

Predicting the Unpredictable: Modeling Turnout in Unprecedented/ Special Elections

December 2013

Predicting Turnout

- **In California, we had more than two dozen special elections this year alone**
- **Past voting behavior is often the best predictor of future voting behavior**
 - **This is particularly true with similar elections – if a voter voted in a similar-type election such as a regularly scheduled statewide primary, then the odds are higher they will vote in the next election of that type**
- **But what happens when you have one-off elections such as a special election occurring on an unusual date with only one item on the ballot and it's a down ballot race?**
- **That's what this panel intends to explore.**

California Senate District 32

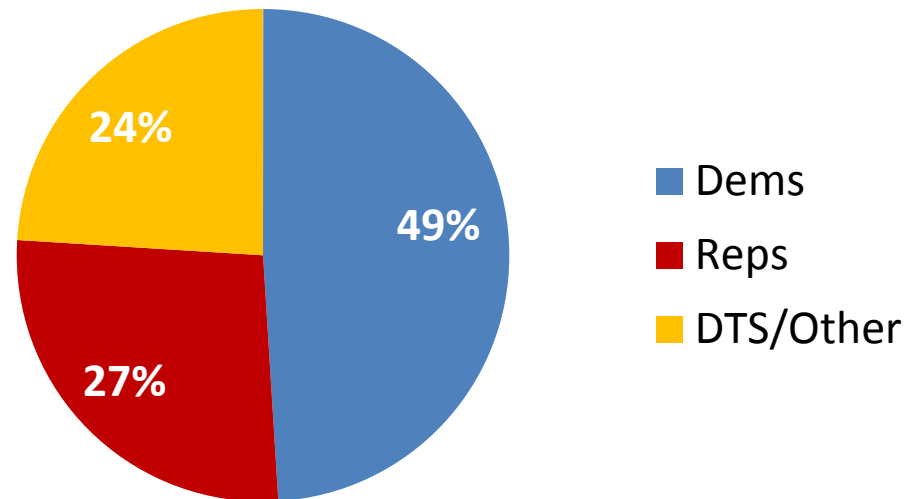
Primary Election: 3/12/13

General Election: 5/14/13

District Profile



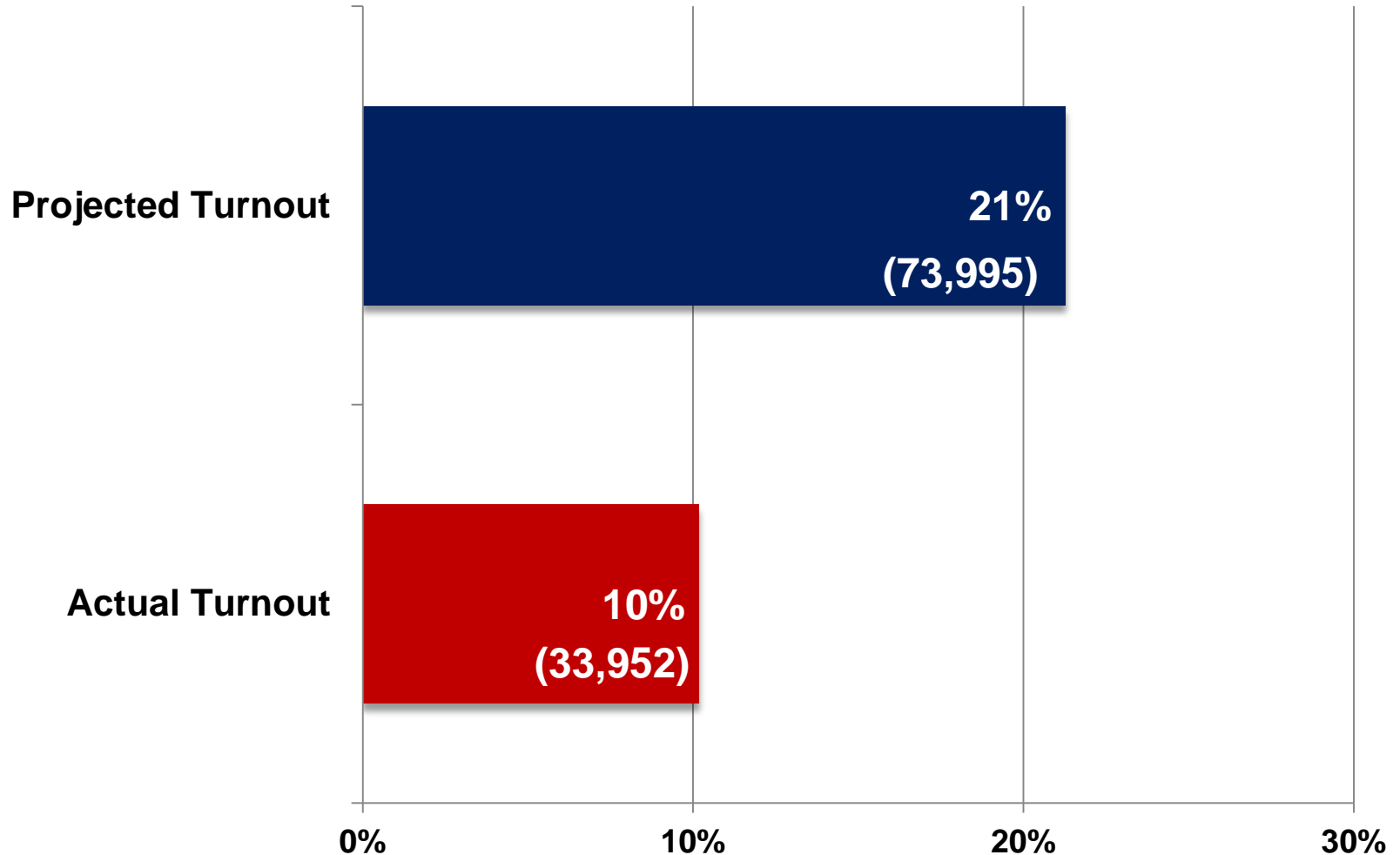
Voter Registration



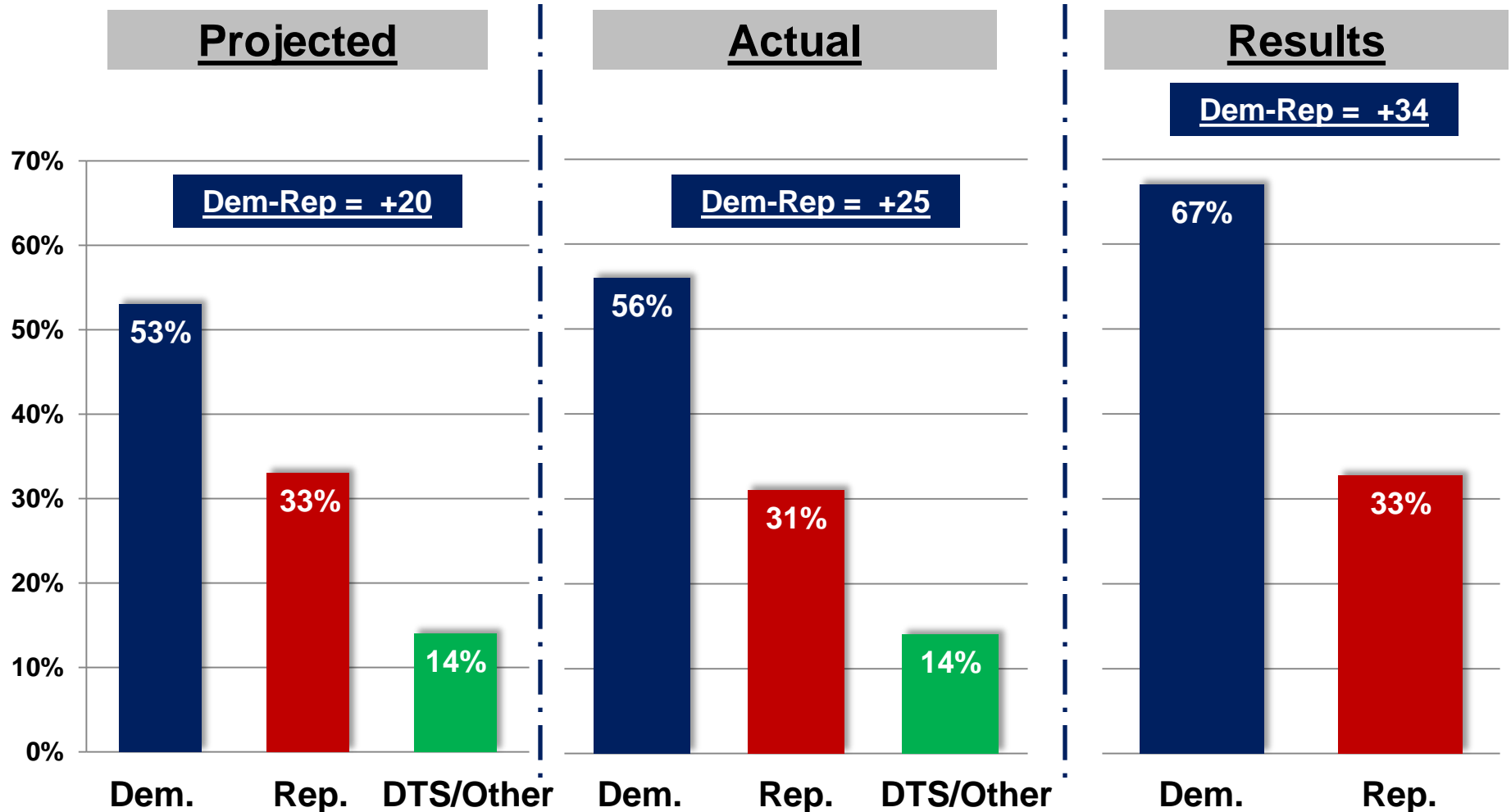
Democrat-Republican
Registration Advantage: +22

- 295,082 registered voters

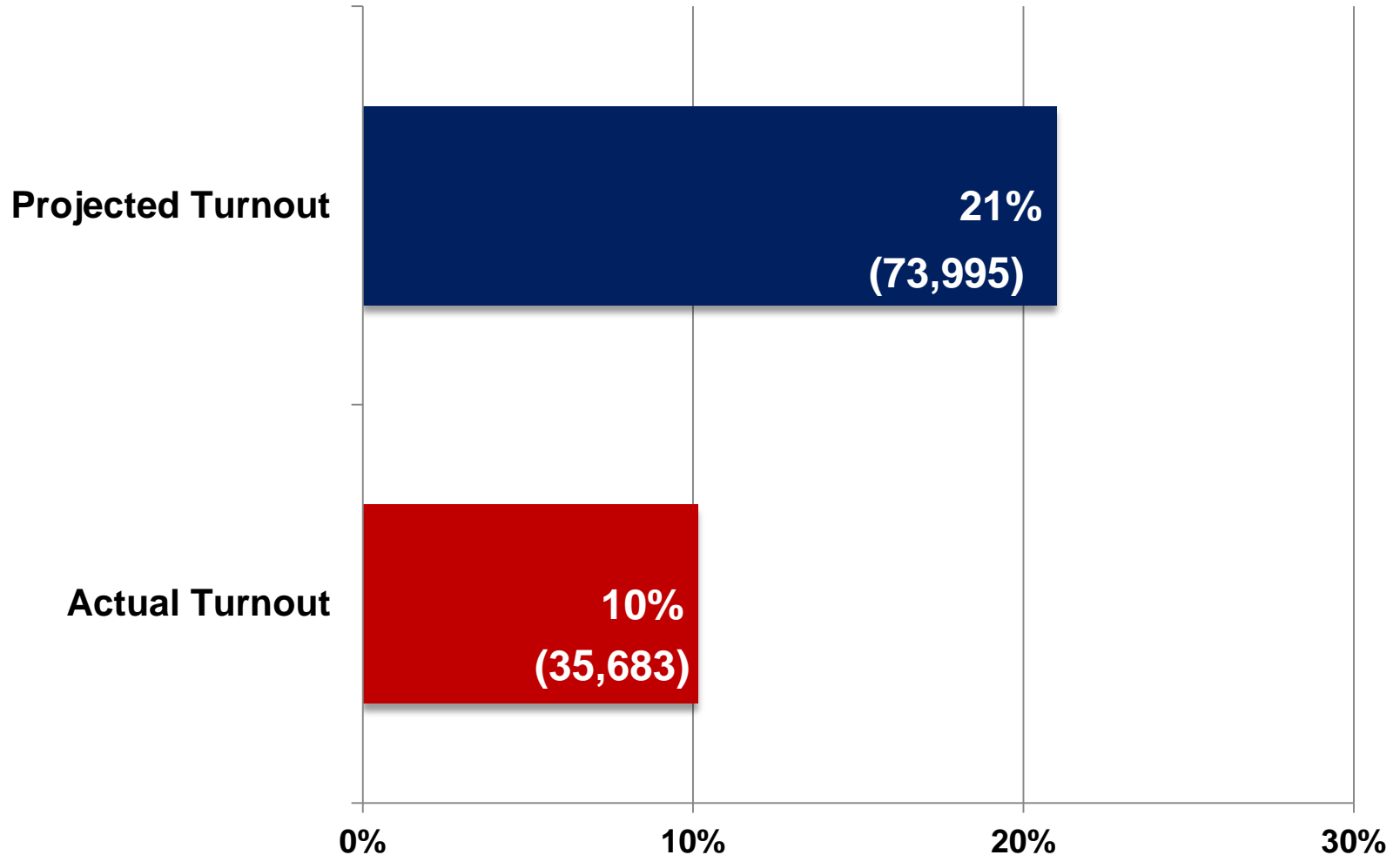
CA Senate District 32 Primary: Projected vs. Actual Turnout



