The Decisive Vote?
How Latinos Voted and What It Means for Policy

Andrew Selee:
This is, I think, as you all know, a place where public policy and research meet. They bring together the world of ideas with your world of policy action. Very happy that Cynthia Arnson, the director of our Latin American program, is here this morning. Also want to acknowledge Miguel Salazar, who had a lot to do with the planning of this event on our end. And of course, very pleased that this is a event we're cosponsoring with ImmigrationWorks, which really did most of the organization of this. Tamar Jacoby, you'll hear from in a minute, the president of ImmigrationWorks really put this panel together, as well as, very proud to cosponsor with Arizona State University. We have a very long relationship with Arizona State University, working on a number of issues, as does ImmigrationWorks. I want to acknowledge Lazaro Cardenas, who I see in the audience here, is a senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center, former governor of Michoacán and distinguished Mexican colleague. And many other good friends here. Good to see Dan and Roberto and many others back at the Woodrow Wilson Center. Some in new guises even, like Dan, who is now out of government and into his civilian life.

There's no doubt that the Latino vote was important in this past election. When we started to put this together, we didn't know how important it would be. This was actually an event that was planned ahead of the elections themselves, and we started it with a question mark. We decided to keep the question mark on there, only because there are, of course, many people that will claim that election outcomes were the result of different factors. But I don't think there's any doubt in it. For anyone who watched endless hours of, you know, talk TV and talk radio, the days after the elections, like me, knows that there was probably no theme that came up more often than the importance of the Latino vote. And for many of us that have followed these issues, some, like Roberto, with great expertise, others like me, with much more generality, you know, for the past couple of decades, you know, we've been saying for a long time the Latino vote is really going to matter in national elections. It's really going to -- this is going to be the year the Latino vote really comes home.

You know, I think after a while, we stopped believing it, for the most part. We kind of figured someday it will really be a decisive factor. I think you could make a plausible argument, and I suspect some of our panelists will today, that in this election it really was a decisive factor. It may not have been the only one, but it certainly was one of the decisive factors.

And there's a number of things we could ask here. First of all, how much of a decisive factor was it compared to other things? Clearly, it's one of them, but how much did it matter in the outcome? Not just in the presidential race, but obviously congressional races and many of the state races as well. Why was it such a decisive factor? Why now and not other times that many of us have predicted it? How much was immigration policy a factor in this? I mean, there's a tendency to conflate the Latino vote with immigration policy. I think you'll hear from the panelists that that is a grave error, that these are actually different things. The immigration policy has a different set of constituencies far beyond Latino voters, and Latino voters care about a lot of things beyond immigration policy. Actually, there is some sort of relationship there. So to what extent did immigration policy play into this, and are there effects on immigration policy going forward? But also there are ways that candidates approached issues that may affect the way different groups vote for them. I think that's a key question beyond specific policy. You know, the assumption is that immigration policy drove the Latino vote in a lot of the general media. There may be much more indirect correlations there, which is how candidates and how parties talk about immigrants overall. And Latinos, for the most part at this point, have closer ties to an immigrant past or an immigrant present within families, than other groups in U.S. society. And so how candidates approached immigrants rather than immigration policy may be decisive.

And let me throw out one more thing, which is, you know, there was a great commentary -- and I wish I could remember who the author was -- the day after the election, a Republican analyst who said, you know, the Republican Party did really well on Latino leaders, but not on Latino followers. And if you look at it, in fact, the two governors were Latino in this country are both Republicans. Two of the three senators who are Latino are Republicans. Republicans have not done so badly on recruiting, actually,

Latino politicians, something we could not have said 10 years ago. Democrats were way on their way. Republicans have actually caught up on this, or at least are catching up, and certainly catching up relative to the support that they have gotten from the Latino electorate.

So is there a difference between Latino leaders and Latino supporters? Does this look forward to the fact that the Republican Party is maybe getting ahead of the game and will do better in the future, or are we looking at the fact where Republicans have made those inroads are still are not able to attract the Latino vote? And the converse for Democrats. You know, are Democrats in a position to feel comfortable that what they have done is secure, a strong base of support among Latino voters and they can count on it? Or should Democrats be worried that in the long-term, Republicans may eat their lunch with some of these voters who are currently supporting them? And I think these are things you'll hear different perspectives from the group.

Now that I've made a little bit of time for some of you to arrive, let me turn it over to the real host here, and before I do that, let me acknowledge those of you that came in, actually. Good to see all of you. Tamar is being mic'd up, and Tamar Jacoby, president of ImmigrationWorks.

Tamar Jacoby:
Well, thank you so much, Andrew, and good morning, everyone. Thank you for coming and thank you for being on time. I'm Tamar Jacoby, I'm president of ImmigrationWorks USA. We're a national federation of employers, mostly small business owners, working for better immigration law. We're kind of the advocacy side of this trio, but we're not wearing our advocacy hat today. I'm very pleased to be cosponsoring the event with the Woodrow Wilson Center and the Arizona State University. So thank you, Andrew. Thank you, Cynthia Arnson, director of Latin American program here at Woodrow Wilson. Our allies at ASU, who are not here. We're very grateful to General Counsel Jose Cardenas and Vice President Jim O'Brien, who made this happen on the ASU end. And very grateful to my team, who did a terrific job in putting it together.

