

Taking a deeper look at Hispanic voting patterns in South Florida

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Background and Qualifications

This conducted report is a response to the redistricting boundaries under consideration by the Florida Legislature. The project began with an interest in understanding how the Latino population in Florida would be affected by these new districts. We gathered precinct-level election data and precinct-level demographics in Miami-Dade County for every general election between 2012-2020, focusing on Presidential, U.S. Senate, Gubernatorial, U.S. Congressional, and State Legislative races— a total of over 85 races. From these races, we then selected 13 to be further analyzed to provide us with a greater understanding of the effects of redistricting on the Latino population. This report outlines these findings.

Executive Summary

South Florida³ has a population of over 4.7 million, the majority of the region comprised of Hispanic or Latino⁴ residents. However, South Florida is home to one of the most diverse Latino communities anywhere in the country. In the 1990s a clear majority of Latinos in South Florida were Cuban. This is no longer the case today. Demographics have shifted substantially over the past 30 years, where today 55% of Latinos in South Florida are not Cuban American. While the region has a total Latino population of almost 2.5 million, only about 1.1 million are Cuban. The

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³ Here we refer to South Florida as Miami-Dade, Broward and Monroe Counties

⁴ We use the term Latino in this report to describe people of Latin American ancestry.

remaining 1.4 million are non-Cuban and composed of large South American, Central American, Puerto Rican, Mexican and Dominican populations.

Given the diversity within the Latino population, voting data make clear that it is not accurate to speak about “the Latino vote” as one cohesive bloc. A close look at the data reveals that while there are patterns of cohesive voting, there are separate and distinct Latino voting blocs that vary by geography and ethnicity. On one hand, a vibrant and generally cohesive Cuban community exists that supports common candidates of choice. On the other hand, non-Cuban Latinos also have numerous majority-Latino, non-Cuban communities, which demonstrate patterns of majority support for their candidates of choice. However, non-Cuban Latinos regularly vote for different candidates of choice than do majority-Cuban Latino communities. Thus, it can be concluded that grouping all Latino voters as a single cohesive voting block is not supported by the data.

Our main findings are:

- The Latino population in South Florida and Miami-Dade is growing and diversifying. Today, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe Counties combined are 53% Latino and in Miami-Dade, 69% of the population is Latino.
- Cubans, which used to be a dominant bloc in this region, are only 24% of all voters in South Florida, while the remaining 76% consist of non-Cuban Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, and White non-Hispanics. In Miami-Dade, Cubans make up 35% of the population. Today, non-Cuban Latinos have grown substantially across the entire region.
- Among Latinos in South Florida in 2020, 55% are non-Cuban.
- While Cubans continue to vote fairly cohesively in support of Republican candidates, other non-Cuban Latino groups do not follow the same voting patterns.
- These two distinct Latino electorates should be considered separately when drawing districts and considering districts that perform for minority candidates of choice. In areas of high Cuban concentration such as around Hialeah can and should remain cohesive Latino-majority Cuban American political districts.
- However in areas further to the east and south in Miami-Dade county Latino populations are less likely to be Cuban, and less likely to be voting in alignment with Cuban Americans. These areas still represent Latino-majority cohesive political districts, but it dilutes their vote to be grouped in with large Cuban communities which regularly vote in opposite directions to other Latinos.
- It also means that campaigns will need to tailor their messaging and outreach to the different segments of Latino voters to more effectively campaign on policy issues.

Background

Historically, South Florida has been home to one of the largest communities of Cuban descent in the United States. Cubans have dominated the political story of Latinos in Florida for decades, but the landscape is shifting. We focus our results on Miami-Dade, though a large Latino population is also found in Monroe and Broward counties. From 2010 to 2020, the population in Miami-Dade has grown by 205,322 people⁵. However, all segments are not growing equally. While the Latino population has increased by 233,079, the non-Latino population has declined by 27,754 in this same timeframe. The census indicates that the Latino population in Miami-Dade is diversifying. While the Cuban population grew by 110,679 between the 2010 and 2020 census, other Latino populations in Miami-Dade grew by a total of 122,400. The following table shows the population in 2010 and 2020 in Miami-Dade, along with the growth experienced at the county level for non-Latinos, Latinos as a whole, Cubans specifically, and non-Cuban Latinos.

Demographics of Miami-Dade

	2010	2020	Growth
Total	2,496,435	2,701,767	205,322
Non-Latino	872,576	844,829	-27,754
Latino	1,623,859	1,856,938	233,076
Cuban⁶	876,247	986,926	110,679
Other Latino	747,612	870,012	122,400

While Cuban voters make up roughly 35% of the electorate, the share of non-Cuban Latinos are growing. We see this trend continue particularly among South American, Central American, and Puerto Rican Latinos. The growth of these other national origin groups is leading to more diversity among the Latino vote in the county.

Using a shapefile of the precincts in Miami-Dade, along with the Florida tract shapefile with 2019 American Communities Survey (ACS) national origin estimates, we were able to overlay the files to create estimates for the percent Cuban population for each precinct.