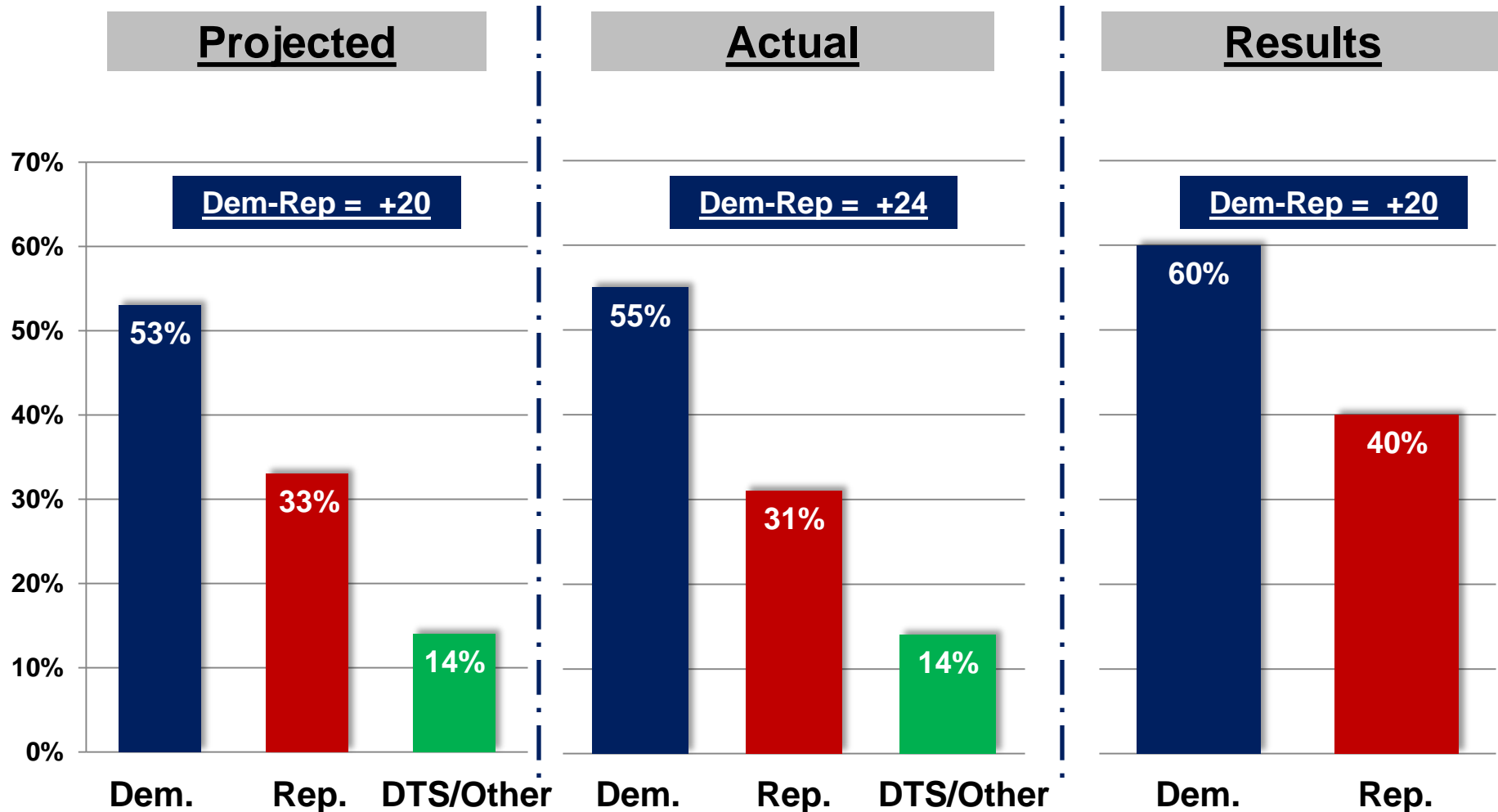
CA Senate District 32 Primary: Projected vs. Actual Party Breakdown of Electorate



CA Senate District 32 General: Projected vs. Actual Turnout



CA Senate District 32 General: Projected vs. Actual Party Breakdown of Electorate



