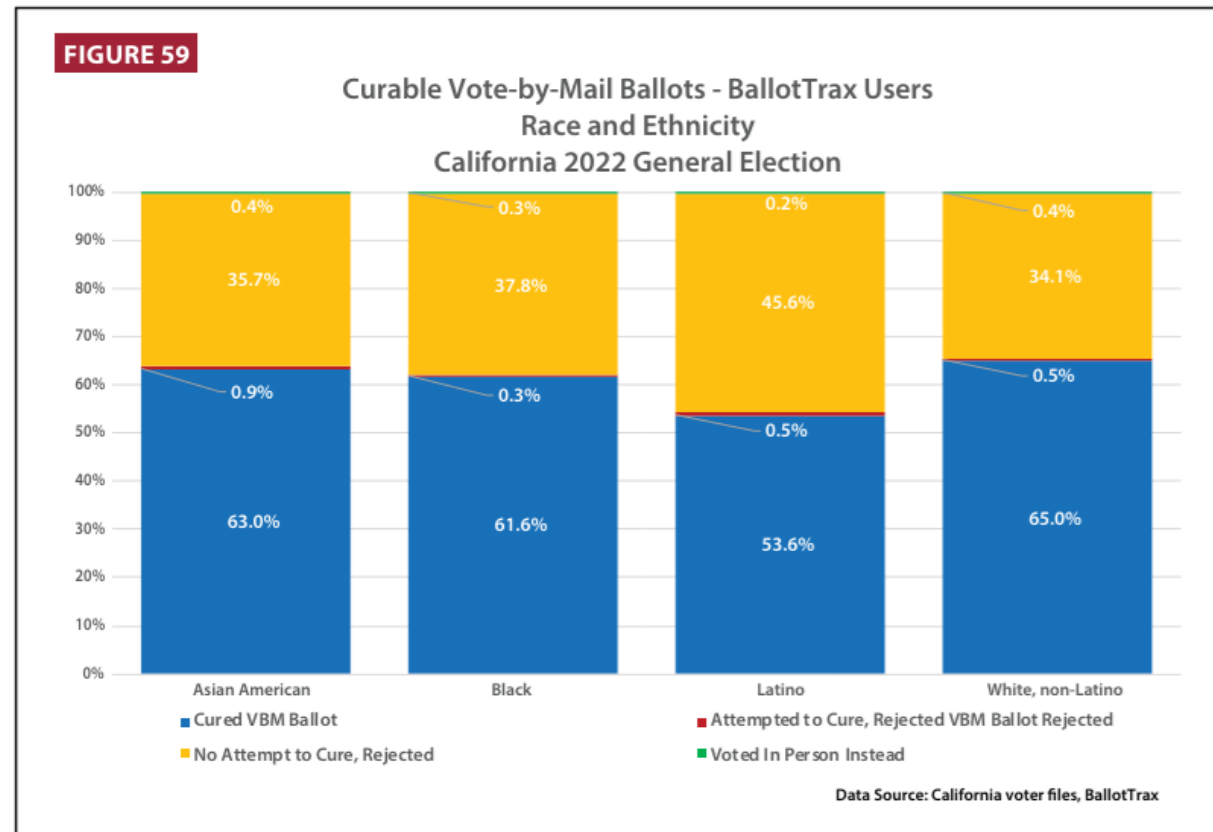
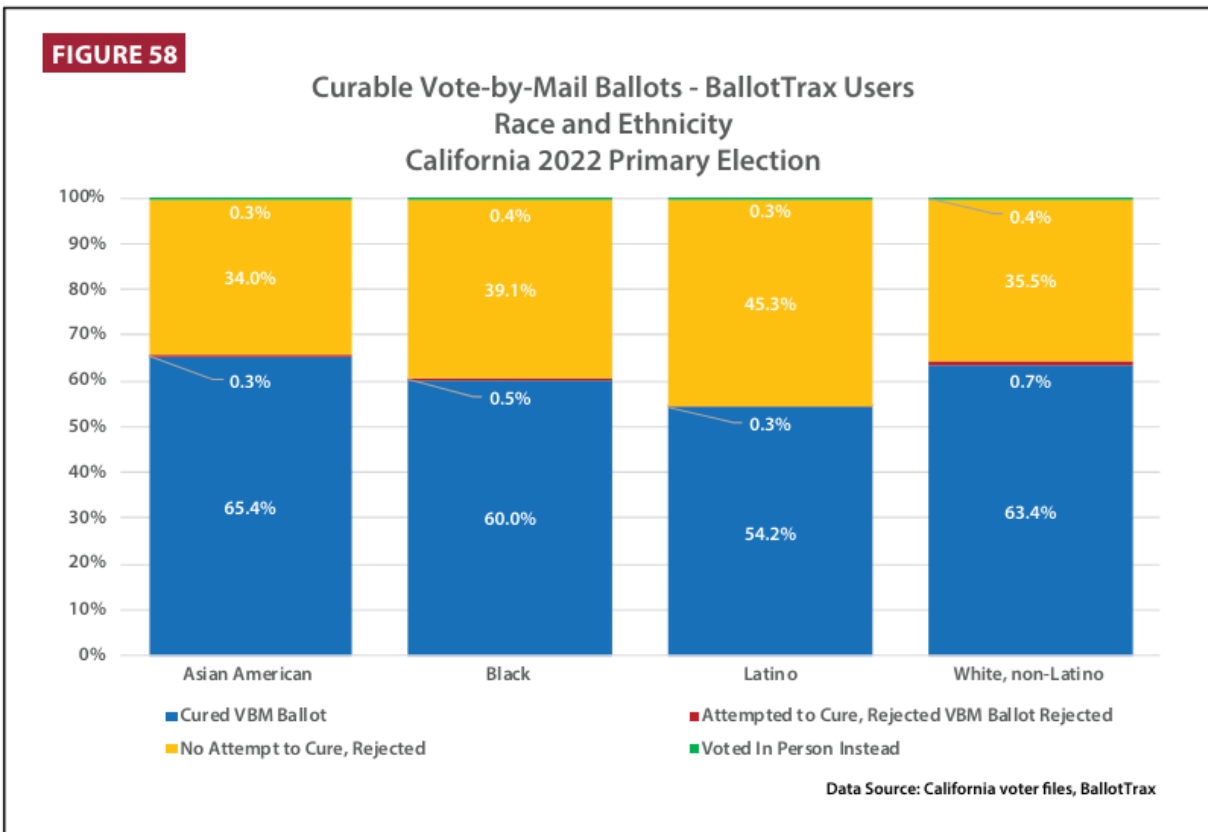
FIGURE 57