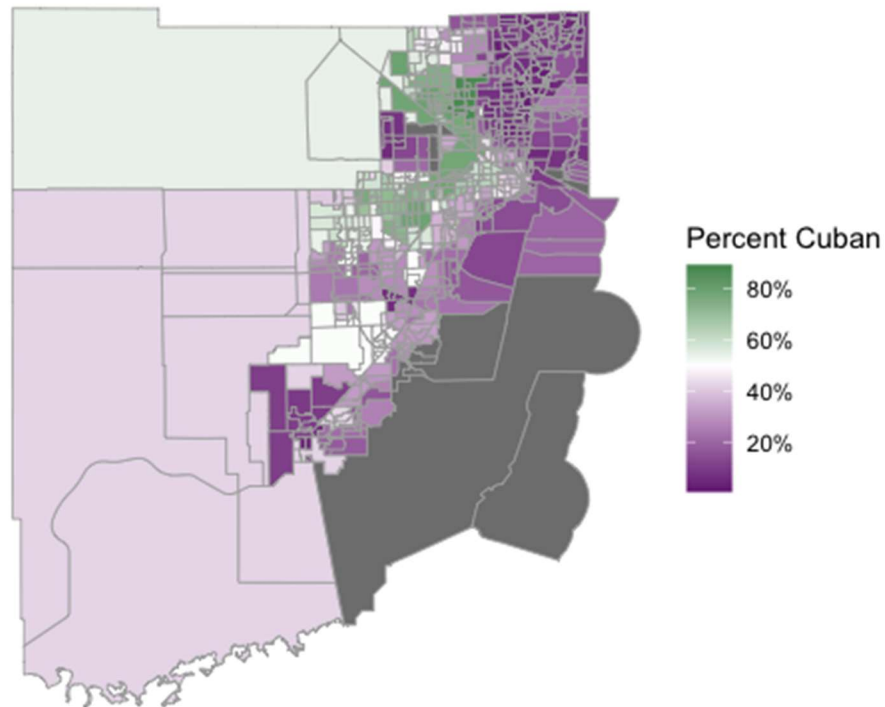
Figure 1 displays our results. In Miami-Dade County, Cubans are highly concentrated in Hialeah, Corral Terrace, and in the Kendall West/ Kendale Lakes area.

Minority Vote Cohesion

⁵ Comparing Census 2020 Redistricting Data PL 94-171 to Census 2010 Redistricting Data PL 94-171.

⁶ Cuban and Other Latino estimates for 2020 are derived from percent of all Latinos who are Cuban in the 2019 Census ACS data and multiplied by the total Latino population in the 2020 Census.

Figure 1 Miami-Dade estimated percent Cuban precincts



The report seeks to identify minority vote cohesion among Latino voters in Miami-Dade County. In *Thornburg v. Gingles*, the Supreme Court provided the elemental test for vote dilution claims under § 2 of the Voting Rights Act. Moderately, § 2 requires plaintiffs to prove that voting patterns within the challenged jurisdiction are polarized; it examines if voters of different racial and ethnic backgrounds tend to prefer various or similar candidates. Similarly, racially polarized voting (RPV)— voters of different racial or ethnic groups exhibiting different candidate preferences in an election, demonstrates that voters of different groups are voting in polar opposite directions, rather than in a coalition.

In this report, we examine if there is cohesion among voters across Latino majority precincts or if Latino voters are expressing different candidate preferences. Voters may vote for their candidates of choice for a variety of reasons. RPV statistical analysis is not concerned with why voters make decisions. Instead, RPV reports how voters are voting by measuring the outcomes of voting patterns and determines whether patterns track with the race/ethnicity demographics of neighborhoods, cities, and voting precincts.

Cubans in South Florida are known for their support of Republican candidates, in contrast to other Latino voting blocs in the U.S., such as Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, who are more likely to support Democratic candidates. This voting trend, discussed in historical precinct

and polling analysis and academic research⁷, is especially true for Cubans living in Miami-Dade. Because of the greater diversity in the Latino population in Miami-Dade, there may be two Latino electorates: one primarily consisting of Cuban Voters who vote similarly for Republican candidates and the other composed of non-Cuban Latino voters who tend to favor Democratic candidates.

Ecological Analysis of Latino Population

Interested in whether there is vote cohesion of Latino voters among different ethnic groups, we used a form of ecological analysis. We presented the relationship between the percent of registered Latino voters and candidate vote choice through scatterplots. These plots allow us to easily see the vote a candidate received in each precinct on the vertical Y-axis against the percent Latino within each precinct on the horizontal X-axis. These graphs are fitted with a loess regression line, demonstrating the smoothed average of percent Latino on vote share. Since more heavily Latino precincts tend to be mostly Cuban, we can see the voting patterns of these Latino groups.

Further explanation of these graphs can be found below.

Races Selected

We conducted an ecological analysis on 13 different elections. All of the elections analyzed in this report, featuring the two Republican and Democratic candidates and their vote shares, are in the table below. We begin with the 2020 Presidential election. The 2020 Presidential election is a critical starting point due to the public interest in the Latino voting patterns of Miami-Dade County. Additionally, we can examine all of the precincts in the County rather than a subset of the precincts. Next, we look at the U.S. Congressional Districts 26 and 27. These two races were selected because of their close margins and the impact that the Latino community had on the outcomes. We then examine Florida State Senate District 39 in 2020 and 2016 as well as Florida State Senate District 36 in 2018 and 2016. These two districts were selected based on the size of their Latino populations. We conclude our 13 elections by examining Florida State House seats 111 and 120 in 2020, 2018, and 2016. While the State House seat 111 is not a particularly close election, this seat has a large Cuban population and is a majority Latino population. Seat 120, on the other hand, has fewer Latinos, but the portion of precincts in Miami-Dade is a more ethnically diverse Latino electorate. Focusing on two districts over multiple years allows us to contrast the voting patterns within, but also across these races.

⁷ Alvarez, R. M., & Bedolla, L. G. (2003). The foundations of Latino voter partisanship: Evidence from the 2000 election. *The Journal of Politics*, 65(1), 31-49.

Bishin, B. G., & Klofstad, C. A. (2012). The political incorporation of Cuban Americans: Why won't little Havana turn blue?. *Political Research Quarterly*, 65(3), 586-599.

Moreno, D., & Warren, C. (2018). The conservative enclave revisited: Cuban Americans in Florida. In *Ethnic Ironies* (pp. 169-184). Routledge.