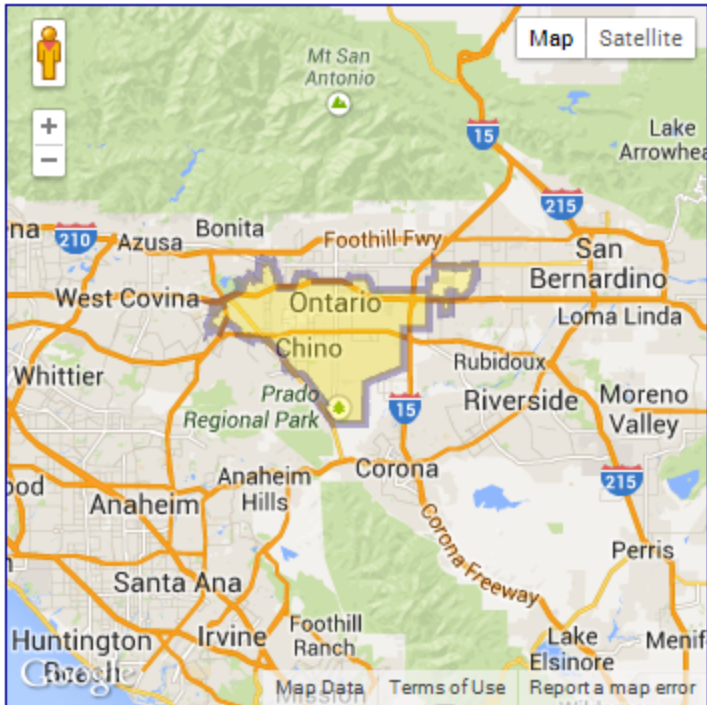
California Assembly District 52

Primary Election: 7/23/13

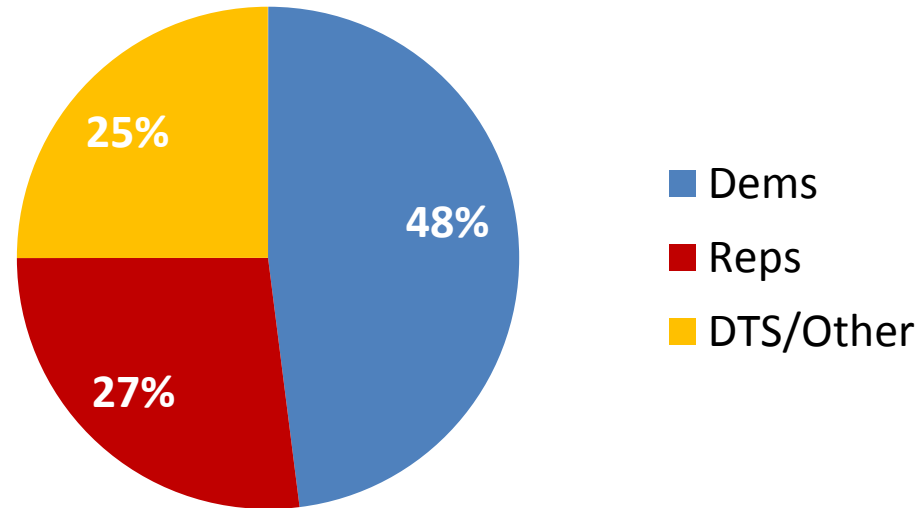
General Election: 9/24/13

District Profile

District Map



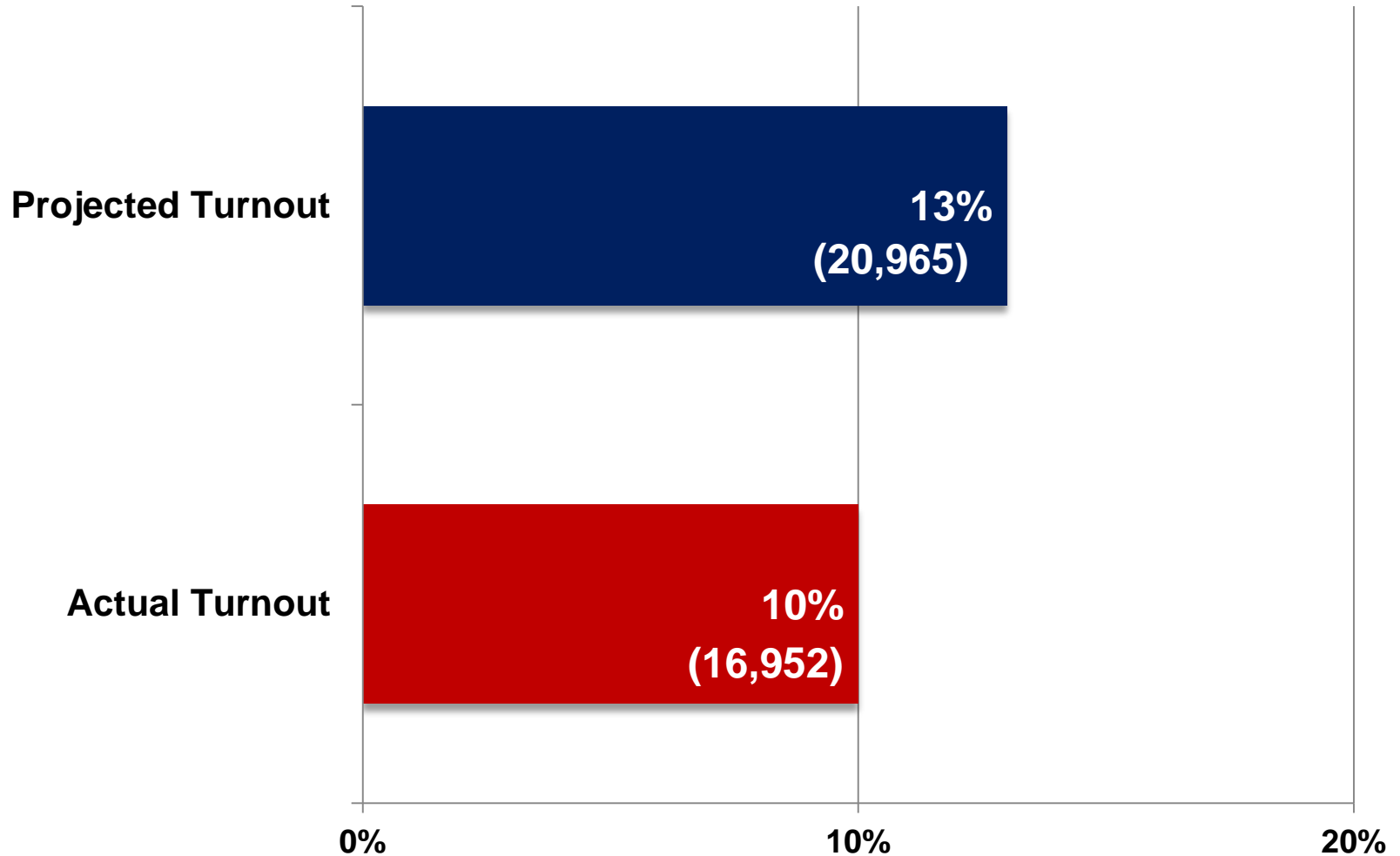
Voter Registration



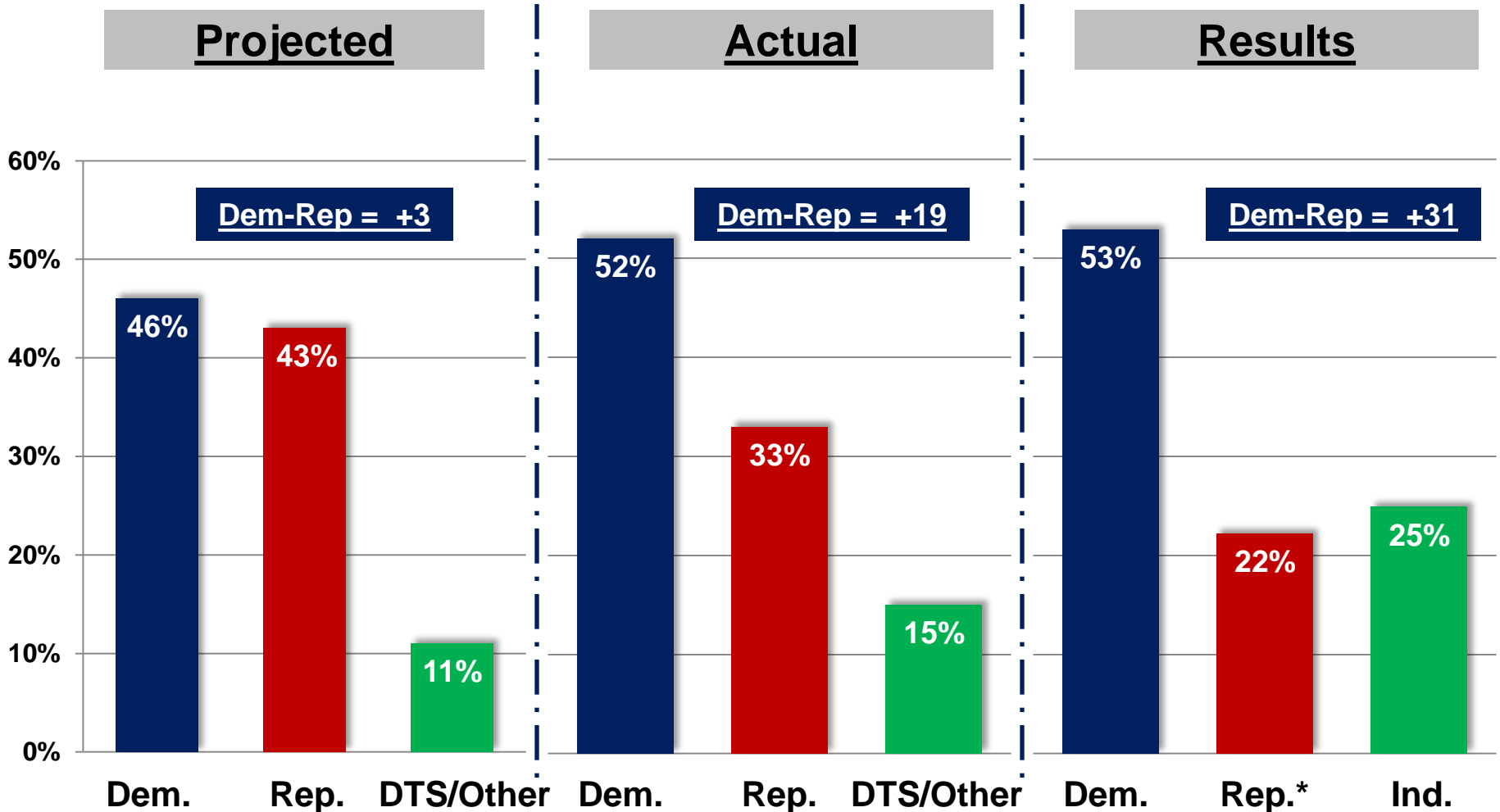
Democrat-Republican
Registration Advantage: +21

