

# IOWA STATE DAILY

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## LATINO VOTERS STRUGGLE WITH ELECTION

Recent growth within the Latino population has increased the number of eligible voters. Between the years of 2008 and 2012 eligible Latino voters increased about 19 percent, but as the number of eligible voters

increased, the actual turnout rate for Latino voters has declined.

Overall, Latinos make up about 17 percent of the nation's

population but only 8.4 percent choose to vote out of the 10.8 percent of eligible Latino voters.

The issue Latinos are facing today is whether they feel the need to participate in the upcoming election. Latino voting has dropped within the years because many feel a lack of acknowledgement along with unmet promises.

Berenice Liborio, a Latina sophomore at Iowa State, feels this is an important issue. "I do agree with the current issue of Latinos questioning the decision to vote, because many Latinos aren't aware of the different political

parties," she said. "Being a student at Iowa State, I have learned to take initiative and take on leadership roles, and it

is because of this I have educated myself more and I have talked to other people about my options."

Many Latinos carry over a decent number of Democratic votes during the election due to the rapid increase in Latino support. Democrats usually count on Latinos for their votes. Unfortunately, many Latino groups are unsure how they are going to

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vote or even if they are going to vote at all

Although many Latinos seem to particularly vote Democratic, “Senator Marco Rubio from Florida hopes to gain popularity with Hispanic and Latin voters using his conservative stance that may seem a bit dissuasive while the Republican Party tries to attract Hispanic voters with his surname,” Material Science and Engineering professor, J. Eliseo De León said, as he takes notice through this political year('s) campaigns.

One thing standing in the way of Latinos decision to vote is President Obama; failure to follow through with the nation’s immigration laws. Changes to the immigration law have been deferred, leaving many Latinos in heavy frustration. Talk of organizing a boycott is underway with certain Latino groups.

Puente, a human rights group based in Arizona and Los Angeles, is in favor of the boycott because they feel Latinos are being used as game pieces within this whole

electoral competition. A sense of false hope falls amongst the Latino community while they await changes they have yet see to come through.

“If the politicians do not deliver on their campaign platforms, the population is likely to abandon them by withholding their vote. Issues like the lack of immigration reform are likely to keep some Hispanic voters from supporting candidates who have not delivered on such platforms,” De León commented after considering the possibility that certain issues, influence Latinos not to participate in political events such as the election.

While some Latinos are choosing to boycott the election, others are doing the opposite in hopes of reeling in new voters. On the other side of the fence there are Latinos who are choosing to still cast their vote, as well as seek potential new voters who have yet to be registered. Latino organizations and groups who partake in this believe that many

individuals have sacrificed and fought for the right to vote, and those who choose not to can send a hurtful message

As a Latina Liborio feels voting is an important process and can make a difference to those in the Latino community. “Whomever the people of the United States elect for President can affect me as an individual and to my Latino community. I feel that by voting I can have my voice heard and let the government know that the Latino community cares and we’re full aware of what’s happening,” she said.

With a divide between Latino groups and their decision on what to do with the election, it is difficult to see where their votes will go and how it will unfold. A solution seems possible if resolution can be made with the current conflicts, but with constant postponement of change within the immigration law, Latinos are starting to lose hope steering them away in a different direction.