So I think Andrew framed the issue very nicely for us. We don't need too much more of that. You know, the frame that really says it all, in my view, is 71-27: 71 percent to 27 percent, the presidential vote margin, and it's not just

incredibly lopsided presidential vote margin. It's a presidential vote margin in the nation's fastest-growing voting bloc. A voting bloc by one estimate likely to double in size over the next 20 years. You heard me right: double in size by 2030. So, you know, anybody who didn't realize -- lot of -- some Republicans out there, and I am a Republican -- but anybody who didn't realize the Latino vote was important before November 6, you know, probably knows by now. Although I think it's true, as Andrew said, many of us who knew it was going to be important didn't really know how important and how significant and how stunning, in effect, it would be, no matter what the numbers were, how it would make an impression on the public and the political class this time.

Certainly when we planned this event, as Andrew said, we did not know. We had no idea how much attention the issue would get on the days after the election. And I think, you know, we thought that we would come on a kind of a blank slate and we would talk a little bit about how many people voted where, and we would kind of say it's going to be important going forward. Obviously our job's a little harder now because you've all read those stories. But in a way, that gives us room and our panelists room to dig a little deeper, to look into the future, to think about significance and to talk about some choices that lie ahead, that we might not have done if the issue hadn't gotten so much attention in the last couple of weeks.

So the morning is divided into two sessions. The first is a conversation about Arizona, narrowly focused on Arizona. What exactly happened in Arizona? And that needs a little bit of a kind of explanation or a disclaimer. Arizona was a little bit of an anomaly this time. Latinos made up 18 percent of the people who voted in Arizona, so one of the states with the biggest Latino vote. But Obama didn't carry the state. In fact, Romney won big. The Latino Democratic Senate candidate, Richard Carmona, didn't win. And Sheriff Joe Arpaio, scourge of immigrants -- legal and illegal -- did win reelection comfortably. So, not exactly what you would expect. Big Latino vote but it didn't translate into results. Still, we think that there's a lot that's interesting to be said about Arizona. And I won't steal the fire of the people who are going to say it. We -- obviously we're looking at it in particular because of the ASU connection, but there's a lot to learn. It's a very interesting microcosm. So the first panel is about

Arizona, with that kind of -- just to be aware of that disclaimer. We're certainly not saying Arizona is typical.

The second session will zoom out, pull back from Arizona, and look at the big picture: the scope and significance of the Latino vote nationally. And I'll say more about that when the time comes. But for now, just think I want to thank you all for being here. And let's get going. I'm going to hand the stage over to Stephen Dinan, who's the politics editor of The Washington Times, who's going to conduct a conversation about Arizona with Rodolfo Espino, who's an associate professor in the School of Politics at ASU. So thank you, Stephen. Thank you, Rudy. Take it away.

Stephen Dinan:
So, Professor Espino, good to have you here. I am Stephen Dinan. I'm the politics editor at The Washington Times. I agree with what Tamar just said. Actually, I think you can learn a lot about the national stage from immigration conversations and the Latino voter, in particular, from what went on in Arizona, in particular, the counter factual sort of explores the limits of -- it tests the limits of what we can learn about Latino voters and their effect both on electoral politics and on policy.

So I guess I'd like to start with just sort of a basic question. If somebody were to ask me what, you know, what the white voter is, I would have no clue how to actually answer that question. So let's start with a very tough one, which is what is the Latino voter, or what is a Latino voter? And in particular, what is the Latino voter in Arizona? Who is he or she? You know, how much of the electorate, how much of the population, citizen rates? Who is that person?

Rodolfo Espino:
Okay. Yeah, as many in the audience already know, the Latino population in the United States is very diverse, coming from various national origin backgrounds, Mexican-American, primarily. Of course, there's the Cubans, Puerto Ricans. In Arizona, the Latino population there is like the Latino population in neighboring states, primarily of Mexican origin. But one thing that's unique about the Latino population in Arizona, a lot of them are recent arrivals, not necessarily foreign-born, but having migrated

from, let's say, California, Texas, New Mexico, because of the draw of job opportunities in Arizona over decade or so.

But that's not unlike, perhaps, the white population, too. It's very hard to find native Arizonans. So a lot of the people there are transplants from elsewhere. And I think that explains a lot as to why the Latino vote -- Latino voters are still the sleeping giant in Arizona. You know, we saw them surging in New Mexico, of course, and of course Colorado, Nevada. But in Arizona, they're still asleep, and some people ask why. And I think, in part, it's because they have not established the roots, the roots in the community like Latino populations have in, say, California or Texas.

Stephen Dinan:
Go into the numbers a little bit. What percentage of the population -- we heard what percentage of the electorate they made up this time around. Give us some sense for the percentage of the population, what they -- growth rate, the expansion.