- **177,070 registered voters**

CA Assembly District 52 Primary: Projected vs. Actual Turnout



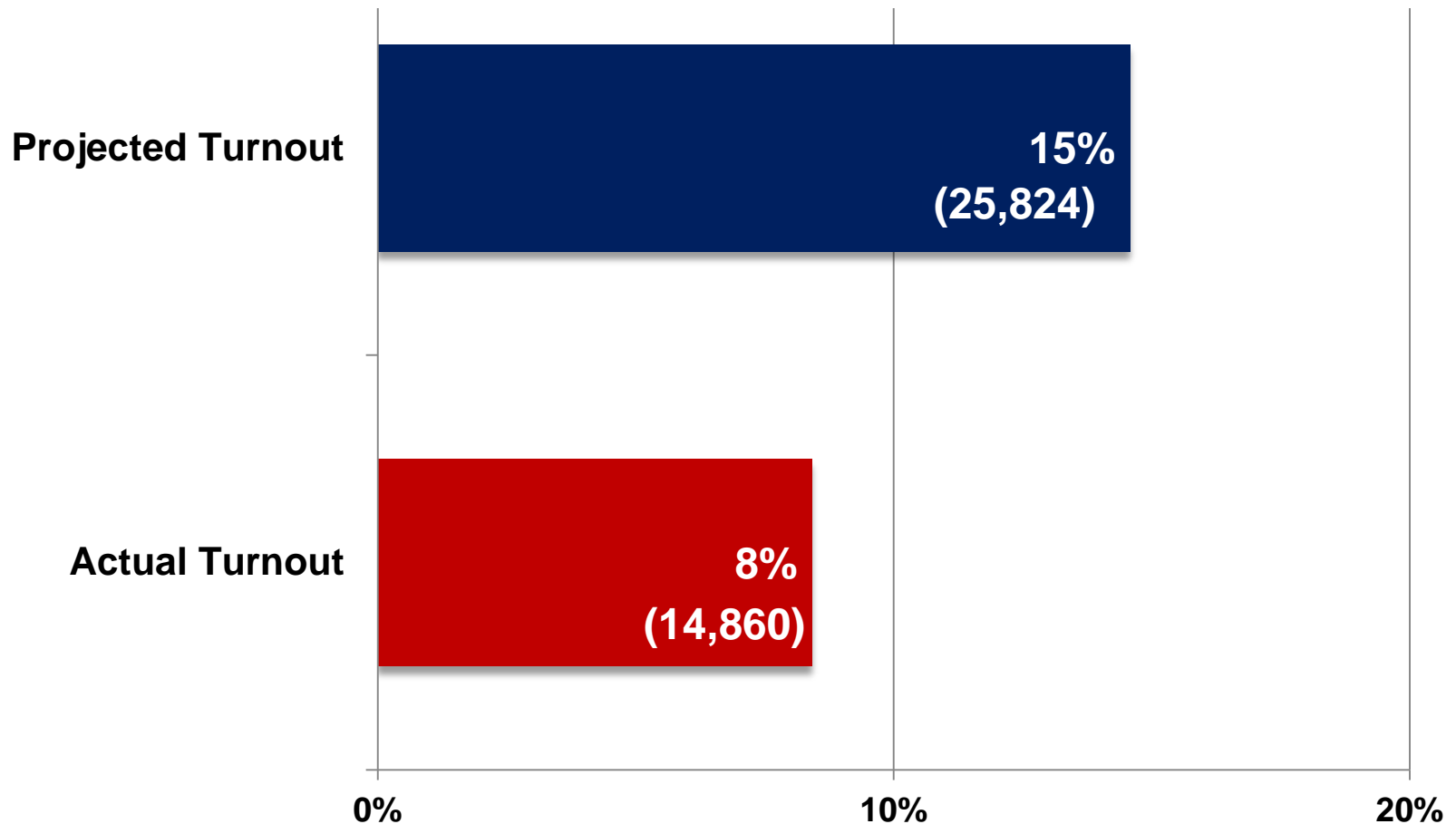
CA Assembly District 52 Primary: Projected vs. Actual Party Breakdown of Electorate