Race	Year	Democratic Candidate	Republican Candidate	Democratic Vote Share	Republican Vote Share
Presidential Election	2020	Biden	Trump	53.31	45.98
U.S. Congressional D26	2020	Mucarsel-Powell	Gimenez	48.7	51.3
U.S. Congressional D27	2020	Shalala	Salazar	48.57	51.3
State Senate D39	2020	Fernandez	Rodriguez	43.09	55.43
Florida State House 111	2020	Hancock	Avila	35.13	64.87
Florida State House 120	2020	Barras	Mooney	47.74	52.26
State Senate D36	2018	Perez	Diaz	45.94	54.06
Florida State House 111	2018	Ahmed	Avila	37.83	62.17
Florida State House 120	2018	Friedman	Raschein	52.66	47.34
State Senate D36	2016	Peralta	Garcia	44.98	55.02
State Senate D39	2016	Mucarsel-Powell	Flores	45.72	54.28
Florida State House 111	2016	Miyar	Avila	40.82	59.18
Florida State House 120	2016	Horton	Raschein	52.56	47.44

Using the Miami-Dade precinct level results along with the voter registration demographics, we were able to subset the data to precincts where the percent of registered Latinos is equal to 50% or more of the registered voters. The table below presents the two-candidate vote share in majority Latino precincts for each race analyzed.

Race	Year	Democratic Candidate	Republican Candidate	Dem Vote Latino precincts	Rep Vote Latino precincts
Presidential Election	2020	Biden	Trump	44.21	55.80
U.S. Congressional D26	2020	Mucarsel-Powell	Gimenez	46.28	53.72
U.S. Congressional D27	2020	Shalala	Salazar	43.73	56.27
State Senate D39	2020	Fernandez	Rodriguez	40.77	59.22
Florida State House 111	2020	Hancock	Avila	34.70	65.30
Florida State House 120	2020	Barras	Mooney	45.29	51.70
State Senate D36	2018	Perez	Diaz	43.58	56.42
Florida State House 111	2018	Ahmed	Avila	37.83	62.17
Florida State House 120	2018	Friedman	Raschein	58.11	41.89
State Senate D36	2016	Peralta	Garcia	42.74	57.26
State Senate D39	2016	Mucarsel-Powell	Flores	41.62	58.37
Florida State House 111	2016	Miyar	Avila	40.82	59.18
Florida State House 120	2016	Horton	Raschein	59.21	40.79

Analysis of Voting Patterns

In Figure 2, we present the results from subtracting the precinct level Trump 2020 vote from the Biden 2020 vote. Blue shading indicates precincts where Biden received more votes than Trump, with darker blue indicating larger Biden wins. Inversely, light reds are precincts where Trump received more votes than Biden, with dark reds denoting larger Trump wins. The following maps demonstrate that areas where the Cuban population is higher also have a higher share of Trump voters.

Figure 2 Biden-Trump Vote 2020

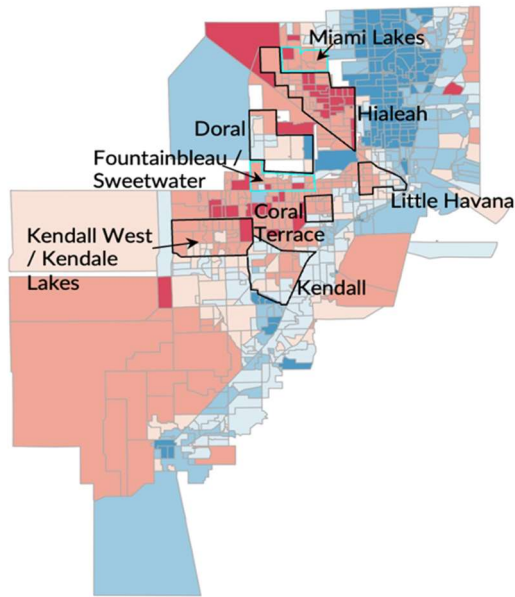
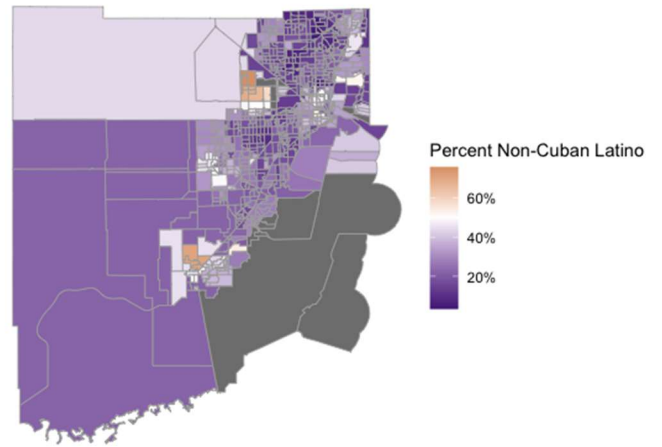


Figure 2 Percent Non-Cuban Latino Precincts

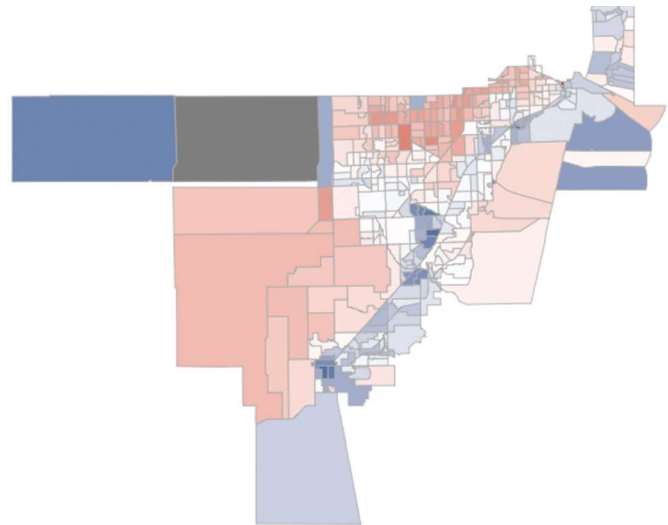


There are many Latino precincts, in which the dominant population is of a racial/ethnic group other than Cuban-American, where Biden received more votes than Trump. Using the same ACS data, we were able to similarly estimate the percentage of the non-Cuban Latino population in each precinct. Precincts, where non-Cuban-Latinos make up 50% or more of the population, were less likely to vote for Trump. A similar pattern was seen in Congressional Races for District 26 and 27. This suggests that there are two Latino electorates in Miami-Dade, one comprised of Cuban voters who historically tend to support Republican candidates and another electorate of non-Cuban Latinos that vote differently from the Cuban population.