Rodolfo Espino:
In Arizona, approximately one-third of the population are Hispanic background. But when we take into consideration the qualifications to be able to vote, you know, the voting age population, you only have 25 percent that are eligible to vote, in terms of being over 18. But of that population, one-third are disqualified from participating in elections because of their citizenship status. So that whittles the numbers down dramatically, and so you really only have about 15 percent of the electorate being -- of the registered voters being Hispanic.

Stephen Dinan:
And what's the -- what are the projections for, say, the next two decades or so? Will they become -- will they double as the national voting bloc looks like? What are they going to do?

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah, demographic trends in Arizona suggest that Latino populations will -- that they'll be a much larger share of the electorate in elections to come. But one thing that's important to keep in mind in Arizona, it's not just what the Latino population looks like and who they are, but who is the white population in Arizona? The white population

in Arizona is a much older population than, let's say, white populations in other states. You have a lot of snowbirds, retirees coming there. So one thing you have to take in account about these demographic trends is the Latino population's very young, is aging. You have an older white population that's not replacing itself and is dying off. So that replacement of Latinos into the electorate will, I think, probably happen a lot faster in Arizona than we have seen in other states.

Stephen Dinan:
So let's get into a little bit about what the Latino voter in Arizona cares about. You know, and I guess, give me a sense for -- as we heard from Andrew earlier -- there's been this conflation of Latino voters and immigration, in particular, folks in my profession like to do this, and there's definitely a lot of nuance there that needs to be dealt with. What are the top issues that Arizona Latino voters tell pollsters they care about, and do we believe what they tell pollsters? I guess, deal with both of those, because there's definitely some questions about polling overall, and in particular, among various subgroups, Latino voters, in particular.

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah. With respect to that latter question, I would refer any members in the audience that want to get some good insight into mind of Latino voters, I'd refer them to latinosdecisions.com, that does frequent polling of Latino voters in key states, including Arizona. And so lot of the numbers I refer to come from Latino Decisions.

Now, with respect to the concerns of Latino voters. Latino voters are not unlike other voters in the country. Over the last couple of years, one of their most primary concerns has been the state of the economy. Of course, their position on how to fix the economy is different. It falls along partisan lines. But closely related to that is immigration reform. And in Arizona, Latino voters show more concern over immigration reform or passive of comprehensive immigration reform than, say, Latinos in other states, in part because of what has been happening in Arizona. As many people know, Arizona is famous, or infamous, for the passage of SB-1070. And that has remained in the news. It was passed in the spring of 2010 but the drum beat of SB-1070 remained in the news over the last couple years, and of course was helped with the recent

Supreme Court ruling, and, of course, Latino activists on the ground seeking to get Latino voters registered and turned out to vote. And they used the issue of SB-1070 as a talking point, a galvanizing lightning rod to get them registered and mobilized.

Stephen Dinan:
We were talking earlier about the comparisons of polling from a number of states, like there's Latino Decisions polling, looked at a number of states -- was it pre-election polling just the night before the elections, as I recall, with the polling -- looked at a number of states, and Arizona and North Carolina both were the ones that had that distinction, I guess, of immigration versus the economy and whatnot. Do you draw any significance from that versus the other states that they looked at?

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah, I mean I think that that presents an opportunity, you know, as Tamar had mentioned at the beginning. You know, there was a lot of expectations put on the Latino voters that, "Oh, my goodness, you're going to get a Latino elected to the U.S. Senate from Arizona, and perhaps Arpaio will be gone now." That did not transpire. But, you look at the concern that Latino voters in Arizona. And specifically, they're split 50-50. 47 percent, approximately 48 percent are saying that the economy is important; 47 percent saying immigration reform is important. So that's at the forefront. And that is going to remain up there because the Latino activists that have been on the ground registering Latino voters are still going out there and using that as a talking point to get them out to the polls.

Stephen Dinan:
So I've sort of been dancing around this question. Let's get to it. Why did Arpaio win? What happened in Arizona this year? What was the difference between Arizona and other places where we believe that Latino voters and, in particular, issues that they promoted carried elections?

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah, when it comes down to it, why did Arpaio win? It was money. He raised approximately $8 million for his campaign, for a county sheriff seat, right? It blew all records out of the water.

Stephen Dinan:
Do we know what the previous record was?

Rodolfo Espino:
Oh, maybe $2 million? I'm not sure, but it was hand-over-fist money that he -- and he used almost all of it for campaign ads. And Phoenix is not an expensive media market. His opponent -- his Democratic opponent, Paul Penzone had about $600,000 to $800,000 on hand. So it was just -- it was unfair, right? It was just unfair playing field for the Democratic candidate. And another thing, too, that I think that signals that the Latino vote did make a difference, was how Arpaio changed his campaign ads. In the past, he used to talk about how he was tough on the border, tough on immigration. His ads shifted tone. It's what political scientists might refer to as, rather than issue-oriented ads, they became warm, fuzzy biographical ads, right? They featured him sitting with his wife, who we'd never seen before, really. Talking about his 50 years in law enforcement, how he's a grandfather, cares about children. I mean, who doesn't care about children, right? And so, very much shifted the tone because I think the recall of Russell Pearce sent the signal to a lot of elected Republicans in Arizona, that if you continue to march down that road of scapegoating Latino voters, they can turn out and vote you out of office, as we saw with Russell Pearce, who was the author of Arizona's SB-1070.

