



Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

California Secretary of State

Elections Division

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October 10, 2025

County Clerk/Registrar of Voters (CC/ROV) Memorandum #25134

TO: All County Clerks/Registrars of Voters

FROM: /s/ Victoria Estrada
Language Access and Translations Coordinator

RE: Language Accessibility Advisory Committee: October 22, 2025, Meeting

Attached is the notice and agenda for the next Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) meeting to be held on Wednesday, October 22, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. via videoconference.

County elections officials and members of the public are welcome to attend in person or by calling in to the conference number listed on the agenda.

This notice and agenda will also be available on the LAAC website at:
<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/laac>.

Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions at LAAC@sos.ca.gov.

Thank you.



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October 10, 2025

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Language Accessibility Advisory Committee
(LAAC)

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/laac>

Date and time: Wednesday, October 22, 2025, 1:30 p.m.

Conference call number: +1 916-354-5402

Phone Conference ID: 601 947 013#

Screenshare/Webstream: [Click Here to Join the Meeting](#)

Password: hf79Rn2g

Location: Secretary of State
2nd Floor Boardroom
1500 11th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Notice of Meeting Platform Change:

This meeting will be held on Microsoft Teams. Due to a scheduled Zoom upgrade on October 16, 2025, which will change call-in numbers and links, the meeting has been moved to Microsoft Teams to ensure compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act and to provide uninterrupted public access.

Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC)

Wednesday, October 22, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

Agenda

1. Welcome, Call to Order, Roll Call, and Declaration of Quorum
2. LAAC Member Updates
3. Secretary of State Updates
 - Voting Systems Testing
 - Voter's Choice Act (VCA)
 - Legislation
4. Presentation on "*California's Voter Participation Gaps*" by Dr. Mindy Romero from Center for Inclusive Democracy
5. Working Groups
 - Poll Worker Research
 - Translation Timeline, Feedback, and Recommendations
 - Recommendations: Improving Translation Timelines for Ballot Materials
 - Language Accessibility Best Practices and Recommendations
 - Draft – Best Practices for Early and Inclusive Voter Outreach
 - State and Federal Language Requirements
6. 14201 Language Determination Timeline
7. 2026-2027 Language Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Applications
8. Public Comments and Future Agenda Items
9. Adjournment

IMPORTANT NOTICES TO THE PUBLIC:

- This meeting is open to the public and is accessible to the physically disabled.
- In accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, reasonable accommodations are available. Providing accommodation requests at least five (5) business days before the meeting will help to ensure availability of the requested accommodation.
- Any person who needs a disability-related accommodation or modification in order to participate in the meeting, or any person wanting to subscribe to future meeting notices and agendas, may make a request by contacting Victoria Estrada at (916) 695-1444, by emailing LAAC@sos.ca.gov, or by sending a written request to Victoria Estrada, 1500 11th Street, 5th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814.
- Discussion and action may be taken on any item on the agenda. The time and order of agenda items are subject to change at the discretion of the committee and may be taken out of order.
- Persons interested in addressing the committee on any agenda item will be given an opportunity to speak. The committee may limit the time for each individual speaker.
- The committee may not discuss or take action on any matter raised that is not included on this agenda, except to decide whether to place the matter on the agenda of a future meeting. (Government Code sections 11125, 11125.7(a).)

