MONROE COUNTY
BOARD OF ELECTIONS

2022 Annual Report to the Monroe County Legislature

Lisa Polito Nicolay
Commissioner

Peter Elder
Deputy

You're Right To Vote.

Jackie Ortiz
Commissioner

Natalie Sheppard
Deputy

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MISSION STATEMENT

WE WILL PROVIDE, AS A NEW YORK STATE MANDATED DEPARTMENT OF MONROE COUNTY, THROUGH A SKILLED AND DEDICATED STAFF, IN COLLABORATION WITH FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, FOR THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF VOTER PARTICIPATION IN HONEST AND FAIR ELECTIONS FOR ALL THE CITIZENS OF MONROE COUNTY, NEW YORK.

WHAT WAS NEW FOR 2022?

LANGUAGE ACCESS DEVICES (LAD) – A LAD was available at every Early Voting location and Election Day polling site for the 2022 General Election. A LAD provides a voter with on-demand live video access to a professional interpreter, available in 40 different languages, including American Sign Language.

ATTORNEY – MCBOE added a full-time attorney to our staff, in order to provide guidance to the Commissioners and ensure compliance with election law, as well as federal, state and local regulations.

REDISTRICTING – MCBOE provided guidance and assistance with local redistricting efforts and implemented voter systems updates due to congressional and state legislature redistricting.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS – NYS Election law governing absentee processing changed significantly in 2022.

CHARGING MUNICIPALITIES/AGENCIES – In 2022, MCBOE began charging municipalities and outside agencies for assisting with off-cycle elections. These charges include machine delivery fees, ballot creation and printing fees, and charges for other supplies. Our fee schedule is included in the Monroe County Budget as well as the MCBOE website. This will result in approximately $5,000 of additional annual revenue for MCBOE.
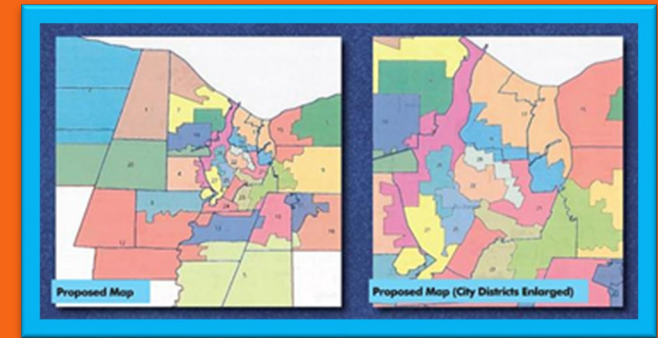
REDISTRICTING MONROE COUNTY

Due to delays in the transmittal of the 2020 Census Data from the United States Department of Commerce to local governments, candidates for Monroe County Legislature were forced to run on existing district lines, which were adopted in 2011.

Following a failed effort in the waning months of 2021, the redistricting of the 29 Monroe County Legislature districts recommenced in 2022 with the appointment of a new five-member Redistricting Commission, which included both Commissioner Nicolay and Commissioner Ortiz.

To further the Commission's efforts, MCBOE hired a nationally recognized redistricting consultant to assist with mapping and statistical analysis. Additionally, the Board provided experienced in-house technical assistance and guidance throughout the process.

After conducting six public hearings, throughout Monroe County, during the month of May 2022, the Commission adopted a redistricting plan on September 6, 2022, by a majority vote, which was subsequently approved by the County Legislature but vetoed by the County Executive.

REDISTRICTING MONROE COUNTY
- CONTINUED

On December 23, the Commission adopted a revised redistricting plan, by a unanimous vote, which the County Legislature approved in a bipartisan vote of 27-2, on December 29, following a public hearing. County Executive Bello signed the plan into law on January 5, 2023.

The new bipartisan redistricting plan creates six county legislature districts in which Black voting age residents are the majority of the population, with 50% or more. Five county legislature districts are wholly located within the City of Rochester. Six county legislature districts blend areas of the City of Rochester and suburban Monroe County towns. Eighteen county legislature districts are wholly located in suburban Monroe County towns. No villages are split between county legislature districts. Using the United States Census Bureau's Total Population (Adj) 2020, the ideal population of a county legislature district in Monroe County is 26,282. Accordingly, the population of all twenty-nine county legislature districts fall within the maximum allowed deviation of 5% (+/-), as proscribed by New York State Law.

Using the new redistricting plan, MCBOE will map and reassign voters to county legislature districts for the 2023 Primary and General Elections.

REDISTRICTING NEW YORK

New York voters approved a constitutional amendment in 2014, that created a redistricting commission to draw state senate, state assembly and congressional districts, beginning with the 2020 Census. Following a deadlock on the commission, the New York State Legislature drew and passed new lines, as allowed by the amendment. On February 3, 2022, Governor Hochul signed the state legislature and congressional redistricting bills into law.

Following litigation and rulings by a state trial court, as well as an appellate court, the New York State Court of Appeals ruled the state senate and congressional lines to be unconstitutional. The trial court appointed a special master to draw new lines and ordered a bifurcated primary election, with state senate and congressional primary elections held on August 23, while all others were held on the previously scheduled date of June 28.

As a result of a subsequent court challenge to the state assembly lines, the new districts were allowed to remain in place for the 2022 Election but the redistricting commission was ordered to submit new lines for the state legislature's approval by April 2023, which will be in place for the 2024 Primary and General Election.