Stephen Dinan:
Do we know anything about Latino voters in that Arpaio race in particular?

Rodolfo Espino:
I'm still waiting to get the precinct-level data. But from what I'm hearing from a lot of people that were active in mobilizing Latino voters, they did break records in terms of getting more Latinos registered, of course. I think there was a 40 percent increase in the number of Latinos registered from 2008 to 2012. And, of course, that results in more Latinos turning out to the poll. And one thing, too, that these activists did was educate Latino voters rather than just signing them up, educating them on how to vote, and specifically on how to vote in Arizona because we have a mail-in ballot process, and we also have a voter ID law in place. So a lot of the organizations were educating Latino voters: look, it may be easier for you to sign up on the mail-in list so that way you don't have to deal with

identification and what have you, if you don't have the proper I.D., and if you choose to vote in person. And I think that explains why there were so many mail-in ballots cast in the general election in 2012.

Stephen Dinan:
I want to actually get back to the Senate race in just a quick minute, but stick with the voter I.D. requirements and whatnot. And talk about the restrictions, what exactly the requirements are and, in particular, you know, there's been this question at the national level about Republicans, whether they're using voter I.D. requirements to tamp down on voter turnout from certain areas. What are the concerns, how is the Latino population -- Latino voters in Arizona, how are they dealing with that? Are there problems we're hearing? Is there going to be a battle over trying to tighten the voter I.D. requirements? Is it a photo I.D. requirement, in particular?

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah, really quickly, Arizona's voter I.D. law was voted on by the citizens of Arizona back in, let's see, 2004, with Proposition 200. It was challenged in the federal court, and it was shot down at the district level, and it was going to be put on a PO, but the Marion County, Indiana case rendered that moot for the Supreme Court decision, in which Indiana has a tougher voter I.D. law than Arizona. So challenges to Arizona's voter I.D. law were dropped. The basic requirements are just that you have to have a picture I.D., a state driver's license, for instance. And the important thing, though, is that your address that you're registered to vote at has to match the address on that identification. So this can hit populations that are more mobile than others, younger than others, and that's Latino voters.

Stephen Dinan:
Is there a sense that this was targeted towards Latino vote, or is there a sense that it will be used to try and tamp down on Latino vote in the future?

Rodolfo Espino:
Well, the initial challenges -- you had challenges being filed by the Navajo Nation because it also affected them. They actually settled out of the court with the state of Arizona, and there were exceptions given to them about Navajo Nation I.D. that they could use to vote. But Latino

voters -- the lawsuit being filed was by MALDEF, and the evidence that they were bringing to bear was showing that there was a drop-off in Latino voter registration following the implementation of Prop 200. But as far as I see it, Prop 200, that voter I.D. law in Arizona, is the law. It's not going to be challenged. It's going to pretty much stay in place.

Stephen Dinan:
So I said we would get back to the Senate race.

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah.

Stephen Dinan:
And let's do that. So, you had Arpaio win and you had a Latino candidate, Democratic candidate, lose. What happened in the Senate race? You obviously had Jeff Flake, a longtime incumbent who has a track record, an interesting track record, on the immigration issue. Talk about the way Latinos voted in there and the way that immigration played in that race.

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah. Well, to answer your question: Why did Flake win, why did Carmona lose? It really boils down to name recognition. Flake, as you indicated, is a well-known name in Arizona politics, serving since, you know, over the last decade.

Stephen Dinan:
Family name.

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah, the family name goes way back. You know, his heritage goes back to the early Mormon pioneers. And that's another thing -- factor to keep in mind. Just the level of enthusiasm among Mormon voters for voting for Jeff Flake. But also you had Mitt Romney on the ballot, a Mormon candidate. So you had high levels of enthusiasm for -- among Mormon, the Mormon electorate, to vote for those two candidates. And that was a significant hurdle for Carmona and Obama's campaign to overcome in Arizona.

Stephen Dinan:
So let's actually delve into that really briefly because it seems like there's a potential path for victory for

Republicans that doesn't necessarily involve Latino voters if they can find other ways to tap in and expand their bases, as you just said, such as the Mormon vote. I guess the question is, the Republican Party in Arizona, how do they go forward, do they choose to move towards trying to find other bases of support, do they choose to try and reach out to Latino voters? What's their strategy going forward, and how viable is that strategy? That's a one off with two Mormon candidates on the ballot, or is there a viable strategy for them to find voters elsewhere and ignore the Latino vote?

Rodolfo Espino:
No, I don't think they can continue to ignore the Latino vote. And now that Jeff Flake is in office, it'd be interesting to watch his -- whether he comes back home to his original position, being an advocate for immigration reform. When he made the run for the U.S. Senate seat, given the politics of Arizona, he certainly shifted back and became a border hawk, much like we saw John McCain in 2008 "build that dang fence first, before we talk about immigration reform." But now that he's safely elected for the next six years, perhaps he might be one of the key Republicans that brings up and pushes for comprehensive immigration reform in the U.S. Senate. And one interesting survey note that came from the Latino Decisions poll on election eve was a question that asked Latino voters in Arizona about their willingness to vote for Republicans, if they took a leadership role on comprehensive immigration reform. And 39 percent of Latino voters in Arizona said if the Republican Party took a leadership role and ensured the passage of comprehensive immigration reform, that would make them more likely to vote for the Republican Party. And I think that finding right there tells Republicans in Arizona that rather than pursuing the strategy that perhaps Arpaio and Russell Pearce chose to do in the past, they may want to be rethinking their strategy and looking at demographic growth trends in Arizona.