Curable Vote-by-Mail Ballots - BallotTrax Users  
All Voters  
California 2022 General Election



Data Source: California voter files, BallotTrax

# Asian-American BallotTrax users cured their rejected ballots at higher rates than other BallotTrax users of color, while Latino BallotTrax users had by far the lowest cure rate



**BallotTrax users aged 65 and over had a vote-by-mail cure rate sixty percent higher than those aged 18 to 24**

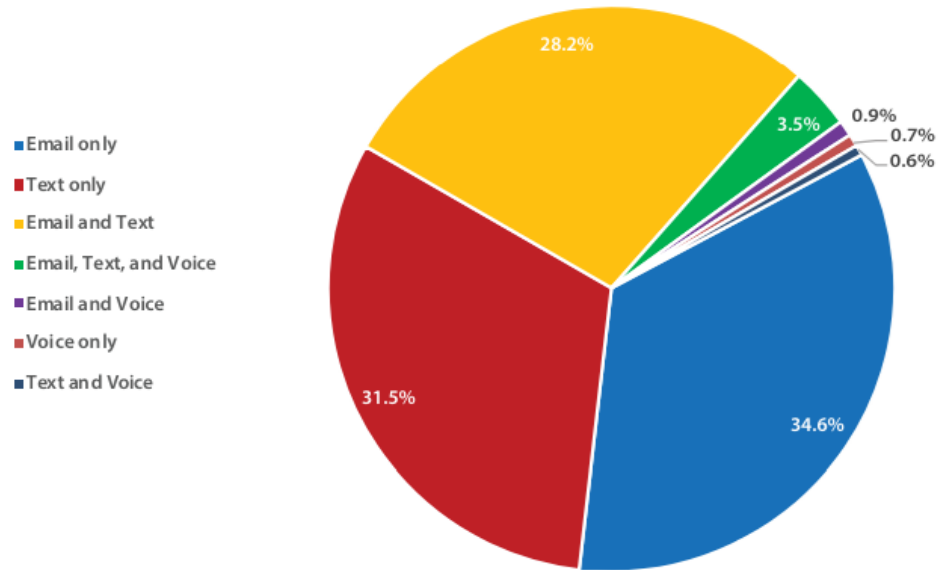
**Republican BallotTrax users cured their rejected vote-by-mail ballots at lower rates than Democratic BallotTrax users**