Miami Dade Congressional Districts 26 and 27

Figure 4 shows recent voting patterns for Congressional Districts 26 and 27. Darker blue indicates larger Democratic vote in the precinct while darker red indicates that the Republican received a larger percent of the precinct level vote. To visualize the vote share by the percent Latino population, Figure 5 displays the precinct level results in the form of a scatter plot with a loess fitted line that allows us to easily visualize the average level of support for the candidates.

Figure 3 CD 26 and 27 Precinct Results



To make these scatter plots, we took the precinct level voter registration data from the Miami-Dade voter registration statistics page posted on the county website⁸ for the month of the election in question and merged this with the precinct level election results.⁹ Since Miami-Dade includes information on the number of Latino voters registered in each precinct, we are able to report the actual percent of registered Latino voters. In Figure 6, we used the 2019 ACS census tract data to estimate the percent Cuban population at the precinct level.

On each scatterplot, the x-axis represents the percent of the population while the y-axis represents the percent of the vote share. Typically, the starting point for the x axis is 0, and will go up to 100. There are some instances, particularly when looking at the percent Latino, when the precincts in a district will not have precincts that are 100% Latino. In these cases, we will shorten the x axis to the appropriate end point for the precincts in question. The y-axis displays the percent of the vote that a candidate received. Each precinct in a particular race is represented twice on the plot, once denoting the percent that the Democratic candidate received, and again denoting the percent the Republican candidate received. Each plot has two lines demonstrating a smoothed average of percent Latino on vote share, using a loess procedure, which fits a local average and smooths the estimated average across the series. The red line is the estimated average vote share for the Republican candidate, and the blue line is the estimated average vote share for the Democratic candidate. These two lines roughly mirror each other, with the exception for cases where there is a large third-party vote. For example, in figure 5, for precincts where the percent registered Latino is 25%, the Republican received an average of 38% of the vote. For precincts where the percent registered Latino is 25%, it is estimated that the Democrat received an average of 62% of the vote.

⁸ <https://www.miamidade.gov/elections/voter-statistics-current-archive.html>

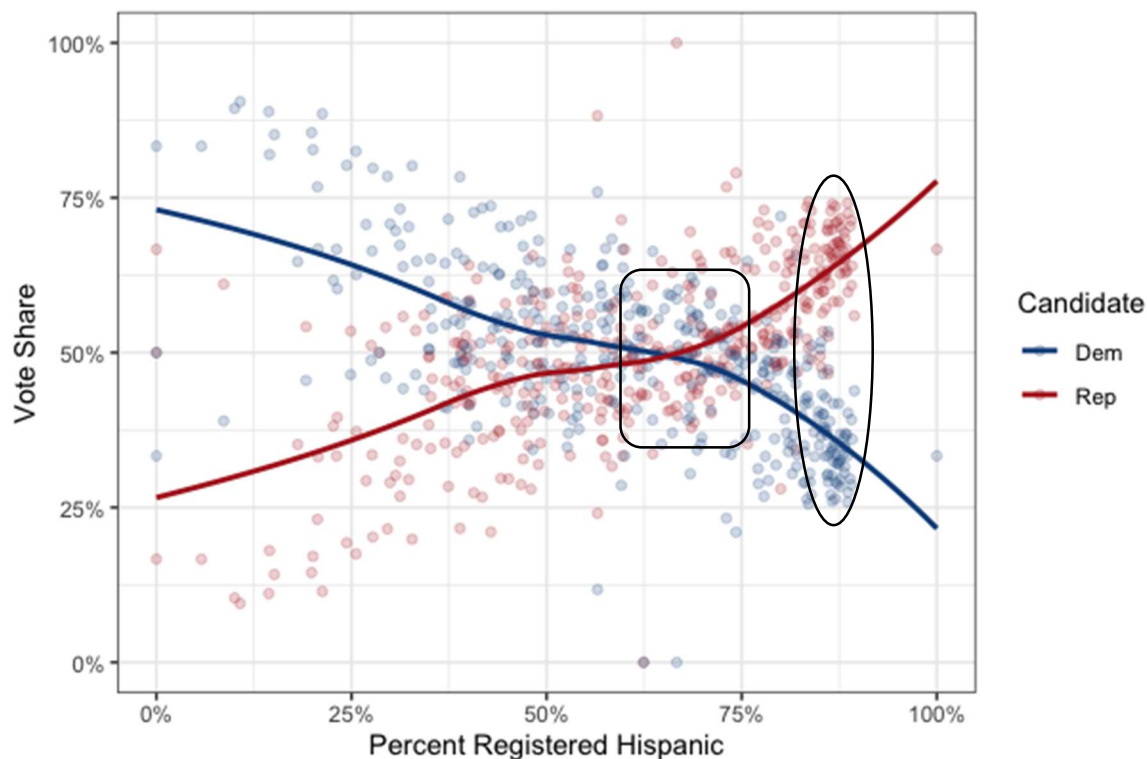
⁹ <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/elections/election-results-archive.page>

Figure 5 displays the results by precinct for Congressional Districts 26 and 27 in 2020. Precincts with a larger percentage of registered Latinos, trend more Republican, but the story is a bit more nuanced. It isn't until a precinct is 65% registered Latino that the precincts trends indicate a greater vote share going to the Republican candidate. Looking back at what we know from the census data, these precincts are precincts where non-Cuban Latinos reside. Our estimated non-Cuban Latino precinct populations aren't ever more than 75% non-Cuban Latino. But because there are some very densely populated Cuban areas in Miami-Dade, we know that the precincts with 75% percent registered Latinos and higher are much likely to be either entirely Cuban, or a mix of non-Cuban Latino voters, with Cuban Latino voters making up a large segment of the registered voters.