MCBOE successfully mapped and reassigned voters to the new state legislature and congressional districts for the 2022 Primary and General Elections. Likewise, it will do so for the new state assembly districts, once they are finalized, for 2024.
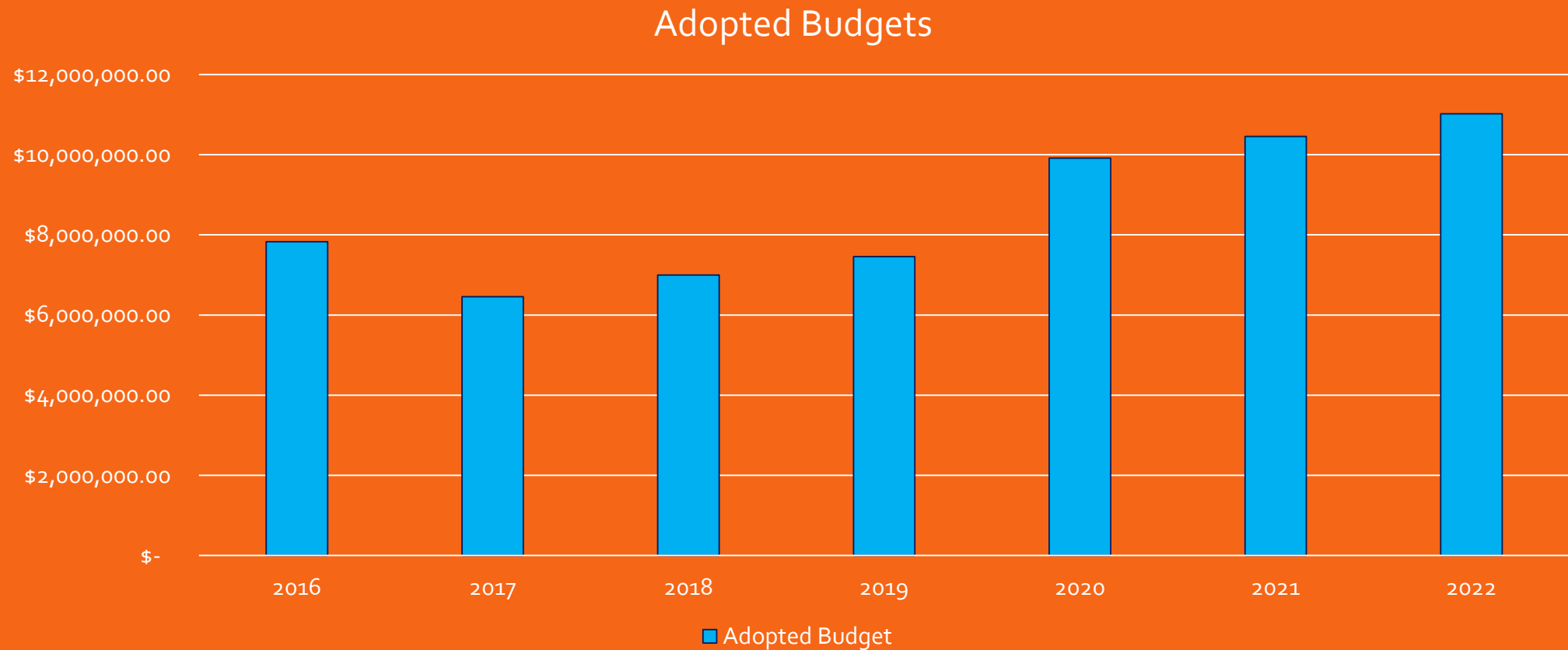
BUDGET 2022
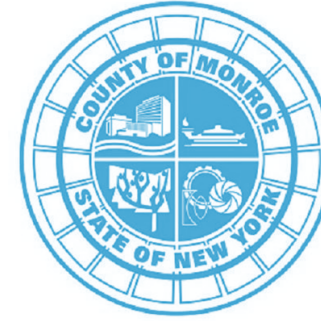
The entire budget of the MCBOE is charged back to the taxpayers of Monroe County. The total adopted budget for the MCBOE in 2022 was $11,016,661. This is an increase of $566,319 (5%) from the 2021 adopted budget. We are grateful to the Monroe County Legislature for fully funding our requested operating budget. It is allocated to the following areas:

- Personnel costs including salaries and benefits

- Data processing charges

- Rent for three locations

- Voting machine parts and repair costs

- Postage and office supplies

- Commercial services which include: ballot printing, Accupay Systems payroll, election security, envelope printing, voting machine delivery, Mailchimp email service, and election day taxi cab service

- Professional services which include: election inspectors, election coordinators and site chairs, Spanish interpreters, and rental of polling sites

BUDGET COMPARISON BY YEAR

Adopted Budgets

Bar chart titled "Adopted Budgets" showing Adopted Budget values by year (2016–2022). Y-axis ranges from $- to $12,000,000.00 in $2,000,000.00 increments.

Legend: Adopted Budget

STAFF 2022

Two Election Commissioners (one Republican and one Democrat), as a bipartisan team, make up the MCBOE, each serving a staggered four-year term. The Commissioners are recommended by their respective county political committees and elected by the Monroe County Legislature. The Commissioners are each assisted by a Deputy Commissioner as required per Election Law 3-204.

In 2022 the Monroe County Board of Elections employed 47 full-time employees as well as an additional 4-8 seasonal staff members at various points throughout the year. MCBOE staff represents individuals enrolled in the Republican or Democratic Parties, as mandated by New York State Election Law.

The Monroe County Board of Elections (MCBOE) conducts all National, State, County, City, Town, and Village elections held within Monroe County. Although the Board of Elections is a county agency, the structure, responsibilities, and duties are mandated by New York State and Federal Election Laws. The New York State Board of Elections provides regulations and advice on how to administer elections and procedures to meet both Federal and State Election guidelines.
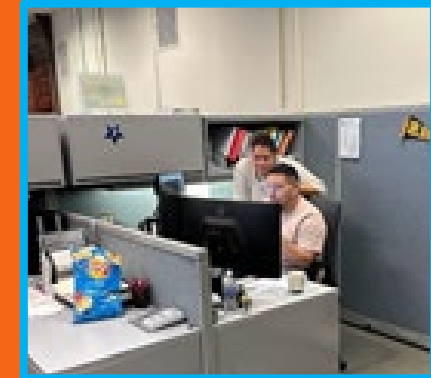
POLLING LOCATIONS 2022

Securing polling locations that meet our legal requirements (especially post COVID-19) is always challenging. Ideally, we want spacious areas that are fully ADA accessible, offer ample parking and lighting, and provide sufficient cellular connectivity. Moving forward, our goal is to provide consistent polling locations to all voters. This is a good example of where quality really is more important than quantity.

By the close of 2022, we completed a poll site inventory of all sites including documenting square footage, parking spaces, ADA accessibility, cellular connectivity and more. This will provide the information necessary to establish a minimum threshold for all polling locations, further working towards our goal of uniform, fair and accessible locations for all voters in Monroe County.

In 2022 we provided 241 polling locations for the Primary Election and 243 in the General Election.

VOTER ACCESSIBILITY 2022

- EVERY polling location is ADA accessible!

- In 2022 the MCBOE continued its commitment to improving accessibility to the election process for all persons. The BMD (IC2) voting machine allows individuals with nearly any disability to vote independently and is available at every polling site.

- MCBOE printed election materials, such as the voter registration form, absentee ballot request, and "Voter's Bill of Rights" are available in Spanish and Braille.

- American Sign Language interpreters were added to select Early Voting and Primary/Election day sites.

- Accessible absentee ballots for voters who are blind or visually impaired were once again available for both the Primary and General Elections in 2022.

- A Language Access Device (LAD) was available at each Early Voting and Election Day polling site for the 2022 General Election.

TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT 2022

MCBOE continued to implement a host of new policies and procedures in regard to Inspectors, Site Chairs and Coordinators to make Primary Day and General Election Day in 2022 run as smoothly as possible.

Over the course of 2022, we added and improved upon existing training mechanisms. This included a hands-on workshop for our Site Chairs and Coordinators to gain a more tangible experience with election materials. We also enhanced our online training to ensure that training materials remained consistent across both training platforms.