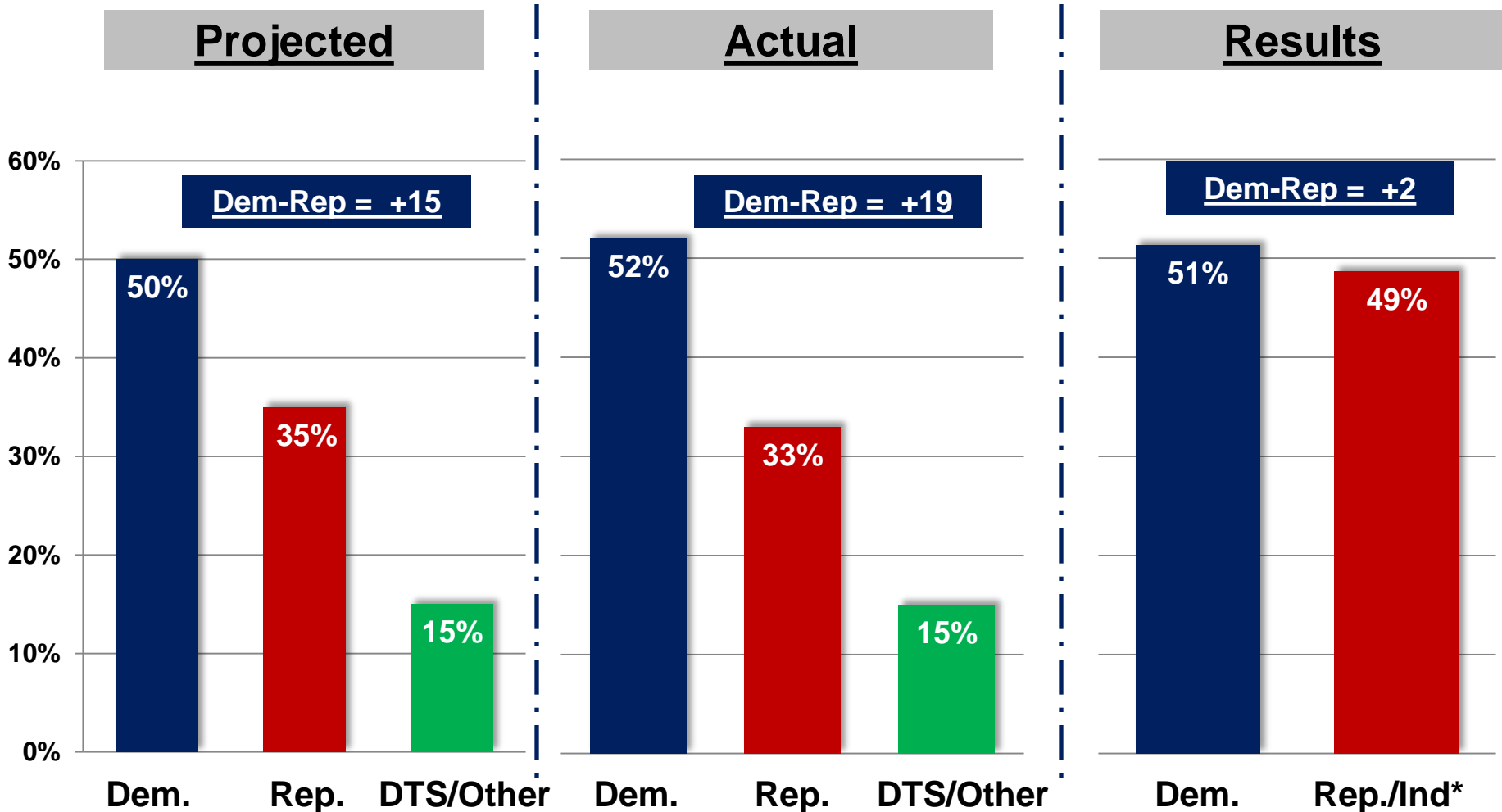
*The Mayor of Ontario was a Republican and recently changed his registration to NPP

CA Assembly District 52 General: Projected vs. Actual Turnout

Universe defined as: voted in the AD52 special primary, voted in at least one of the SD32 special elections, and PAV voters just from Chino who voted in 3/3 Nov 2010, June 2012, and November 2012



CA Assembly District 52 General: Projected vs. Actual Party Breakdown of Electorate



*The Mayor of Ontario was a Republican, and recently changed his registration to NPP