In Figure 5, once we cross the threshold of 75% registered Latinos, we see the voting patterns strongly diverge. While the precincts that are more likely to have non-Cuban Latinos vote for the two Democratic candidates, the likely Cuban precincts are voting much more strongly Republican. Precincts that have 85% registered Latino voters are voting 62% Republican and about 38% Democratic. This is about a 10% increase in the Republican vote share compared to precincts that are 75% Latino, and a 17% increase compared to precincts that are 50% Latino, indicating that there is not cohesion among all Latino voters in Districts 26 and 27 in Miami-Dade.

Figure 4 Vote Share for CD 26 & 27 by Percent Latino

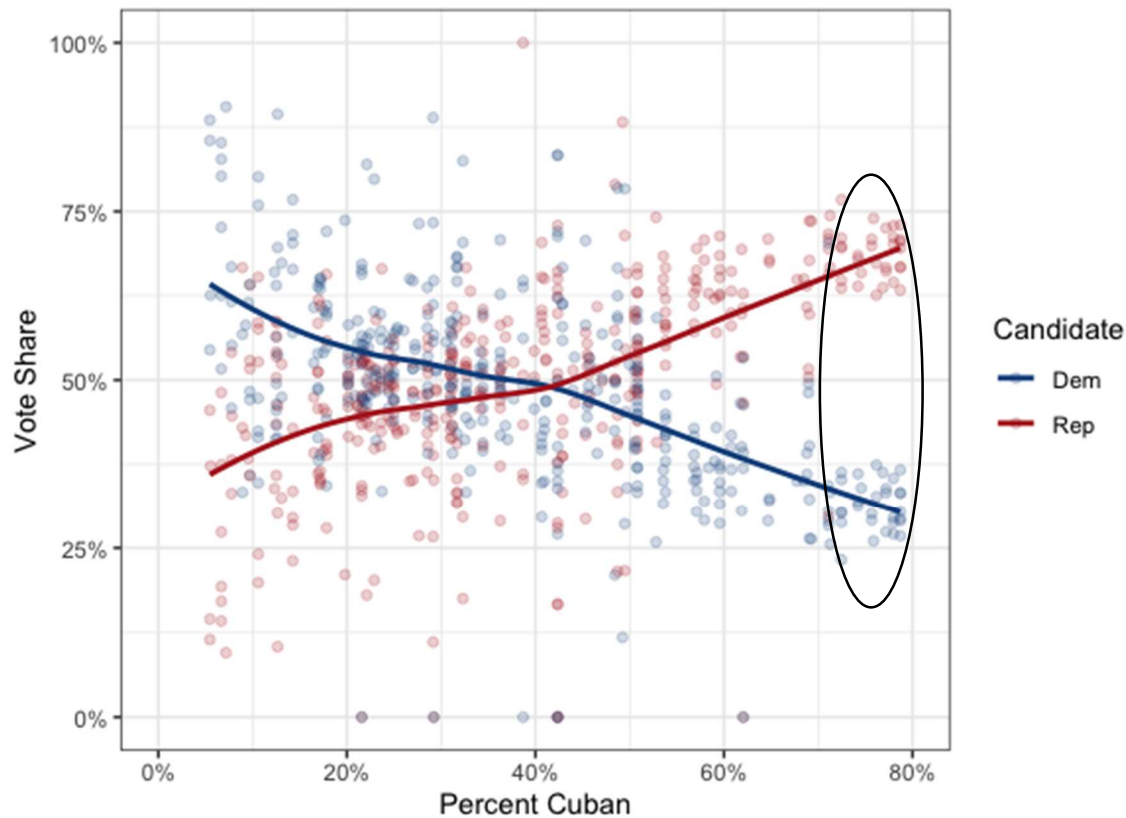
**U.S. House of Representatives District 26 & 27
By Percent Hispanic Precincts
Miami-Dade 2020**



These data suggest there is cohesion in voting preferences among the Cuban population. In figure 6, we use our estimated Cuban precinct level population, with the same precincts, and election results in Districts 26 and 27. The Cuban voting pattern becomes more pronounced. Any precinct with a more than 40% Cuban population statistically is extremely likely to support the Republican candidate. Precincts that are estimated to be 80% Cuban vote closer to 70% Republican, suggesting that over 80% of Cuban voters in these precincts prefer the Republican candidate. In precincts where the Cuban population is much smaller, we find that Democrats received a larger vote share relative to the Republican congressional candidates. This tells us that when we look at the percent Latino metric, the precincts that are in the 50-70% range are more likely non-Cuban Latino or a mix of non-Cuban Latino voters and Cuban voters. The preferences of the non-Cuban Latino population are indeed different from the Cuban Latino population in Miami-Dade. Because their candidate preferences are divergent, Cubans in these districts can deny the non-Cuban Latinos the opportunity to elect their candidates of choice.

