
Disability Could Play Outsized Role In Election

by **Shaun Heasley** | August 16, 2016

A new report finds that Americans with disabilities account for a larger share of eligible voters than either African-Americans or Latinos. (Jose M. Osorio/Chicago Tribune/TNS)

The number of potential voters with disabilities is on the rise and now exceeds that of either African-Americans or Latinos in this country, according to a new report.

Some 35.4 million people with disabilities are expected to be eligible to vote in the presidential election this November. That's an increase of 7 percent over 2012 and represents nearly one-sixth of the total U.S. electorate.

The findings come from a [report](#) released this month from the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations which is based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population projections.

"People with disabilities are often overlooked in elections, but they are one of the largest minority groups in the United States," said Lisa Schur, a co-author of the report. "They often receive messages from society that they are not welcome or expected to participate, but their votes can sway election outcomes."

As their numbers increase, voters with disabilities can edge out other demographic groups that traditionally receive more attention, the report found. African-Americans are expected to account for 28.7 million eligible voters while Latinos represent 29.5 million.

Meanwhile, the influence of people with disabilities rises even more when those who live in their households are also factored, bringing the potential number of eligible voters impacted by disability to 62.7 million.

Community Advocacy Coalition

The Arc of Washington State is a member of the Community Advocacy Coalition (CAC), a group of organizations from around Washington State that advocate for services and supports in the community for people with developmental disabilities. The Arc assists with forwarding email information to other members of the CAC.