California Senate District 16

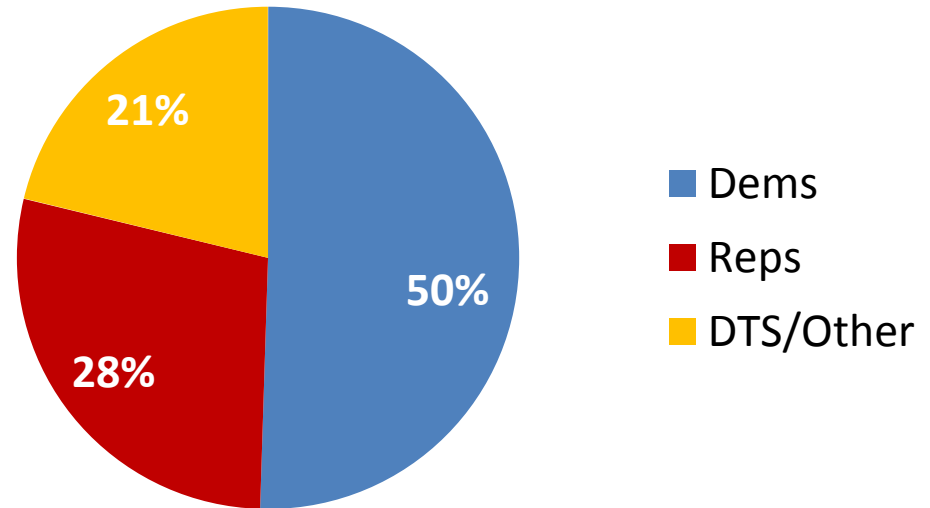
Primary Election: 5/21/13

General Election: 7/23/13

District Profile



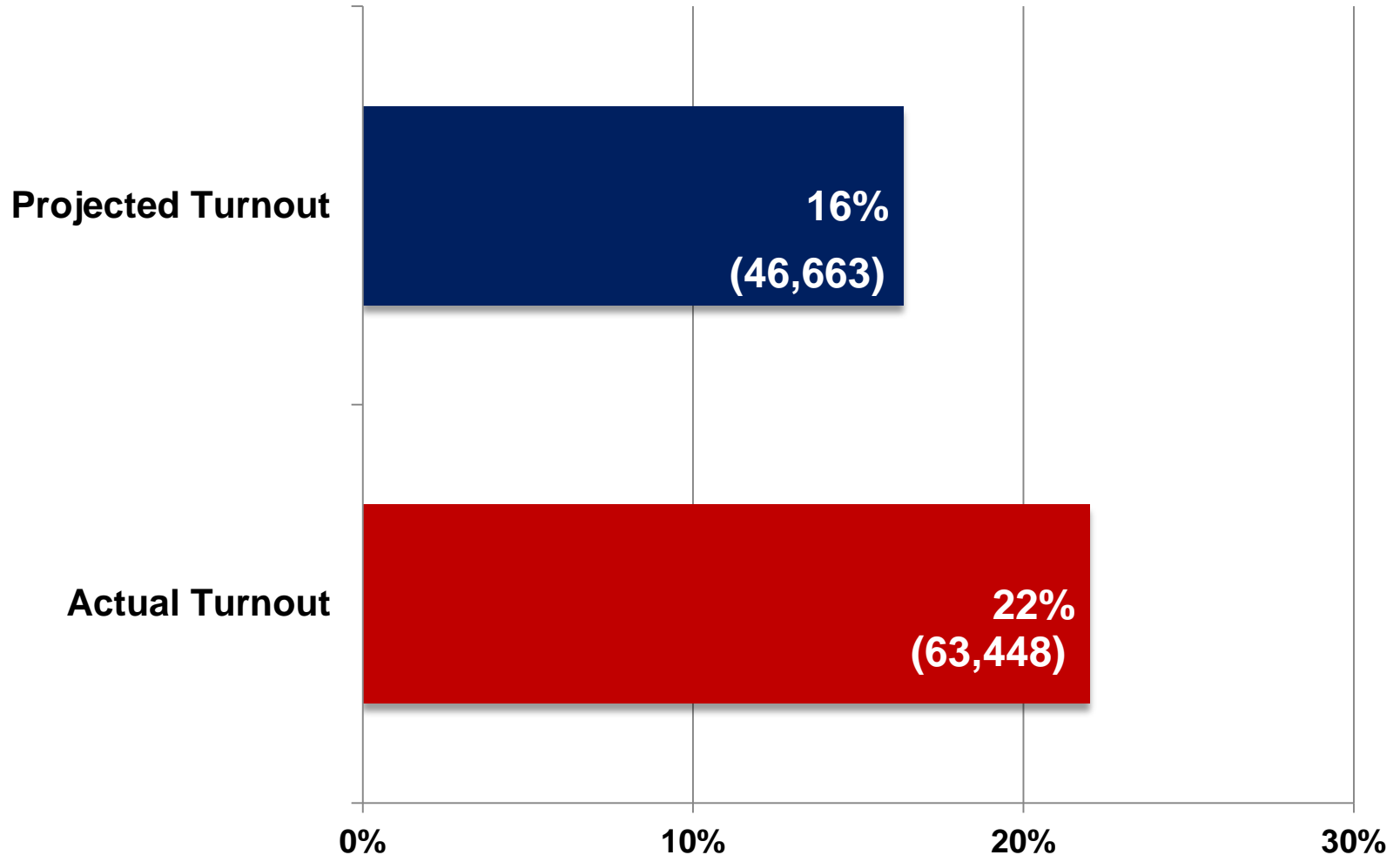
Voter Registration



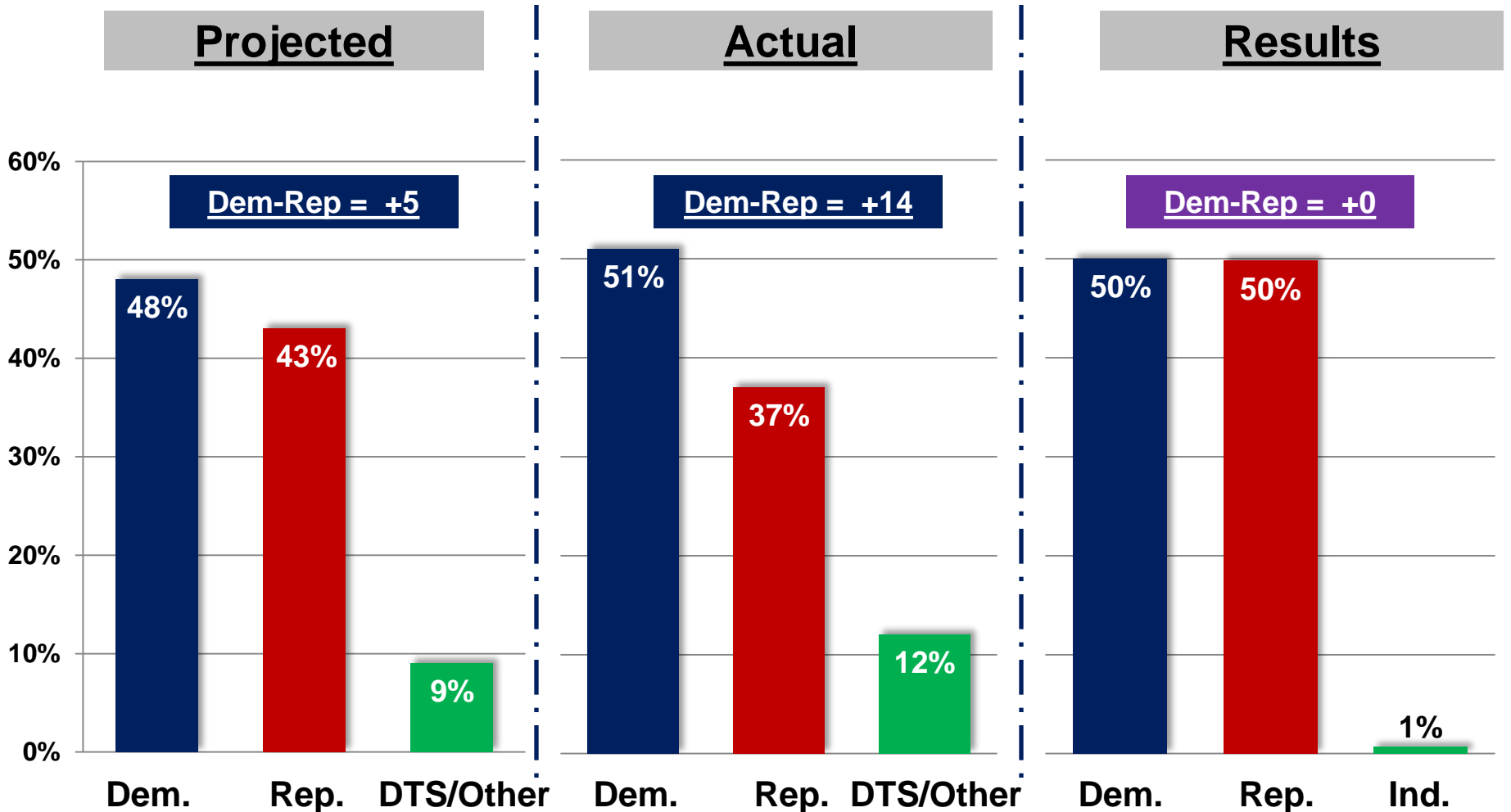
Democrat-Republican
Registration Advantage: +22