Figure 5 CD 26 & 27 by Estimated Percent Cuban

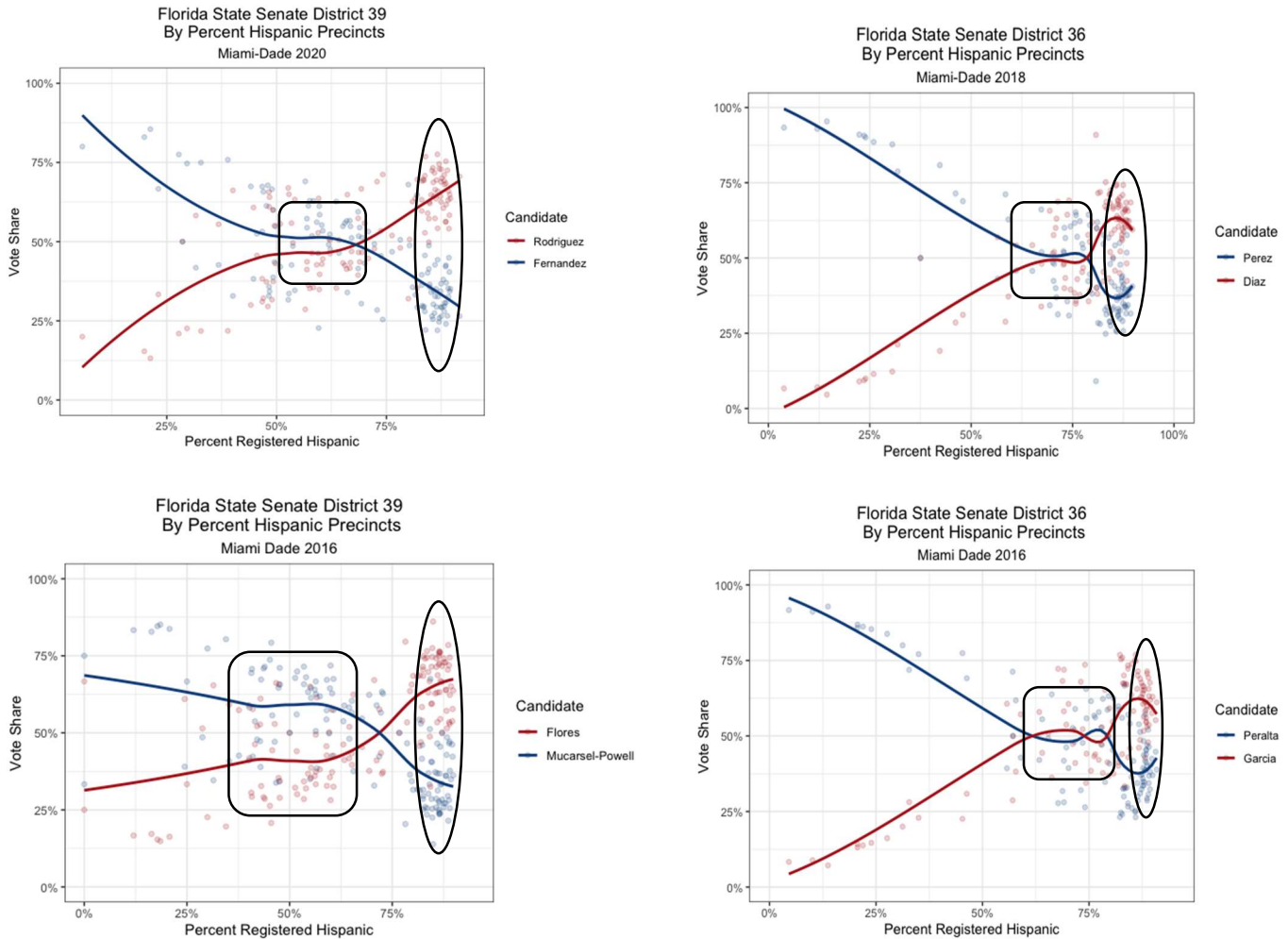
U.S. House of Representatives District 26 & 27 By Percent Cuban Miami-Dade 2020



State Senate Races

The impact of these two Latino electorates can be seen not only at the congressional level but also in the state Senate and state House of Representative races. Below we provide four examples of state Senate races and their results from precincts in Miami-Dade for Senate District 39 in 2020 and 2016, along with Senate District 36 in 2018 and 2016.

Figure 6 State Senate Races by Percent Hispanic



Senate District 39

Senate District 39, in 2020, Republican Ana Maria Rodriguez won 55.6% of the vote against Democrat Javier Fernandez, who received 42.8% of the vote. In Miami-Dade, Rodriguez's votes came from heavily Latino precincts that we have determined to be primarily Cuban. In precincts

where Latinos make up greater than 75% of the vote, Rodriguez received, on average, close to 70% of the vote share. However, in precincts where Latinos made up 50-70% of the registered voters, Fernandez received a slight majority of the votes (approximately 52%). This indicates that over half of the voters in these precincts prefer the Democratic candidate.

In that same seat in 2016, Anitere Flores, the Republican, won with 54.24% against Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, who received 45.76% of the vote. Like Fernandez, Mucarsel-Powell performed better than her Republican opponent in precincts where Latinos made up 50-70% of the registered voters. Her average support for these precincts is 60%. We find that Flores' support majorly came from the precincts where Latinos make up more than 75% of the precinct in these heavily Cuban areas.

Senate District 36

In 2018, Manny Diaz won Senate District 36 with 54.1% of the vote against Democrat David Perez, who received 45.9% of the vote share. Perez, the Democratic candidate, performed well in precincts with fewer registered Latinos and outperformed Diaz in precincts that are 50-75% Latino. However, as precincts approach 80% Latino, we find a sharp and dramatic shift in favor of Diaz, with precincts averaging 65% Republican.

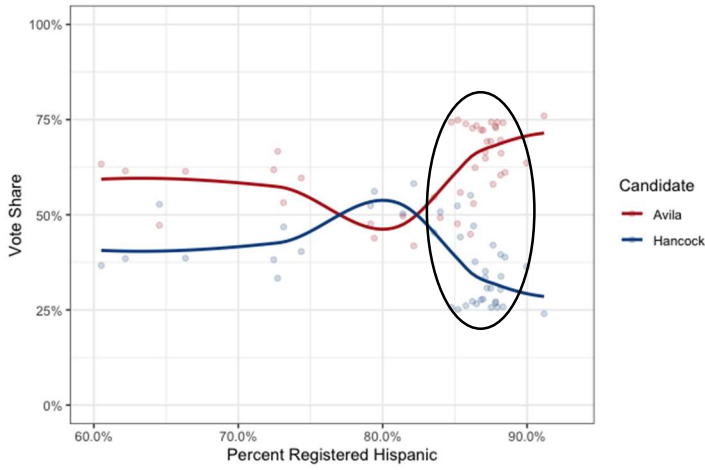
We have a similar finding for Senate District 36 in 2016 when Republican Rene Garcia received 55.02% of the vote against Democrat Anabella Peralta, who received 44.98% of the vote. Though Peralta's support is somewhat mixed in precincts that are 50-75% Latino, she and Garcia split the vote about 50-50. Their paths diverge among precincts where Latinos make up 80% or more of registered voters. The precincts with a large Cuban population once again play a critical role in the political outcome.