MCBOE continues to hold in person and online classes for both Primary and General Elections each year. 1,821 Inspectors took the online training this year, and 1,382 Inspectors attended the in-person training.

For the 2022 Election year, including 18 total days of Early Voting and both Primary and General Election Days, we assigned 2,400 Inspectors.

Election Inspectors ensure fair and honest elections for all voters.

Thanks to the additionof a full-time Recruiter and the continued hard work of our training team – **EVERY** election inspector position was filled.
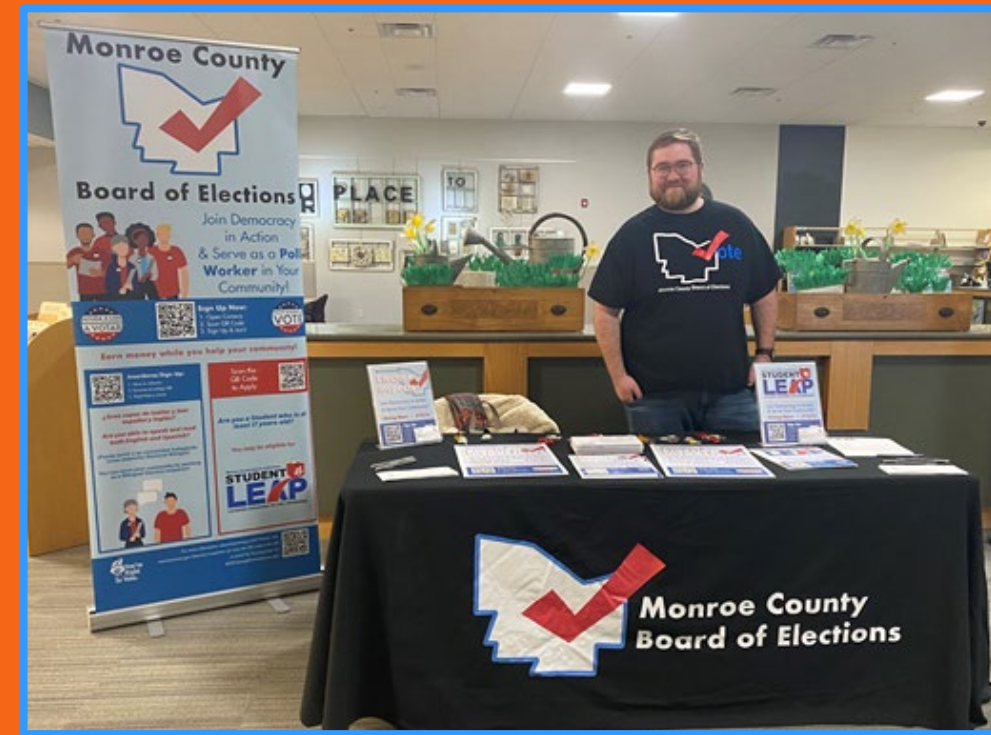
Recruiter Luke J. Rydelek is always on the look out for new poll workers.

TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT 2022 – CONTINUED

The Training and Recruitment Team implemented the following ideas successfully to meet the goal of filling every election inspector assignment:

- Postcards were sent to households of registered Republicans and Democrats in targeted districts where Election Inspectors were needed.
- Strengthened our Social Media presence on Facebook and Instagram.
- Recruited at political committee meetings, rotary clubs, veteran events, churches, and libraries.
- Posted flyers at town halls, recreation centers, and at various events, including outdoor festivals.
- Worked with local elected officials to get the public more involved in the election process.
- Participated in job fairs both virtual and in-person.
- Reached out to area colleges and high schools, working with professors and teachers to allow participating students to receive extra credit and approved absences from school.

Recruiter Luke J. Rydelek making his pitch on campus.

Total number of NEW Inspectors who worked in 2022 was 1,133.

HIGH SCHOOL LEAP PROGRAM

Deputy Commissioner Natalie Sheppard recognizes Jessica Williams as an outstanding LEAP student.

In a continued effort to promote civic engagement amongst our youth, MCBOE experimented with different approaches for recruitment for the Student Leaders Engaging as Poll-workers (LEAP) Program. These methods include classroom visits and lunch-period recruitment events.

The most effective method of LEAP recruitment was social studies classroom visits conducted in partnership with four teachers in the Greece Central School District. A total of 20 students participated. With the help of these teachers, all 20 received extra credit and points toward New York State's "Seal of Civic Readiness," in addition to a stipend and or school credit.

Based on the program's success this election season, the MCBOE is developing relationships with more school districts to gain greater participation in the LEAP program for 2023.

VOTER REGISTRATION 2022

In 2022, MCBOE had approximately 487,814 active registered voters on file, as compared to 484,590 in 2021. Voter Registration forms continue to be accessed by traditional avenues such as the Post Office counter box program, municipal government facilities, as well as the automatic component implemented through the Department of Motor Vehicles. New in 2022 was a greater emphasis placed on community contact and civic education – "meet people where they are". Thus, a rigorous schedule of engagement was undertaken. Churches, social clubs, community fairs and many more were on MCBOE's roster of places to be and be seen.

While MCBOE continues to review options for a new Election Management System, needed upgrades continue to occur to ensure streamlining of registration processing and reporting functionality.

Annette Ramos, Voter Registration Activities Coordinator,
interacting with members of our community.

VOTER REGISTRATION 2022 – ACTION PLAN RESULTS

- Completed over 138 public-facing community engagement registration events

- Began process to redesign / refresh and modernize counter boxes in post offices, DMV's, libraries, and all municipal buildings to be implemented in 2023

- Developed a succinct civic educational presentation on navigating the election process from registering to utilizing available tools (voter app)

- Conducted presentations to both charter and city school district students

- Enhanced pre-registration efforts to assist in creating leads from LEAP students for poll inspector recruitment team

- Over 1900 advance registrations for 16-17 years olds (registrations activate on 18th Birthday) were processed in 2022

- Solidified MCBOE as a partner of national civic institutions and coinciding registration efforts

- Received a $2,000 grant to participate in September National Voter Registration Day

- Partnered with 5 Universities/Colleges to have multiple simultaneous efforts occurring for greater coverage and impact

- Promoted MCBOE's first American Sign language video to ensure awareness of services available

- Utilized Language Access Coalition network to expand reach

- Expanded additional language access efforts by communicating important information through Spanish radio regarding critical election deadlines and Interpreting needs

- Increased internal MCBOE outreach distribution listings beyond legacy Print/TV/Radio media outlets to be more inclusive and cast a wider net (i.e. community associations, neighborhood block clubs, etc.)