Stephen Dinan:
Which leads us right into the issue of -- and we've talked about this slightly -- the South, over the last generation has steadily moved from a Democratic, a solid Democratic voting bloc to the Republican stronghold. We've seen somewhat of the emergence of something similar with Latino voters, or at least Latino heavy states in Colorado, Nevada and New Mexico. How does Arizona fit into that? Arizona

is not yet there. Talk about why Arizona is not at the level of those. I would put Nevada and Colorado as swing states and New Mexico might be more solidly Democratic at this point. Where is Arizona along that trajectory and is it -- will we eventually see the emergence of the solid Latino swing bloc, will it be a solid Latino Democratic bloc or will it remain, I guess, diverse options for, like I said, Arizona on one side and others on the other?

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah. I'm always hesitant to look into a crystal ball, you know, making these predictions about politics, because there are so many what-ifs. You know, like, assuming though that nothing changes in Arizona, Arizona will become a swing state or perhaps a blue state like New Mexico. Colorado, Nevada are now swing states because of the Latino vote. The reason Arizona is not there yet is because the white vote there is much more conservative than the white vote in Nevada and Colorado. But, again, that white vote is aging and dying off at a very quick rate and being replaced by younger Latino vote.

Stephen Dinan:
So it's pure demographics. The demographics will make the Latino vote that much more important as we go forward.

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah, absolutely. But as I mentioned before, that does not mean that Republicans don't stand a chance in Arizona. Latinos are willing to vote for Republicans and they've indicated they're willing to do so if Republicans take up the cause of something that's near and dear to Latino voters right now, and that's immigration reform.

Stephen Dinan:
And so let's talk about this specifically. What are Latino voters looking for specifically on immigration reform in Arizona? Is pathway to citizenship -- you know, it's interesting, I went back and was looking over these numbers, and the words "pathway to citizenship," if you -- were almost nonexistent in my profession, and in articles, people never talk about pathway to citizenship. It was always a difference between amnesty and enforcement back 10 years ago or so, starting in -- I actually have the numbers. It's shocking how little people actually did it. It's been a six-fold increase in the use of the words "pathway to citizenship" essentially since 2004 through

2008. Is pathway to citizenship the be-all and end-all for those voters? Is there something less than that that Latino voters in Arizona would settle for? Are they looking for a good-faith effort? Are they looking for a legal status? Would they accept legal status short of pathway to citizenship? What are they looking for?

Rodolfo Espino:
Well, pathway to citizenship or amnesty, as we might have called it back in 1986 -- [laughs] -- with IRCA and Ronald Reagan, is one of the key things that Latinos are looking for with comprehensive immigration reform. And one of the reasons why -- you might ask, well, Latino voters -- they're U.S. citizens, so why should they care about pathway to citizenship? They're already citizens! Latino voters are very connected to individuals who do not have that citizenship status, whether they're here legally or illegally. The survey data compiled by Latino Decisions found that of Latino voters, approximately two-thirds indicated that they know someone that is here with an undocumented status. And furthermore, there's classifications of the undocumented status. And one that we hear a lot about is the so-called Dream Act: students. Those individuals that came here at a very young age -- you know, we know that Obama issued an order to change the DHS's deportation policy, which really made Latino voters more enthusiastic toward the Democratic ticket. But two-thirds of Latino voters know someone here -- that is here illegally. But more than half know someone that meets that Dream Act qualification. And this is why Latino voters are very concerned about immigration reform, and specifically that pathway to citizenship. It's not because it affects them directly. It's because it may affect them indirectly, via a friend or a family member.

Stephen Dinan:
I think we're going to go to -- we are still going to questions from the audience, correct? Yeah, so, we'll do that in just a minute. I wanted to get to one other sort of very important question here, which is the Republican trap, the primary versus general election trap the Republicans seem to experience. What is the situation with that in Arizona? You mentioned the conservative white population there. Go into what the Republicans face, if they're trying to run in a primary versus a general election. Do they have to toe a harder line on immigration

and do they have to toe a harder line on Latino voters overall?

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah. One thing that is -- well, I get a lot of questions from people outside of Arizona. Oftentimes it involves those first question which is: what is wrong with Arizona? And specifically with Arizona politics, and one thing I always have to tell individuals is we have a unique election system, specifically with clean elections. You can get matching dollar per dollar contributions from the state of Arizona, should you be going up against a well-financed candidate, whether it be in the primary or general election. And this has dramatically shifted the type of Republicans that are now being elected to the Arizona state legislature.