# BallotTrax Message Delivery

# In both the 2022 primary and general elections, the majority of BallotTrax users preferred either email or text notifications about their ballot status

**FIGURE 64**

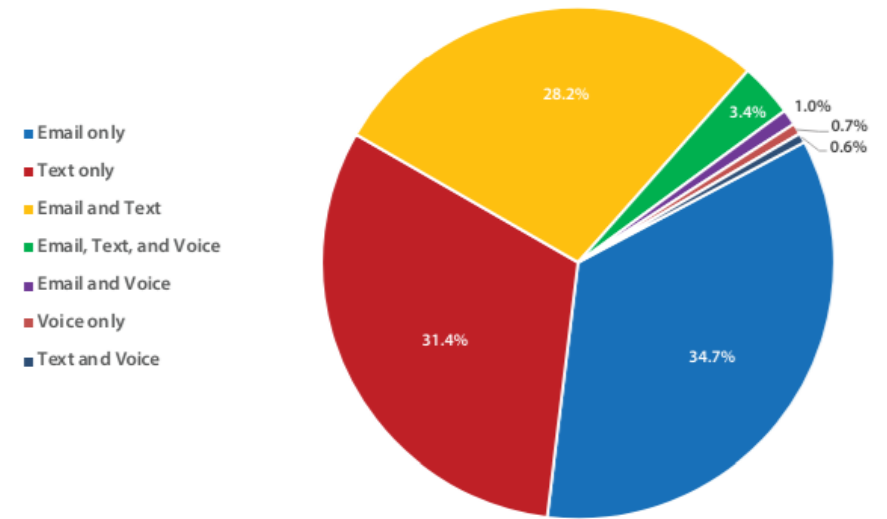
BallotTrax Message Delivery Preferences  
All Voters  
California 2022 Primary Election