EARLY VOTING 2022

Voters can early-vote at any location. It can occur near their workplace, school or church, not necessarily their home Election district. Electronic Poll Pads allow voter data to be available at each location.

None of the votes cast during early voting are counted until Election Day. Standards for protecting ballots and memory cards are extensive. A daily audit of each location is required.

Early Voting began in 2019 with seven locations and a dismal turnout. It was incredibly underutilized that first year. In 2020 an amazing 105,712 voters took advantage of the nine days and 12 locations and voted early. This influenced MCBOE's decision to add two more early voting locations for 2022. Unfortunately only 16,390 voters took advantage of Early Voting in 2022. These polar extremes in voter participation make planning very challenging for MCBOE staff.

Eastside Sites:

6. SUNY Empire
680 Westfall Rd Rochester, NY 14620

7. Henrietta Library
625 Calkins Rd, Rochester, NY 14623

8. Irondequoit Library
1290 Titus Ave Rochester, NY 14617

9. Penfield Dolomite Lodge
1628 Jackson Rd, Penfield, NY 14526

10. Perinton Square Mall
6720 Pittsford Palmyra Rd, Fairport, NY 14450

11. Webster Library
980 Ridge Rd Webster, NY 14580

City of Rochester Sites:

1. David F. Gantt Center
700 North St Rochester, NY 14605

2. Boys & Girls Club
500 Genesee St Rochester, NY 146011

3. Sibley Square
250 E Main St Rochester, NY 14604

4. Edgerton Rec
41 Backus St Rochester, NY 14608

5. Norton Village Rec
350 Waring Rd Rochester, NY 14609

Westside Sites:

12. St Theodores Church
168 Spencerport, Rochester, ny 14606

13. North Greece Rd Church
1039 N. Greece Rd Rochester, NY 14626

14. Sweden Clarkson Community Center
4927 Lake Rd Brockport, NY 14420

Oct. 29 - Nov 6, 2022

Early Voting

Early Voting is available to all voters in Monroe County. Voters can choose to vote at any of the 14 sites in the county from Oct. 29 - Nov 6 , 2022.

Polling Hours:

Sat & Sun: 9 am-5 pm

M, W & F: 9 am-5 pm

Tu & Th: 11 am-8 pm

ABSENTEE VOTING 2022

- NYS Election law governing absentee processing changed significantly in 2022. Prior to this, any voter who applied for an absentee ballot could change their mind and vote in person on a machine, even if MCBOE had received their ballot. MCBOE would count the ballot voted by machine and pull the absentee ballot which would NOT be counted. Beginning in 2022 if a voter **APPLIES** for an absentee ballot, they must vote absentee or by affidavit ballot.

- For the 2022 Primary Election MCBOE processed 1,320 new absentee ballot applications and 12,299 for the General Election. A total of 19,189 ballots were tallied from absentee voters, with 3,487 in the Primary Election and 15,702 in the General Election. Absentee ballot applications are returning to pre-COVID numbers and have fallen far below our 2020 record high of 131,871 absentee ballot applications for the General Election.

- MCBOE once again utilized absentee ballot drop boxes for elections in 2022. These secure boxes were placed at every Early Voting location, as well as every site for the Primary and General Election Days.

AFFIDAVIT / COURT ORDER VOTING 2022

Affidavit Ballots – This method of voting allows someone election law states is unqualified to cast a ballot on a machine, during Early Voting, on Primary or on Election Day, to submit a provisional ballot. This typically occurs when an individual is not registered, has moved or changed names, making the registration record reflect their actual qualifications to vote. A change in NYS Law now requires an individual who applies for an absentee ballot to submit an affidavit ballot if they choose not to vote absentee. This triggers a manual review by Board of Elections staff to ensure that only one ballot per voter is canvassed.

- In 2022, MCBOE processed 424 Affidavit Ballots in the Primary and 2,973 for the General Election.

Court Order Ballots – This method of voting is similar to an affidavit but a court or judge determines whether or not an individual is allowed to vote. Upon a favorable ruling, a voter is immediately allowed to cast a ballot on a machine.

- MCBOE processed 7 court orders for the Primary Election, 6 prior to the General Election, and 21 on the day of the General Election.

CURES 2022

If an absentee ballot is received by the MCBOE but is missing a signature, has a signature that does not match the signature on file, is unsealed, or lacks a witness statement for a voter's mark, it cannot be counted.

In such cases, a voter is provided an opportunity to cure the ballot. MCBOE staff calls, e-mails, and mails the voter a cure letter. The letter explains the error, and the fact that it can be corrected by signing and returning said cure letter. Once received by the MCBOE the cure letter is attached to the voter's absentee ballot and the ballot can now be canvassed.

In 2022 MCBOE identified 113 absentee ballots in need of a cure. Of those, 81 were returned, cured and able to be counted.

VOTING MACHINES 2022

- MCBOE is STILL waiting for NYSBOE to certify new voter registration systems and machines so that we may purchase replacements and upgrade our fleet of voting machines.

- The County of Monroe owns and operates a fleet of 762 optical scanning voting machines, including Image Cast Voting Machines (IC1), Image Cast with Ballot Marking Devices Voting Machines (IC2), and 20 ICE machines, which are all housed in our 30,000 square foot Service Center. These machines were utilized for our 853 Election districts at 257 polling locations throughout Monroe County during the General Election. They are each tested annually, as required by NYSBOE.

- Poll Pads ensure that voters only cast a ballot once and are unable to receive a ballot at another Early Voting site or Primary/Election Day polling place. Poll Pads communicate via a secure network connection, transmitting non-personal information and updating voter files in near real time, thus ensuring individuals are presented with the correct ballot, based upon the residential address from which they are registered.

VOTER SECURITY 2022

There are many checks and balances in place to process voter registration forms, absentee ballot requests and ballot counting:

- The MCBOE verifies against other government records, an annual verification mailing, USPS changes of address, State and Federal address changes, death records from the Department of Health, and signature verification.

AUDITS & CYBER SECURITY 2022

After each Election, ballots from three percent of all the machines used, selected by a random draw, are recounted using a separate NYSBOE approved audit system and the results are compared against the Election Day counts. This audit is also performed for absentee ballots. In addition, paper tapes are pulled from the voting machines and are used to compare the total ballots cast against the totals reported on Election Night. Finally, every polling site is required to provide a detailed reconciliation of ballots used, which are also reviewed and compared against the actual ballots cast. This process accounts for each and every paper ballot supplied.

MCBOE participates in the Elections Cyber Security Remediation Grant Program. By utilizing a grant for $262,000 from the NYSBOE and working together with Monroe County Information Services, elections in Monroe County are safe and secure.

MCBOE Assistant Deputy Commissioner received in-person cyber security training with the SANS Institute in 2022. This training lays the ground work for being able to evaluate and enhance the cyber security defenses of MCBOE. This is particularly important as we look at new systems and vendors to modernize our computer systems.

INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS 2022

The MCBOE website, www.monroecounty.gov/elections provides a tremendous amount of up-to-date, public information available on-demand. One can obtain information about voter registration, polling locations, maps, petition requirements, party enrollment, Early Voting information, elected officials, how to run for office, election results, and absentee voting, There is even a real-time interactive voter application.

@MonroeCountyBOE

Monroe County Board of Elections Facebook Page and Twitter provide easy and accessible ways to share information, provide updates, and engage the community in our electoral process.

COMMUNICATION 2022

Commissioners Nicolay and Ortiz remain very accessible to Monroe County's voters and continue to provide information regularly through the media and direct community engagement.
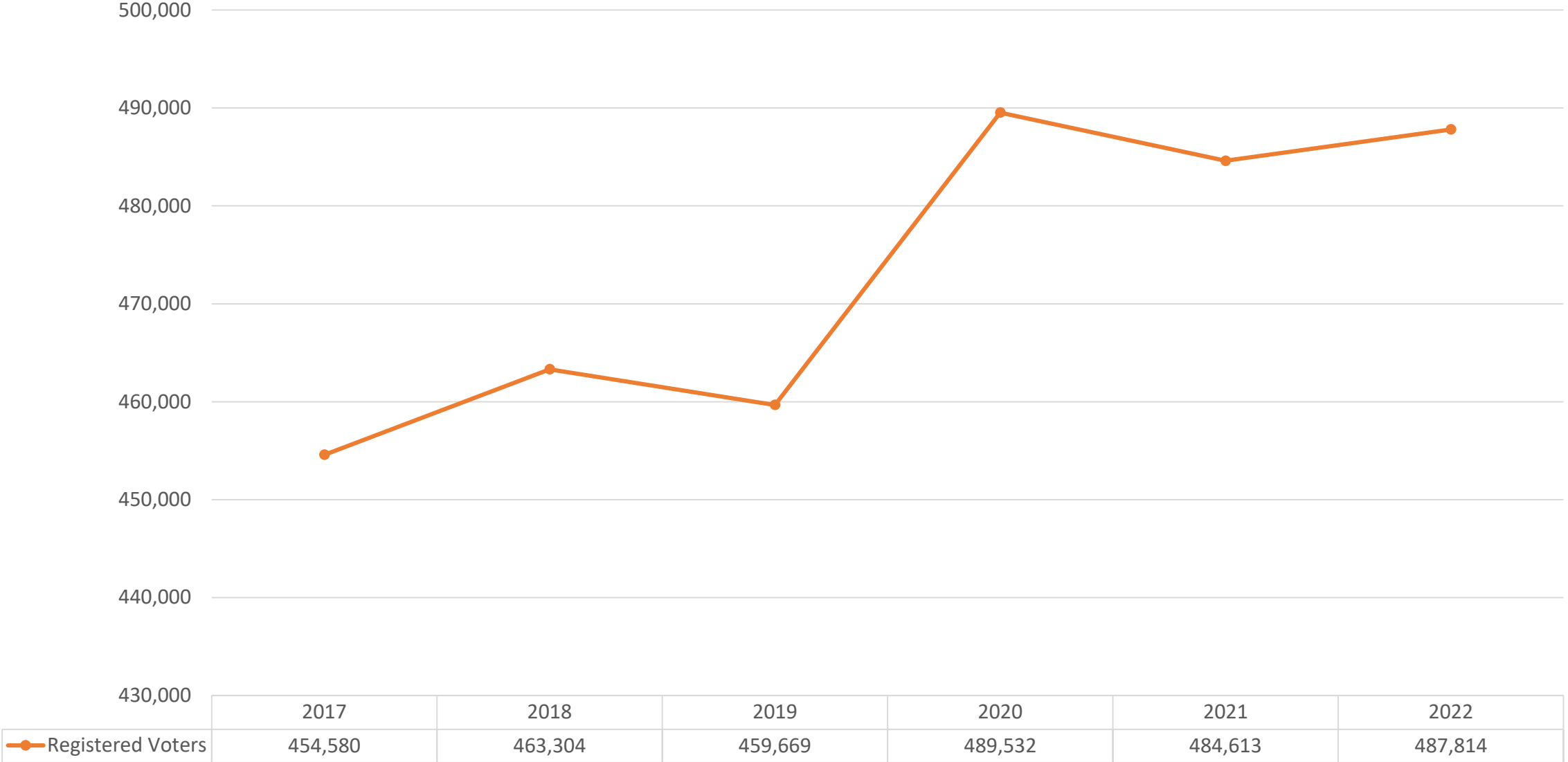
2022 SUMMARY

The MCBOE found 2022 to be a bit less stressful than 2020. However, 2022 presented its own challenges. Poorly thought out new laws including automatic hand recount caused both the Primary and General elections to drag out for additional weeks and costs. We continue to collaborate with the New York State Board and Elections Commissions across our state to incorporate new laws and regulations to positively affect all voters in Monroe County and assist them in their right to vote.

Immediate dissemination of 2022 Election Night results was delayed for several hours, due to apparent connectivity and bandwidth issues with the County website's public reporting interface. MCBOE and Monroe County IS have worked collaboratively to address these issues. Subsequent testing indicates that the system is, once again, capable of posting timely results for future elections for viewing by candidates, media and the public.

The Commissioners are proud of the work completed in 2022. Deadlines were met and certifications to New York State were timely. The MCBOE continued its legacy of administering fair, free and open Elections for each and every voter in Monroe County. This is possible because we have the greatest bi-partisan team in the state!

You're Right To Vote.

NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS
2017 Through 2022

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Registered Voters	454,580	463,304	459,669	489,532	484,613	487,814