State House Races

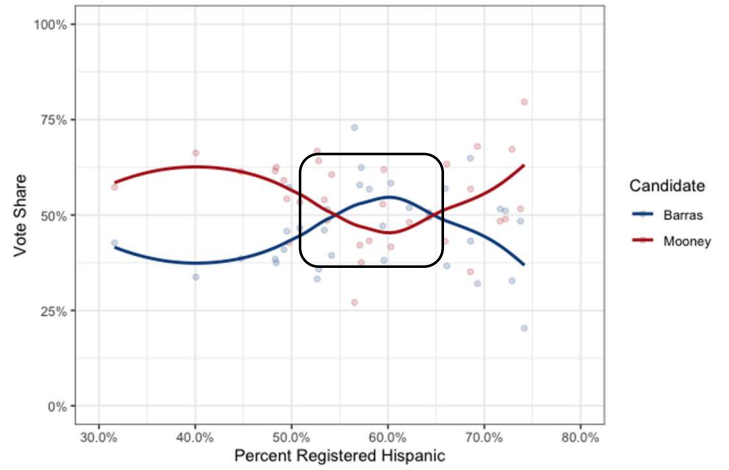
With multiple examples of races and elections over time, we chose to examine two State House races over three different election cycles. By focusing on two races over time, we can demonstrate a recurring pattern and the existence of two separate Latino electorates. We also find that the preferences of the Cuban voters typically outweigh those of non-Cuban Latinos in the districts studied. The two districts we focus on are District 111 and District 120, which have precincts with different demographic makeups and illustrate how the different Latino populations voted in the last three elections.

Figure 7 State House Races by Percent Hispanic

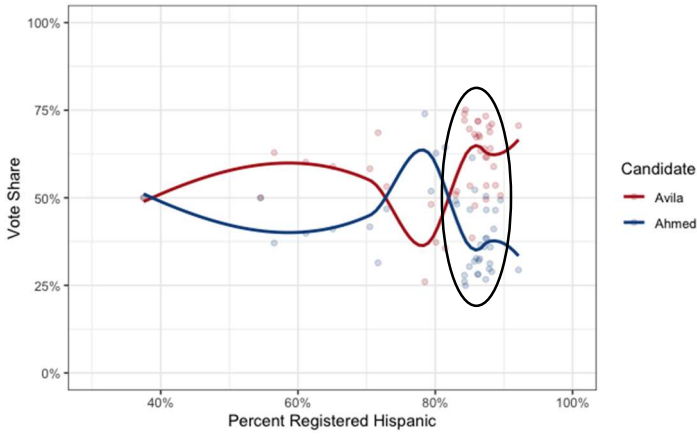
Florida House of Representatives District 111
By Percent Hispanic Precincts
Miami-Dade 2020



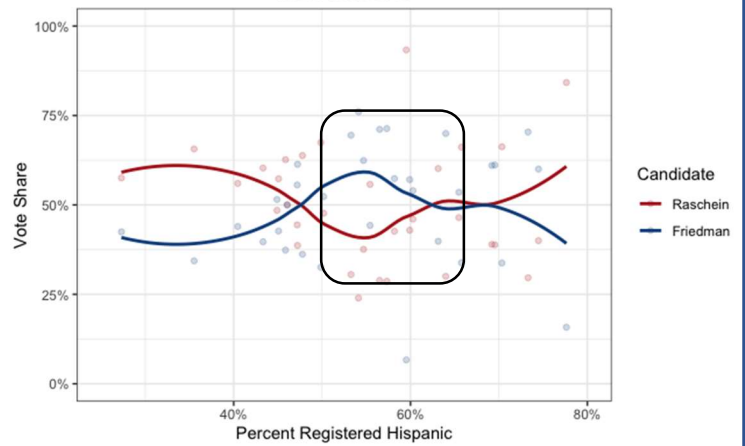
Florida House of Representatives District 120
By Percent Hispanic Precincts
Miami-Dade 2020



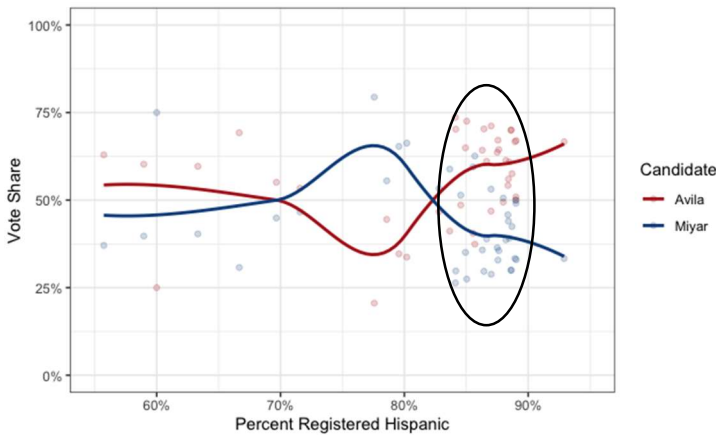
Florida House of Representatives District 111
By Percent Hispanic Precincts
Miami-Dade 2018



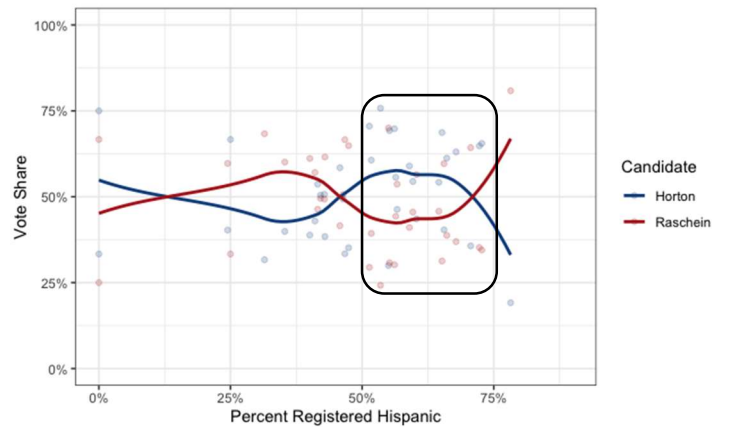
Florida House of Representatives District 120
By Percent Hispanic Precincts
Miami-Dade 2018