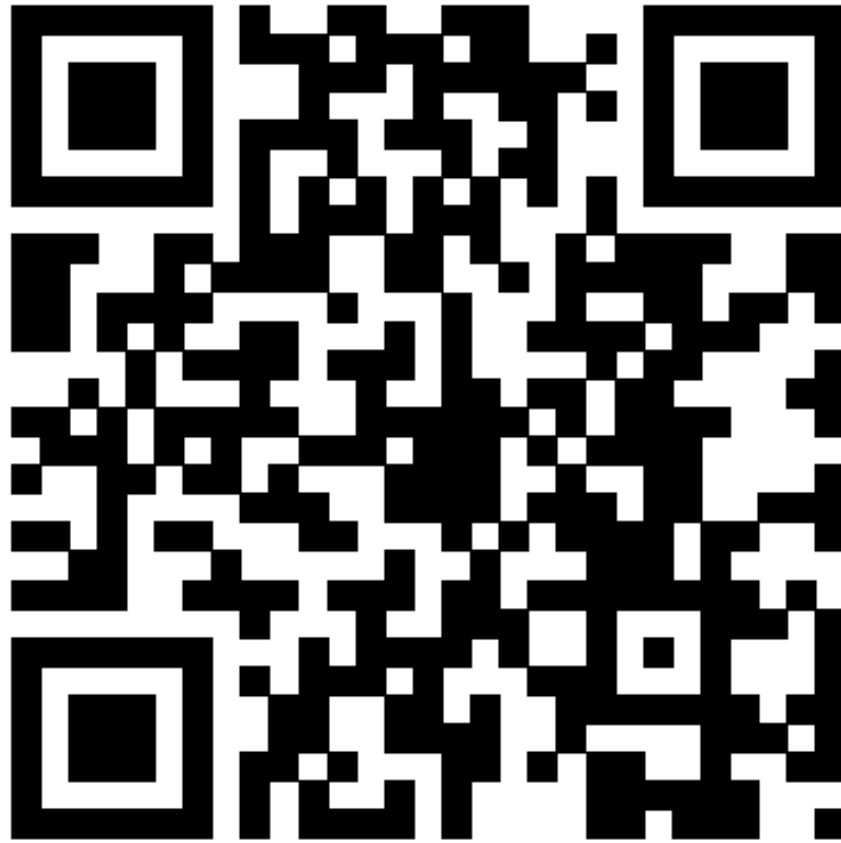


California's Voter Participation Gaps

October 22, 2025

Mindy Romero, Ph.D.

California's 2024 General Election Who Voted and Which 2020 Voters Stayed Home?



This research was made possible by the generous support of the
Haas Jr. Fund.

evelyn & walter
HAAS JR. fund

Research Requires Inclusive and Reliable Data

Data sources are limited – Current Population Survey and CA voter file

- Current Population Survey has methodological challenges for voters of color, state level only
- CA voter file allows for within state analysis, identifying race/ethnicity in the CA voter file is challenging

= CA has a limited set of voter turnout research

2024 Voter Turnout

Data Sources: California Secretary of State, California Department of Finance

Participation in our democracy continues to be low and disparate

What was voter turnout in CA's 2024 General Election?

?

What was voter turnout in CA's 2024 General Election?

Eligible Voter Turnout - 62.0%

What was voter turnout in CA's 2024 General Election?

Registered Voter Turnout - 70.1%

Eligible Voter Turnout - 62.0%

Turnout Declined from the 2020 GE

10 percentage point decline in registered voter turnout rate

4.8 percentage point decline in eligible voter turnout rate*

Participation gaps widened in 2024

*CA Secretary of state's estimate of the number of Californians eligible to vote differs from common sources of adult citizen data in the state - about 800,000 fewer eligible Californians in 2020 and about 900,000 more in 2024.

Registered Turnout by Group

Participation Gaps Widened in 2024

Decline in registered turnout from 2020 GE to 2024 GE was greater for voters of color compared to white voters.

White: **5.6** percentage point decline

Latino: **12.7** percentage point decline

Black: **8.2** percentage point decline

Asian American: **12.8** percentage point decline

Eligible Turnout by Group

Participation Gaps Widened in 2024

Decline in eligible voter turnout from 2020 GE to 2024 GE was greater for voters of color compared to the general population.