Now with clean elections, rather than having to appeal to a certain base, say the Chamber of Commerce in Arizona, what I call the country club Republicans. Just go to the state of Arizona and be an ideologue, and you get matching dollar per dollar, and so your moderate, let's say, business-oriented Republicans have been pushed out over the last 10, 15 years, because of those clean election candidates that come with a specific issue, or ideology, or agenda. And that explains a lot like the rise of Russell Pearce, but we also know about Russell Pearce's recall. And that happened at the primary level, primary election, because of grassroots activists, in particular Latino activists, in Russell Pearce's back yard. And the recruitment by those Latino activists of a more moderate Republican in Jerry Lewis to knock off Russell Pearce.

And it also, you know, it was a very interesting race because it also shows about the divide within the Mormon community. Russell Pearce a Mormon, Jerry Lewis a Mormon, but a Mormon who was adopting what, you know, and Salt Lake City has a much moderate position on immigration that does say, Russell Pearce. The Mormon church was instrumental in passing what was then called the Utah Compact. Basically, a decree by the Mormon church and certain organizations in Utah saying, "We are going to treat all individuals with dignity and respect, and not demonize them," essentially. And that influence has been coming down to Arizona, specifically within the Mormon community, because the Mormon church is very concerned about its outreach to Latino voters. One of the biggest growth groups for the

Mormon church are Latinos, and so when you have individuals like Russell Pearce, a representative of the Mormon church doing what he's done, Mormon missionaries find the doors being slammed in their faces. So, I think that's something that going forward, that the role of the Mormon church in Arizona and pushing forward their Republican elected officials to moderate their position. It is something that I expect that we might see happening more and more.

Stephen Dinan:
I guess the -- do we have microphones? Then, I guess if there are questions for our professor, we'll go to the audience. Excellent, but I actually do have a couple more that I'd love to get to. That's great. One of these -- there's been, and this gets into the national discussion as well, but the big debate among Republicans right now is our Latino voters, a conservative powerhouse waiting to be tapped if Republicans can get pass the immigration issue, or if you look beyond the demographic numbers in terms of just like socioeconomic characteristics, you know, a single parent household, the use of welfare programs, you know, low income tax burden, they look a lot like Democratic voters. What is the situation in Arizona? Are those voters waiting to become -- are they conservative voters waiting to be tapped by Republicans, or are they Democratic voters, or are they true swing voters?

Rodolfo Espino:
I mean at the moment, they are hard core Democratic voters, but you know, their position -- you know, their loyalty to the Democratic Party is not rock hard. And we saw this in 2010 following, you know, the long drawn-out process to pass health care reform. The congressional calendar got compressed, Democrats in Congress, and the White House said, "What are we going to take up in the remaining six months we have, comprehensive immigration reform or climate legislation?" Democrats in Congress and the White House chose the path of the climate change legislation, passing the Cap and Trade Act to deal with global warming, instead of pursuing comprehensive immigration reform. This upset Latino voters across the country, but especially in Arizona, and Latino voters across the country, but in Arizona, chose to stay home. It's not that they didn't go vote for the Republican Party, because the Republican Party at that time wasn't doing any outreach, but they did not see their loyalty to the Democratic Party. We did not see it that strong in 2010 because of failure for Democrats to

even signal that they viewed immigration reform as something important.

Stephen Dinan:
And talk real briefly about the actual leadership organizations within Arizona. Who is going after these voters? Who's recruiting them and are they -- what's the relationship between them? Are they leading Latino voters? Are the Latino voters pulling the organizations along? How is that working?

Rodolfo Espino:
Yeah, I think there's been a change in the organizations, and partly the organizational structure, but also their strategy in going out to Latino communities, and getting Latinos registered to vote and mobilized. I would think that maybe about eight years ago I would describe it as a lot of activists from the 1960s, a lot of people with the long hair, and the bandanas, and you know, marching their civil rights songs. And it just didn't work, right. A lot of Latino voters just did not connect to that message and what you have now are Latino organizations. One of the biggest ones in Arizona lately has been a group called Promise Arizona, led by Petra Falcon, and their message is, you know, they're not harking back to the 1960s. You know, they're talking about 2012, and what Latino voters need now, and that's immigration reform. And not only that, but it's not organizations like Promise Arizona, but you have a lot of the Dream Act individuals that are not allowed to vote in elections. They're going out and registering Latino voters and former students that are impacted by this, and what they say to me is that while they cannot vote, they're making sure that -- they're getting people there that they know that can vote for them, and that's dramatic change from what we saw in 2008 and 2004.

Stephen Dinan:
I should go ahead, and do a pairing, saying, "Look, you go vote because I can't vote," you individually a pairing vote.

Rodolfo Espino:
Yes.

Stephen Dinan:

It's a very different situation. All right, I see we've gotten the stop sign, so that will be all for -- thank you very much, professor.

Rodolfo Espino:
Thank you.

[applause]

Tamar Jacoby:
So, now we are going to, as I say, zoom out and look at the national picture, and we're going to do this, as you can tell, kind of Charlie Rose style. And the high concept is not all that high, but the high concept is that we're going to hear the story from three distinctly different points of view. We have -- let's see. We do have them in the order in can announce them. We have a Republican very personally involved in the campaign, a Democrat very personally involved in the campaign, and a nonpartisan analyst who's been looking at this subject for many years.