- **285,205 registered voters**

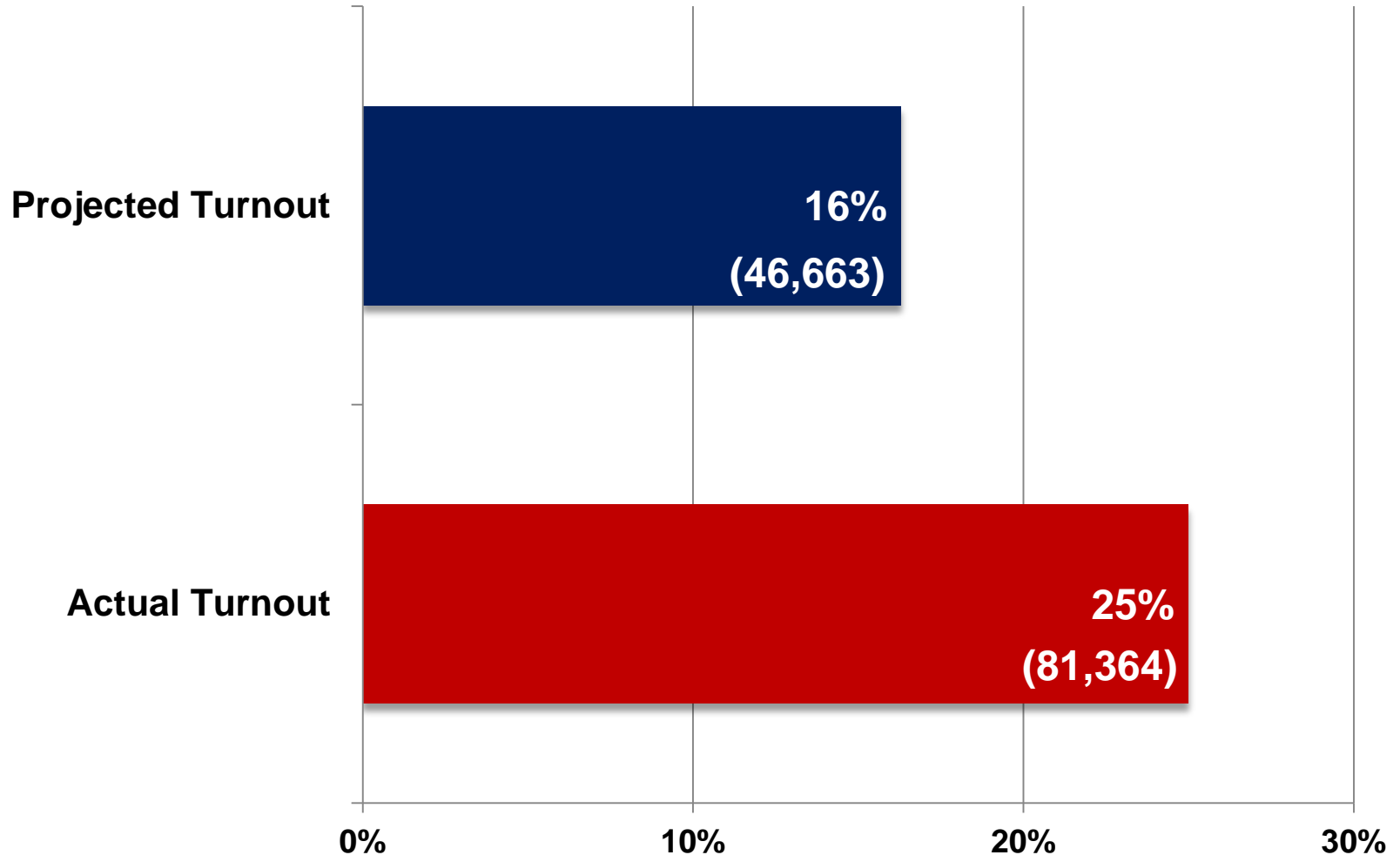
CA Senate District 16 Primary: Projected vs. Actual Turnout



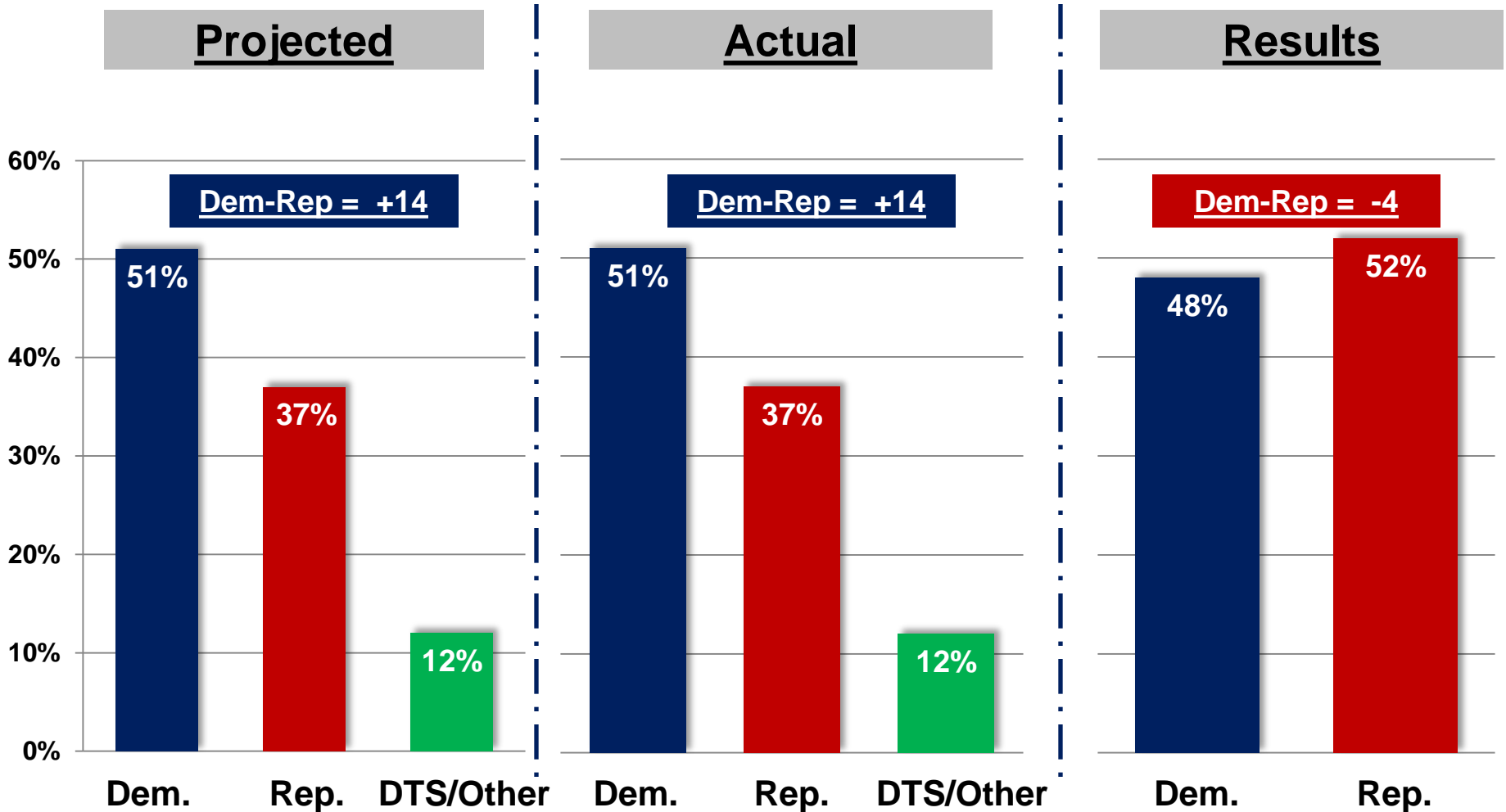
CA Senate District 16 Primary: Projected vs. Actual Party Breakdown of Electorate



CA Senate District 16 General: Projected vs. Actual Turnout



CA Senate District 16 General : Projected vs. Actual Party Breakdown of Electorate



Predicting the Unpredictable – Modeling Turnout in Unprecedented/Special Elections

December 2013