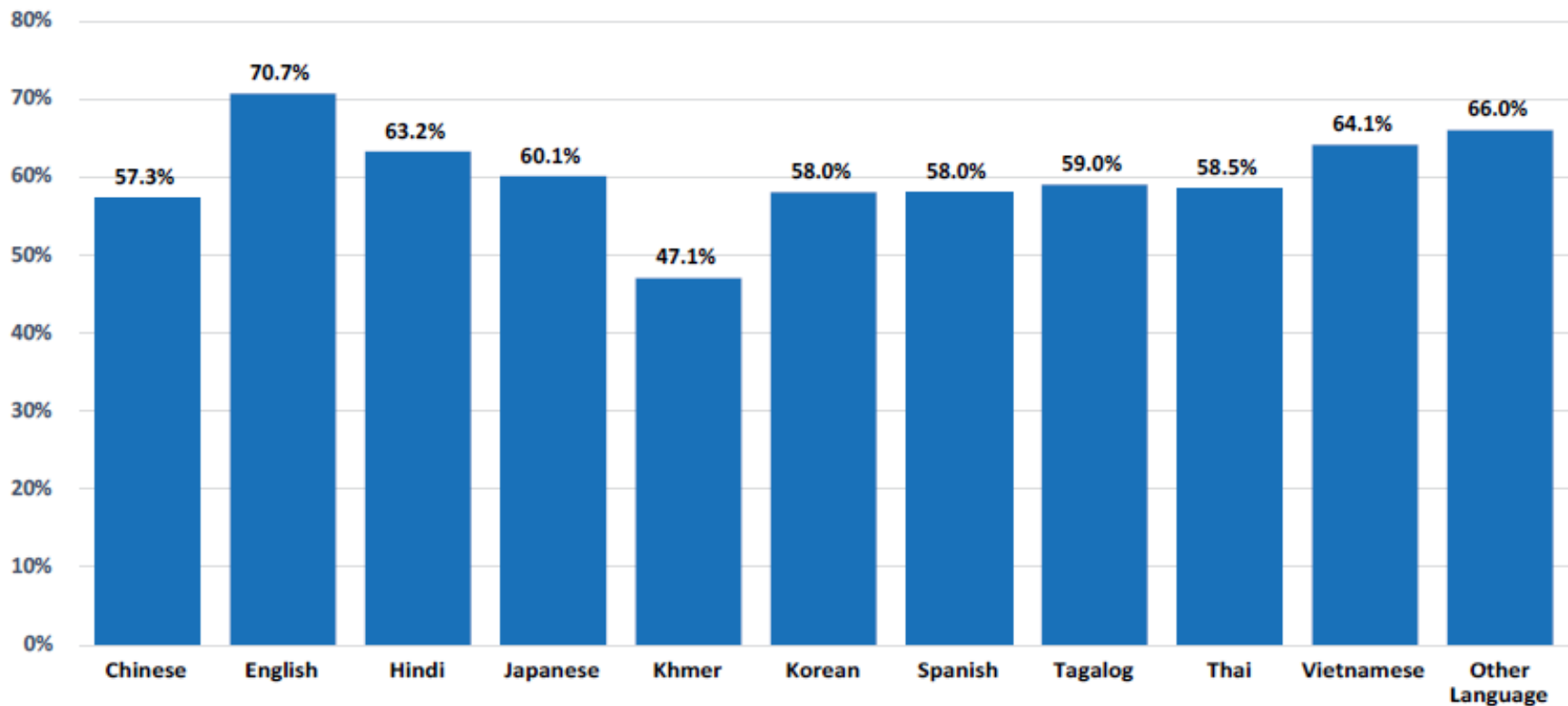
Latino: **7.6** percentage point decline

Asian American: **4.8** percentage point decline

Registered Turnout by Language Preference

FIGURE 39

Registered Voter Turnout
Language Choice
California 2024 General Election



Participation Gaps Widened in 2024

Consequences for Policy and Outcomes

Why so low?

What can be done?

Reasons for Lower Turnout

Disparities in registration

Disparities in outreach and mobilization

Historic and current disconnection from the political process

Demographics

Turnout even lower in midterms and primaries

Questions?

Thank you!

Mindy Romero, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Inclusive Democracy
USC
msromero@usc.edu
@mindysromero

Recommendations: Improving Translation Timelines for Ballot Materials

At the August 2024 LAAC meeting, concerns were raised about the compressed translation timeline currently in use. Accurate and accessible translations—especially in state-required languages—require sufficient lead time, thorough review, and community-informed input.