And they're going to look at two really big questions, or all of the questions they're going to look at fall into two buckets. One is what actually happened this fall, what happened on Election Day, what happened on the run up to election, who voted where. We're going to try to get you some detail on that, sort of dig a little deeper under the myth of, you know, the giant that -- or not the myth, but the big national story of the giant that determined the election. And number two, they're going to look from their different points of view at the future, because the future really is kind of the game here. There is no doubt that we're on the -- we're at the very beginning stages of a sea change that's going to transform American politics.

And just to unpack that a little bit, let me talk -- go a little deeper into that number I threw out earlier a vote that is going to double in size over the next 20 years. So, that's a Pew number. The Pew Research Center, and if you want to look up the paper that was issued on November 14th, and of course there is a number of different assumptions that go into a projection like that, some variables. So number one, the authors assume that this year's success, this flexing of muscle and sense of power is going to encourage more Latinos to register and vote, because although the vote was important this time, Latino registration and voting rights are still very, very low,

way beneath a non-Hispanic, white, and African American voters. And I'm sure someone on the panel will tell us a little more about that. So, one of the assumptions was that this year's success will encourage more political activity, civic activity.

The paper also assumes that Congress will eventually create a path to citizenship for the millions of unauthorized immigrants already in the country, and the third assumption was that the 5 million Latinos living in the U.S. who are already eligible to become citizens, but haven't done it yet, who are green card holders who could become citizens, but haven't naturalized, that they will. But all of those three assumptions together made up only a small piece of this doubling, because the real motor of the doubling, the real driver of change is age, or actually more accurately: youth. And to understand this, you have to think about two numbers. This year 12.5 million Latinos voted, 12.5. The other number, there are 18 million Latinos in America who are under 18 years old, 12.5, 18. And 93 percent of them are U.S.-born citizens. All they have to do is grow up. Like, nothing has to happen. Congress doesn't have to do anything. All they have to do, and I guarantee you they will, is grow up.

[laughing]

So, welcome to the future, a vote that is likely to double by 2030, and that opens a whole lot of -- a whole box. I won't say Pandora's box, because that's a good box, treasure chest of interesting questions for this panel. How are Latinos going to use their newfound power, their newfound and growing power? What obviously is the Latino vote going to mean for both parties? A very fraught question. What are Latino voters in the future going to look like, because after all the generation you're seeing now is really a transitional generation, right? These are immigrants and the children of immigrants. They're on their way to becoming Americans. In a generation the Latino vote's going to look, you know, may look different. They still may remember what happened now, and we'll talk about that, but they will look different, and you know, and even bigger question, and we're taxing the crystal ball powers of my panel. But what is the Latino vote going to mean for the issues that are at the center of American politics? You know, could that change? Will that change? So, there are a lot of really interesting questions, and it

is -- we are doing -- we are going to do some future gazing here, but I want to dig in to what we know and what we can say about those big questions.

So, I'm going to introduce the panelists as I ask them their first question, rather than just, you know, a boring recitation of your brilliant qualifications. So Dan, let's start with you.

Dan Restrepo:
All right.

Tamar Jacoby:
And the question is what did you do so to speak, on your autumn vacation?

Dan Restrepo:
[laughs]

Tamar Jacoby:
You obviously come out of a lot of big jobs in the Obama administration, but you were most recently one of President Obama's principal surrogates in Spanish-language media. What did the election look like from your point of view? You know, what can you tell us about that we didn't read in the newspaper? And you know, from your personal experience, tell us what happened.

Dan Restrepo:
I think the way to understand kind of my role as a surrogate this year is in juxtaposition to four years ago. I basically played the same role in '08 and '12, in terms of outreach to Spanish-language media on behalf of the president, then candidate, and the fascinating thing for me as I emerged from government and went out back into campaign land was the proliferation of Spanish-language media outlet. In 2008, Spanish-language media essentially meant national Spanish-language media, which was two: Univision and Telemundo, a little bit of CNN Español, and local media in South Florida. And that's pretty much the sum total of the outlets that I hit over, and over, and over, and over again four years ago.

This time I ended up doing media in, again, the national: Univision, Telemundo, now there's MundoFox. CNN Español has a bigger footprint domestically than it had four years ago, and in 10 states. I did radio Iowa and Ohio, in North

Carolina and Virginia, obviously in Florida, but in Nevada, and Colorado, and New Mexico, and Arizona, and it's that deepening and that proliferation of Spanish language media outlets that I think tells you a lot about -- that we can go into later, about the proliferation of the Latino vote. Obviously this is a segment of the Latino vote, the Spanish dominant portion of it, but an interesting subset of the vote. So, that I think, that kind of, that difference between '08 and '12, it also gets into some of the structural differences of the Obama campaign, Obama for America in '08 versus '12, but we can get into it later.

Tamar Jacoby:
Well, talk a little more about that. So, you talked about how it's changing the media, and we have what Rudy told us about Arizona, about changing the organization style. So, how is it changing the substance of how Democrats -- you know, is that changing? Is the way Democrats are talking to Latinos, is that even changing?