METHODS VOTERS USED TO VOTE GENERAL ELECTION 2022

- Election Day
- Early Voting
- Absentee
- Affidavit

Absentee 6%

Affidavit 1%

Early Voting 20%

Election Day 73%
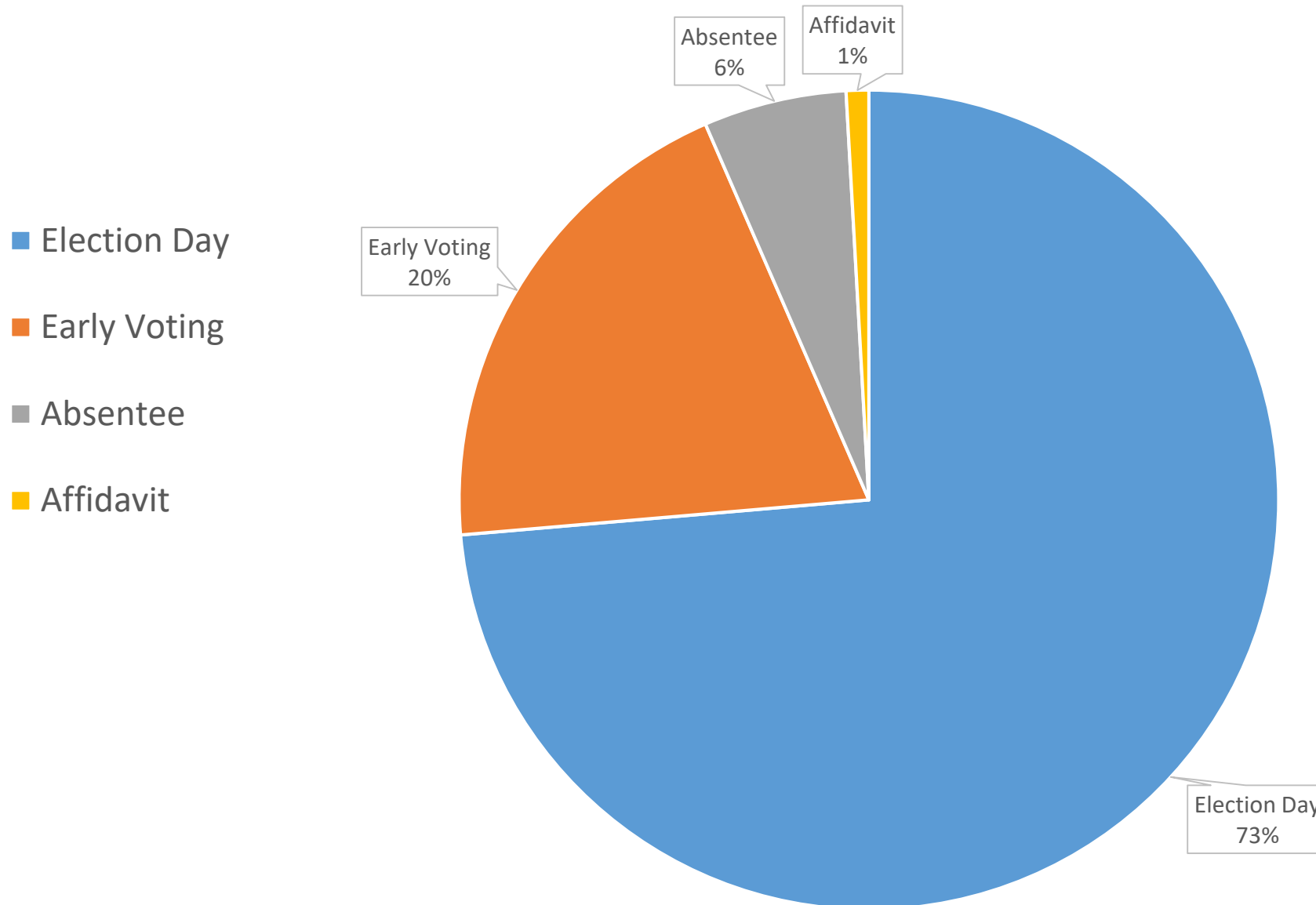
VOTER TURNOUT FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION
2008 Through 2022

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Voter Turnout	80.4%	30.6%	53.8%	32.4%	76.4%	31.6%	46.8%	30.8%	76.0%	38.1%	62.2%	39.8%	78.1%	30.1%	57.0%
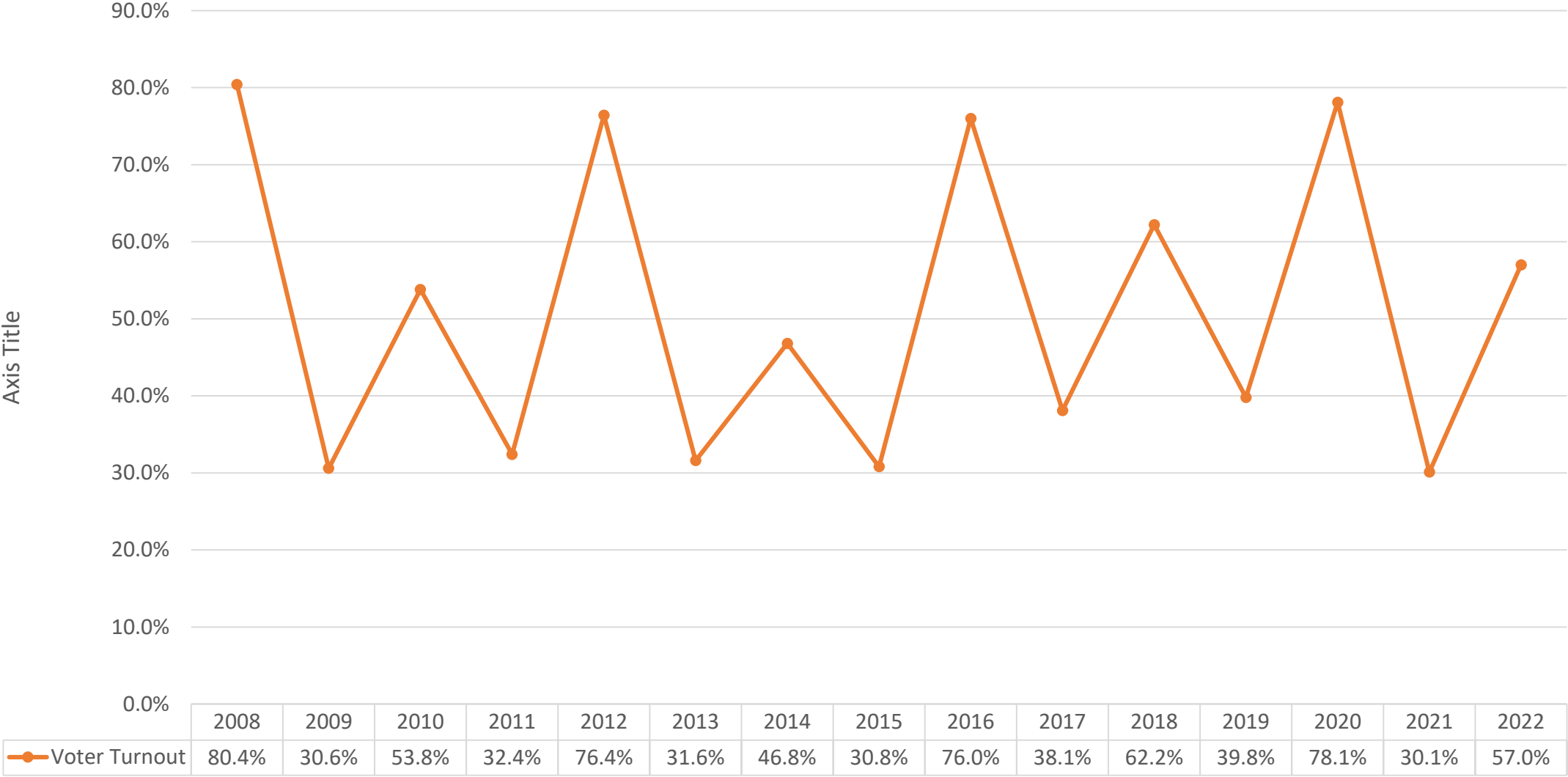
VOTER TURNOUT BY PARTY
2012 Through 2022 GENERAL ELECTIONS