The Subcommittee proposes the following recommendations for the LAAC to consider for submission to the Secretary of State.

Key Timeline Constraint:

Day 123 before the election: SOS finalizes **English Version 1** (ballot titles, and labels) and delivers to state contracted translators.

Day 105 before the election: English Version 1 (plus lists of supporters/opponents) delivered to counties, who then begin translations into **state-required languages (14201)**.

- [SOS Translation Timeline Spreadsheet](#)
- [2024 Transition Timeline](#)

Possible Recommendations

1. Explore Feasibility of Delivering English Version 1 to Counties on Day 123 (not Day 105):

Counties and local vendors could receive the finalized English text at the same time as state contracted translators. This would:

- Extend the translation and review window by 18 days for counties
- Potentially reduce bottlenecks and rushed turnarounds at the local level, especially for multi-language counties

2. Standardize Glossary and Dialect Guidance Early in the Process:

Dialect and terminology disagreements remain a key challenge.

Recommendations:

- Support efforts to update and expand glossaries of terms that counties use for translations.
 - Consider partnerships between community groups and philanthropy to accomplish this.
- Create a public facing glossary, that is available online and provided to County LAACs, that civic orgs and voters could use to ensure terminology is understood.

3. Ensure Transparency and Usability of Review Tools:

During the BLTS process, participants noted the need for:

- A clearer explanation of BLTS process, recruitment, and review flow (ex. first draft → review → translator feedback → final) with the goal to improve recruitment.
- Explore efforts to make the BLTS process and commenting infrastructure more user-friendly and accessible because not everyone has experience with excel sheets and changing character formats within excel.
- More language reviewers (e.g., Thai had only 2–3)

Best Practices for Early and Inclusive Voter Outreach

Providing translated voter education materials, outreach communications, and sample ballots well before major election deadlines allows voters with limited English proficiency to fully understand their options and participate with confidence. Early availability also enables community partners, bilingual staff, and outreach teams to share consistent, accurate information throughout the election cycle, thereby reducing confusion and strengthening public trust.

The following best practices highlight practical steps counties can take to invest early in multilingual outreach and build stronger, more inclusive voter engagement programs.

1. Prioritize Early Translated Materials

- a. Translate voter education materials, outreach communications, and sample ballots well before major deadlines.
- b. Early availability helps community partners and bilingual staff align messaging and reduce voter confusion.

2. Center Community Partnerships

- a. Partner with trusted messengers: community groups, faith leaders, and cultural organizations.
- b. Use imagery, language, and tone that reflect the community's diversity.
- c. Translate all public-facing materials into relevant languages using clear, plain language.

3. Use Multiple Outreach Channels

- a. Combined use direct mail, digital outreach, phone/text, and in-person events.
- b. Target areas with lower participation or limited English proficiency.
- c. Deploy mobile or pop-up outreach teams to meet voters where they are.

4. Strengthen Language Access Infrastructure

- a. Maintain updated translated materials at every voter touchpoint.
- b. Develop or update a Language Access Plan covering translation, interpretation, and multilingual communications.
- c. Use local data to refine language coverage and outreach priorities.

5. Invest in Poll Worker Training and Support

- a. Include language and cultural competency modules to build awareness in poll worker training (e.g., include a review of state and federal requirements, role-play scenarios).
- b. Provide clear guidance and translated reference materials for assisting non-English-speaking voters.

6. Communicate Early and Often

- a. Begin outreach early in the election cycle and repeat at key milestones (registration, vote-by-mail, early voting, Election Day).
- b. Keep messaging consistent and factual across all channels.

7. Monitor, Evaluate, and Improve

- a. Track what works: which messages, and channels reach voters effectively.
- b. Solicit feedback from community partners and voters with LEP.
- c. Share findings publicly to build trust and improve future efforts.

8. Fund Outreach as Core Election Infrastructure

- a. Allocate dedicated funding for community partnerships, and multilingual staffing.
- b. Publicly report outreach outcomes (languages served, materials distributed, communities reached).