Data Source: California voter files, BallotTrax

**FIGURE 65**

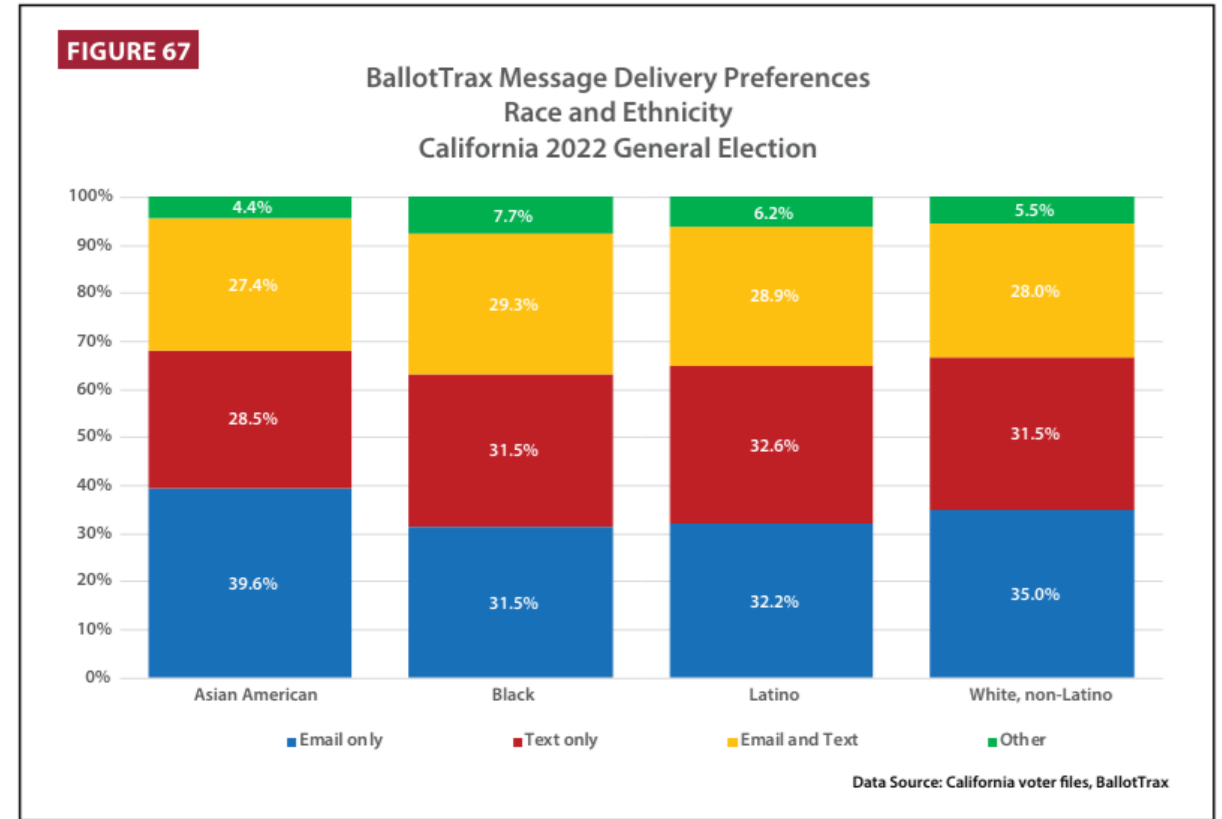
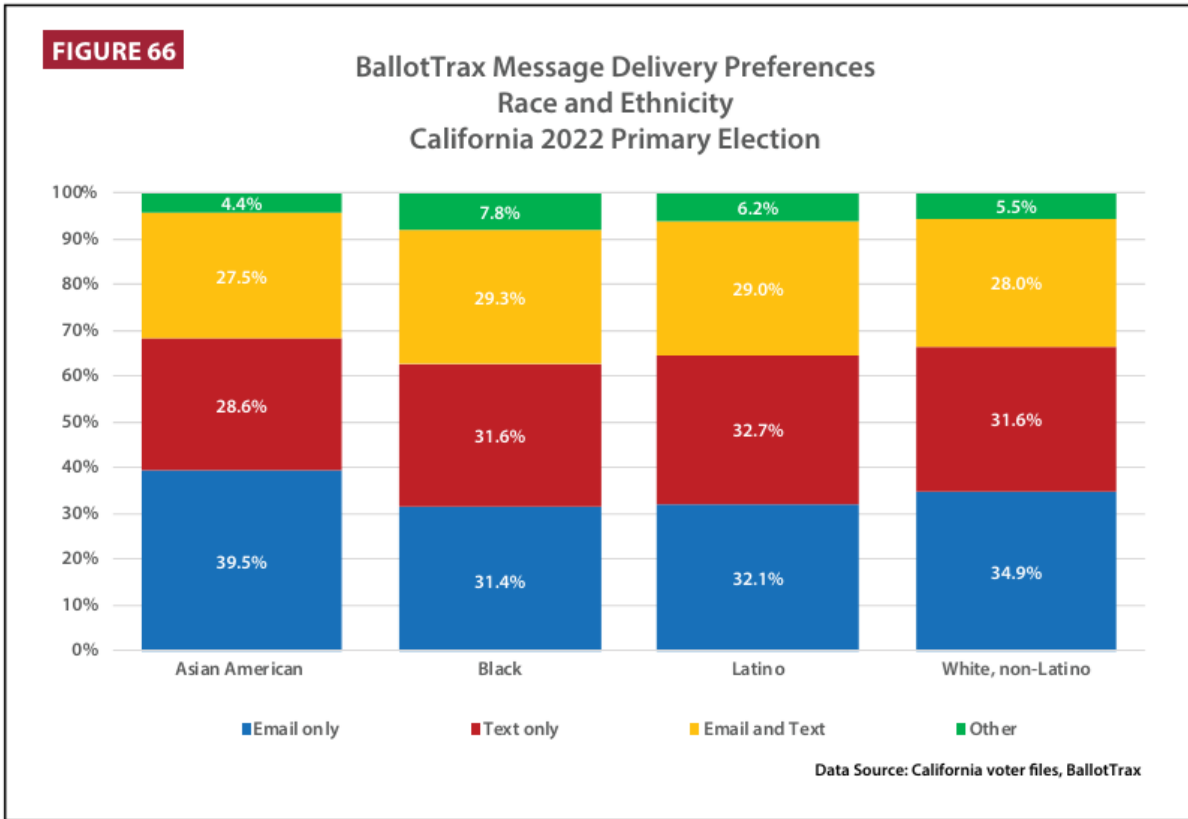
BallotTrax Message Delivery Preferences  
All Voters  
California 2022 General Election



Data Source: California voter files, BallotTrax



# Asian-American BallotTrax users selected email only as their message delivery system at higher rates than other racial and ethnic groups in the 2022 primary and general elections



## **BallotTrax message preferences fluctuated across age groups**

**Republican BallotTrax users preferred to receive ballot updates through text messages only at higher rates than Democrats**

**Democrats elected to receive both email and text notifications at higher rates than Republicans**

Questions?

# Thank you!

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