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Democrats	78.2%	32.2%	43.7%	29.8%	76.0%	38.1%	63.5%	41.0%	78.4%	29.1%	56.7%
Republicans	80.7%	38.2%	58.3%	39.3%	81.3%	45.2%	68.4%	47.7%	83.9%	40.1%	68.6%
Blanks	69.2%	24.1%	39.0%	23.9%	70.2%	30.7%	53.3%	29.7%	71.3%	22.1%	47.0%
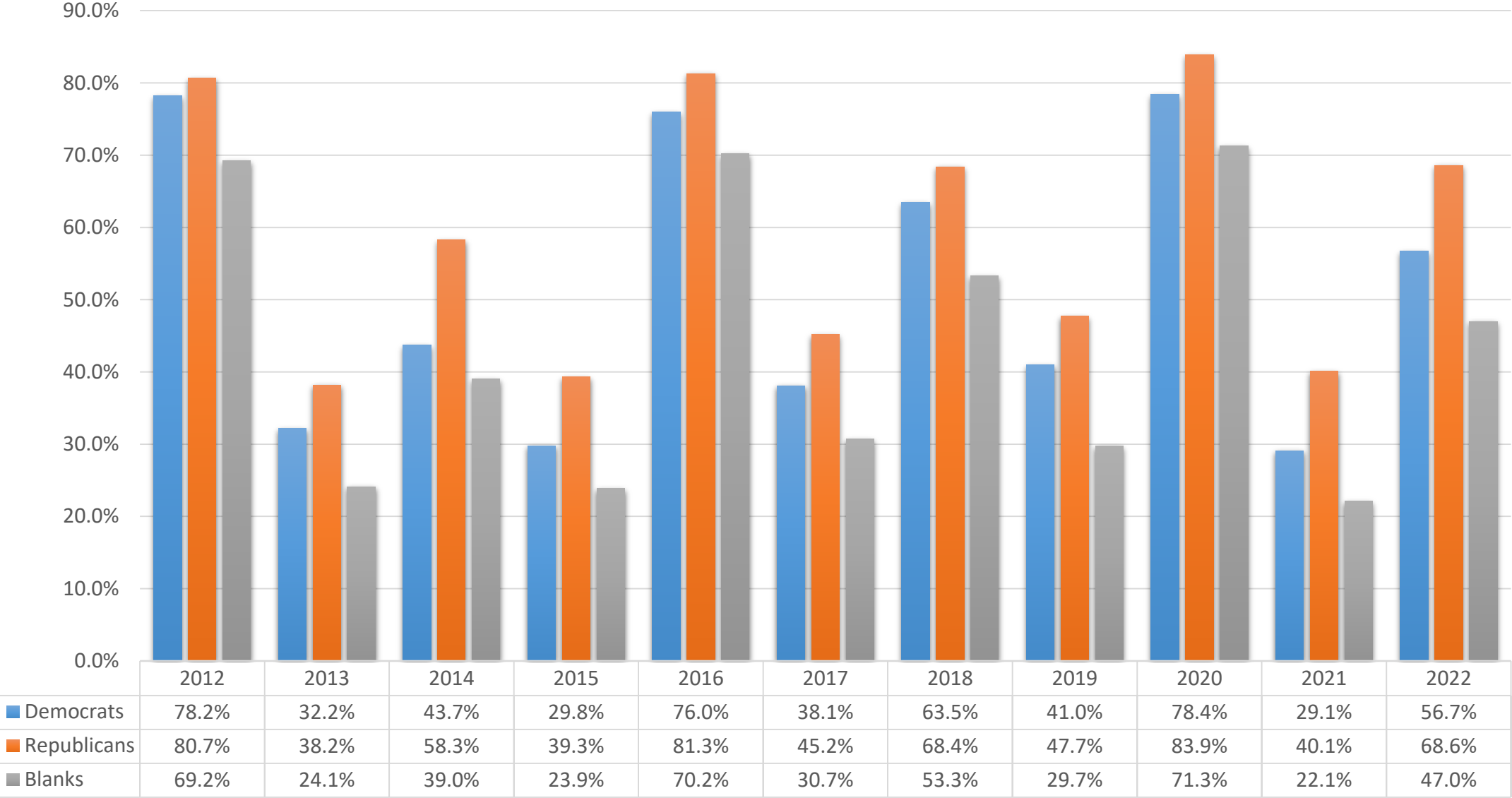
VOTER TURNOUT – TOTAL AND BY GENDER
2022 GENERAL ELECTION