Florida House of Representatives District 111
By Percent Hispanic Precincts
Miami Dade 2016



Florida House of Representatives District 120
By Percent Hispanic Precincts
Miami Dade 2016



State House District 111

District 111 is an interesting example because it is a majority Latino district. In 2020 the overall electorate was 84.22% Latino. This district also includes the Hialeah neighborhood, which is predominantly Cuban. In 2020, the Republican candidate, Avila, won the district with 64% of the vote, while the Democrat, Hancock, received 35.1%. In this district, in 2020, there were very few precincts under 80% Latino. We find that there are a couple of precincts where Latinos make up 80% of registered voters that the Democratic candidate won, though, in precincts where the percentage of registered Latino is above 85%, we see strong bloc voting.

In 2018 we found a similar story. Avila, the Republican candidate, won the district with 62.2% of the vote and Democratic challenger, Ahmed, received 37.8% of the vote. Ahmed did slightly better relative to the 2020 Democratic candidate and received about 60% of the vote in precincts that are between 70 and 80% Latino. In precincts where Latinos make up 85% of the vote, Avila, the Republican incumbent, again breaks away from the Democratic challenger with 63% of the vote.

In 2016 in District 111, Avila received 59.18% of the vote, while the Democratic challenger Miyar received 40.82%. In this election, despite the vote share being closer than in 2018 and 2020, we still see strong evidence of bloc voting in these heavily Latino precincts. With the district's electorate between 82.4 and 84.2% Latino, precincts in this district that are almost all majority Latino, and trends not linear in any of the three elections, a clear indication is made that there is a different segment of Latino voters that are not voting cohesively with the rest of the Latino electorate.

State House District 120

The demographics of District 120 are quite different from those in District 111. District 120's Miami-Dade precincts range from 50-70% registered Latino, with a few in the 70-75% range. In 2020, the Republican candidate, Mooney, received 55.0% of the vote, while Barras, the Democratic candidate, received 45.0%. We found that the precincts that are 50-64% Latino went to Barras with an estimated 55% of the vote. Precincts between 65-75% Latino went to Mooney with about 60% of the vote. While most of the precincts are predominantly Latino, there are fewer homogeneously Cuban precincts. Though the Cuban voting bloc may not be as pronounced as District 111, there are still indications that even among more diverse districts, these heavily Latino precincts are more Cuban and vote differently from the rest of the precincts.

In 2018, Raschein, the Republican candidate, received 53.1% of the vote, while Friedman, the Democratic candidate, received 46.9%. The Democratic candidate outperformed the Republican candidate again in precincts that are 50-60% Latino. The Republican candidate was again able to increase their momentum in precincts where Latinos make up more than 65% of the precinct.

Finally, in 2016, Republican candidate, Raschein, received 57.31% of the voters, and Democratic candidate, Horton received 42.69%. In precincts where the percentage of registered Latinos ranges between 20% and 45%, we found that the Republican candidate garners more of the vote than the Democratic candidate. When the precincts become majority Latino, the Democratic candidate receives an estimated 57% of the vote. This trend reverses itself with Republicans receiving a greater vote share in precincts that are 70% Latino or greater. By grouping the slight majority Latino precincts with the heavily Latino precincts, along with the precincts that are non-majority Latino precincts, we find that the preferences of the non-Cuban Latinos in this district are not likely to be successful.

Conclusion

This report draws on census data, precinct-level voter registration data, and precinct-level results to understand how the changes in the Latino population in Miami-Dade have impacted the voting patterns of Latino voters in Miami-Dade. The data examined provided us with statistical evidence that there are two Latino electorates in Miami-Dade. The first Latino electorate, well known and often discussed, is the Cuban vote. The second is the less widely discussed non-Cuban Latino vote, which accounts for 55% of South Florida's Latino community.

The differences between these two electorates go beyond differences in national origin. It is clear that there are real and important differences in their political preferences. While the Cuban population continues to support the Republican party, non-Cuban Latinos are more likely to support Democratic candidates.

The voting differences between these two electorates should be taken into account when drawing district boundaries. We agree that preserving the Latino ability-to-elect is important, but when drawing new district boundaries, we need to stop and ask ourselves which Latino electorate are these boundaries serving? Are non-Cuban Latinos afforded the same ability to elect candidates of their preference, and how does this impact the Cuban electorate? Continuing to draw lines based on this faulty assumption may also pose risks to the choices of the Cuban bloc electorate as its overall numbers appear to wane in the future. The data clearly shows that all Latino voters do not vote the same in South Florida, and therefore, continuing to draw lines based on this assumption denies all Latino voters the ability to elect candidates of their choice.

More about the report authors

Dr. Matt Barreto was appointed Full Professor with tenure at UCLA in 2015. Prior to this, he was a tenured professor of Political Science at the University of Washington from 2005 to 2014. At UCLA, Dr. Barreto is the faculty director of the Voting Rights Project in the Luskin School of Public Affairs and teaches a year-long course on the Voting Rights Act (VRA), focusing specifically on social science statistical analysis, demographics, and voting patterns that are relevant in VRA expert reports. He has written expert reports and been qualified as an expert witness more than three-dozen times in federal and state voting rights and civil rights cases. He has been retained as an expert consultant by counties and states across the country in 2021 to advise them on racial voting patterns as they relate to VRA compliance during redistricting. Dr. Barreto has taught additional courses in Racial and Ethnic Politics, Electoral Politics, Introduction to Statistical Analysis, and Advanced Statistical Analysis to Ph.D. students. In 2005, he earned a Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of California, Irvine, with an emphasis on racial and ethnic politics in the United States, political behavior, and public opinion. He has published multiple peer-reviewed academic research papers on analyzing racially polarized voting, estimating candidate support with ecological inference, Latino voting behavior, and a number of other works on research methods and minority politics.

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