- Males
- Females
- Undeclared

0.1%

46.8%

53.2%
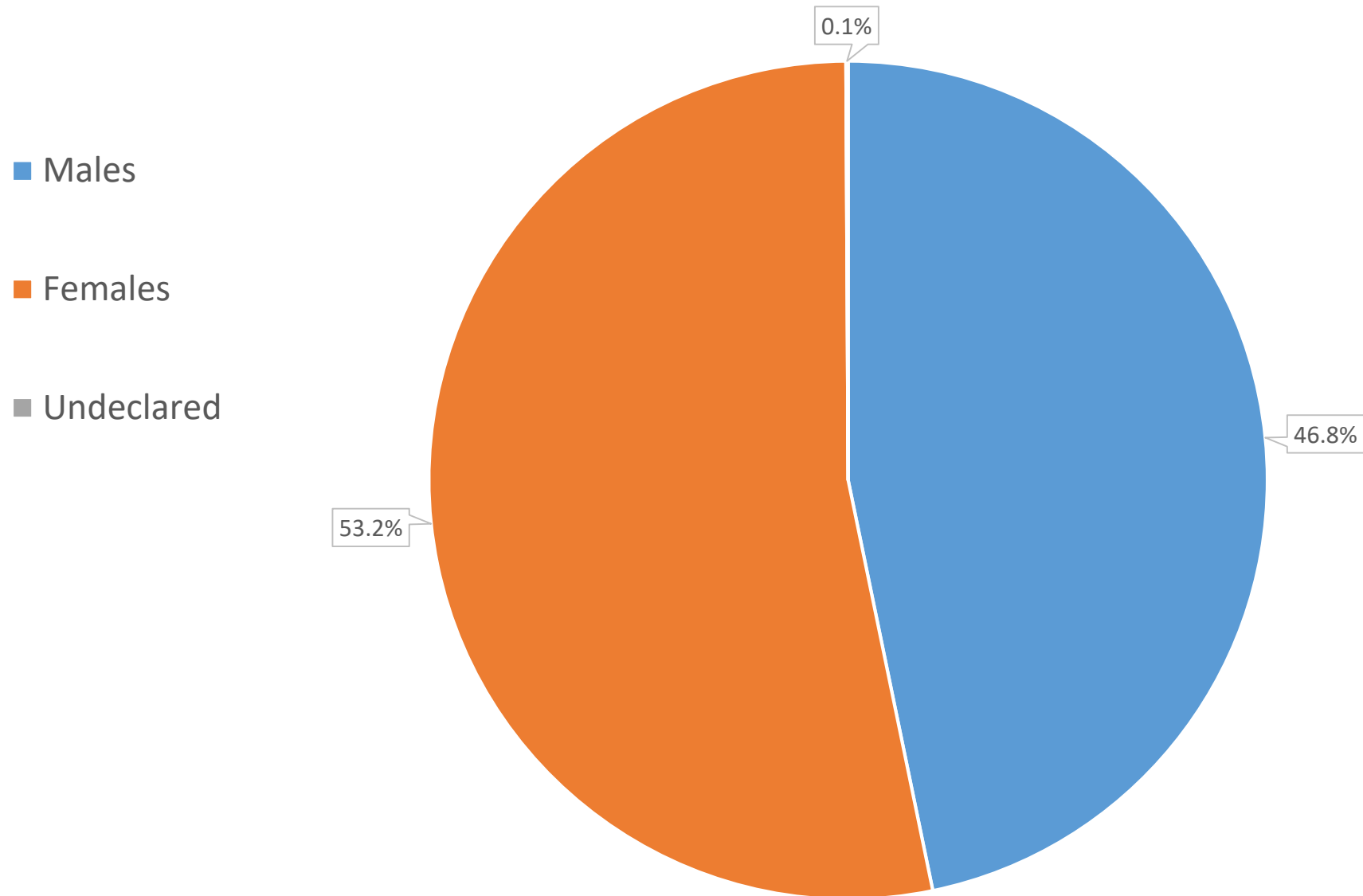
VOTER TURNOUT BY PARTY
2022 GENERAL ELECTION
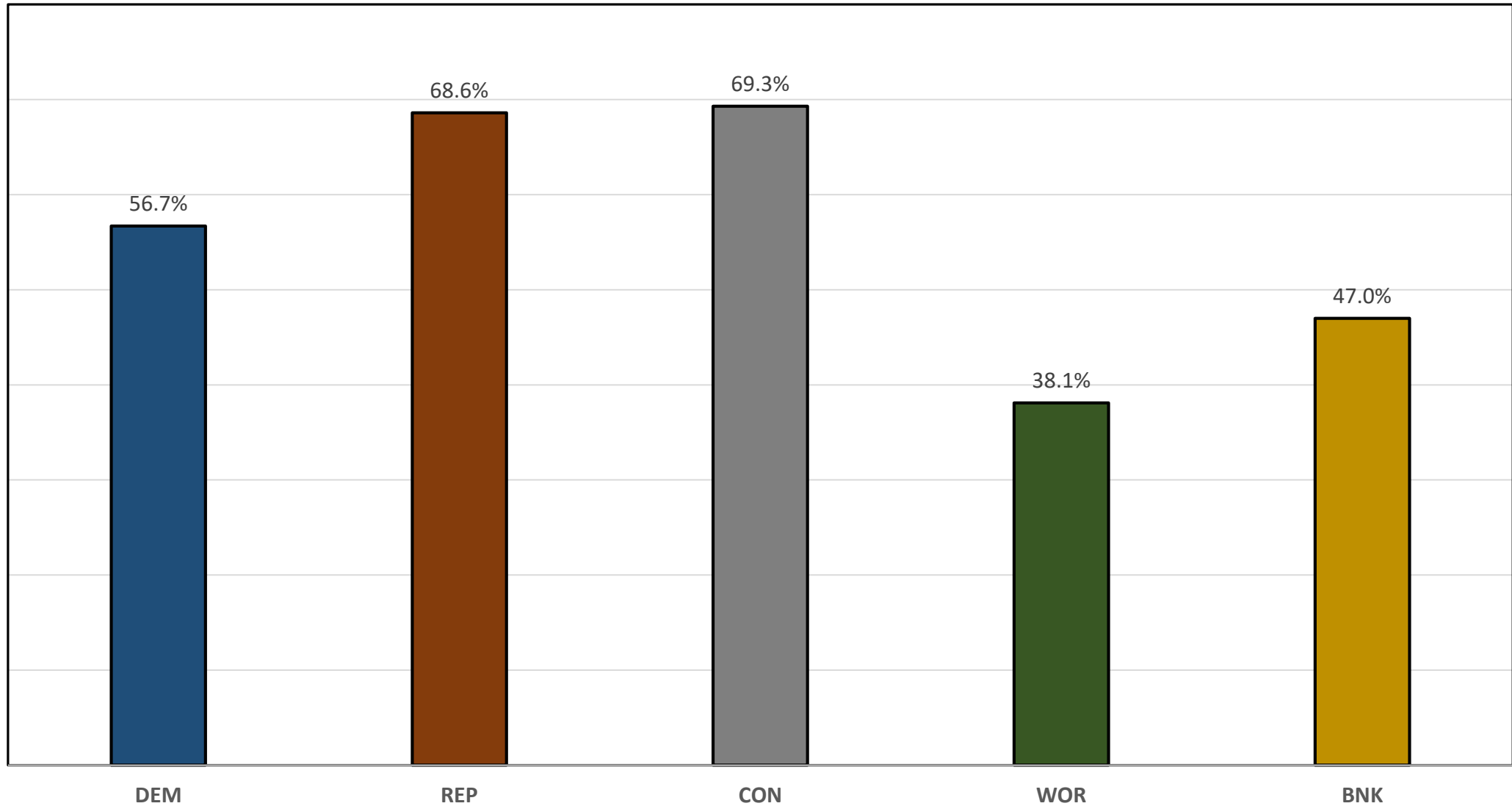
COMPARISON OF TURNOUT BY AGE GROUP
PERCENTAGE OF REGISTERED VOTERS
2022 GENERAL ELECTION

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Democratic	30.4%	39.7%	50.6%	56.9%	66.6%	73.4%
Republican	40.6%	48.1%	61.7%	69.6%	77.4%	76.2%
Blanks	20.5%	26.9%	39.4%	50.3%	62.6%	69.5%