Dan Restrepo:
Absolutely. I think one of the -- a couple of things happened. We started much, much earlier this time. I think that for all those -- a word of hope for Republicans, not something I often do. Let's remember back to the spring of 2008. There was a candidate in that election who had a Latino problem, that you know, Latinos weren't going to vote for, that quite famously said by a pretty well-recognized expert on the Latino vote, and that candidate was Barack Obama. He had gotten a later start in engaging with the Latino electorate than his primary rival, then-Senator Clinton. This time -- and it was true. We started later in '08 for a variety of reasons then had the Clinton campaign.

This time you had a Latino vote director in Chicago a year out. You had many more people in Chicago dedicated to targeting Latino voters, finding them, and communicating with them in that whole spectrum of ways you've heard about the Obama campaign communicating with folks, with new technologies. We also had a lot of segmentation. One of the reasons that I was able to do interviews and all the places that I talked about, I happen to speak a very neutral Spanish. You can't really place my Spanish geographically for a kind of quirky set of reasons, and that allowed OFA to use me in a multitude of places. There's one place for example though, to highlight the

segmentation, where I did one interview all fall, which was Orlando, which has a large Spanish-language media, but it's a Puerto Rican electorate, and you don't need somebody with my skill set or even my neutral Spanish speaking to Puerto Ricans. You need fellow Puerto Ricans speaking to Puerto Ricans, and that's also true in other parts of the country. There was a much more deliberate effort this time to ensure in ads, and in media outreach, and just people to people outreach that you were speaking to and through folks from the same subgroup.

Tamar Jacoby:
And different issues as well? I mean --

Dan Restrepo:
Yeah.

Tamar Jacoby:
-- is immigration coming to --

Dan Restrepo:
Interesting, the issues this time, at least in my experience, and you saw this borne out a little bit in the national exit polls. The issues the Latinos cared about this time were very much the issues, the mainstream if you will, the national issues. The economy was 60 percent. Health care over performed in terms of an issue that Latinos cared about more in the national exit polls than did the rest of the electorate, the budget deficit, and then foreign policy. So, the four top issues were the same in a slightly different order than they were for the rest of the electorate. The budget deficit and health care were in opposite places for the rest of the electorate. This time it was a little more of those domestic issues, those domestic urban issues than four years ago, in my experience. Again, part of that is where the media was focused and the nature of the Spanish-speaking community in South Florida, that's particularly foreign policy driven. This time even that community wasn't -- and to the extent that I was talking about foreign policy, I was talking about Benghazi rather than Cuba.

Tamar Jacoby:
I want to move to Alfonso, but this last question, but you didn't use the word immigration. Immigration was not in that --

Dan Restrepo:
It came up a little -- it came up a little --

Tamar Jacoby:
It came up a little bit?

Dan Restrepo:
It came up a little bit and it came up in the following way. People wanted to know that the president cared about the issue. They wanted to understand why it hadn't been achieved in his first term. It served almost in these interviews the same function that I view it serving generally, which is that of a threshold issue. And by that I mean if you're okay on immigration, they'll listen to the rest of it. If you're not okay on immigration, they're not going to listen to the rest of it, which I think is part of -- I don't think it's fully the problem Republicans have right now with Latinos, but it's part of. So, it served a little bit, again, in these kind of this anecdotal evidence derived from interviews, that it was an issue, but it was almost a, "you're okay on this issue, let's talk about the rest of it."

Tamar Jacoby:
Fascinating, great. Okay, Alfonso, same question for you. What did you do on your autumn vacation? Now, I know that you organized an independent expenditure Spanish-language TV ad campaign in Nevada. So, explain to us what that means, how does that work, what were the ads like, what did the election look like from your point of view? And if you will in your first intervention stick to your personal experience, and then we'll broaden it out.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Right. Well, the great thing about doing an independent expenditure is that it's independent, you know, coordinate with the Republican Party or with the Romney campaign. So, I'm not here to defend thankfully, the Romney campaign -- [laughs] -- but we realize that we needed to do something different, that the Latino vote was going to be decisive and with the limited funding that we had, we said, "Let's go to a state where we can make a difference, a state that is manageable, and show that yes, indeed we recognize that the economy is the number one issue, and unemployment, but that we can't just talk about it through ads. We have to actually go to the community and go, one, go after every single voter, something that I think the Obama campaign did

very well. And that's what we did in Nevada, again, with very limited funding.

So, there was a very organized grassroots effort. Because we knew we had limited funding, we couldn't reach, engage absolutely every single Latino voter in Nevada. The Latino vote went from 15 percent to 18 percent, dramatically, and so we worked with evangelical churches, recognizing that that's a sector of the Latino electorate where conservatives are very strong. And so we did community meetings, town halls. We had town halls of over 200 people. Imagine conservatives going to town hall with over 200 people. Nobody read about this or heard about this, because it wasn't happening. It was just happening in Nevada.

We ran ads. The issue said was we believe that with Latinos we needed a combined message. We couldn't win just by talking about unemployment and the economy. Again, talking about unemployment and the economy in a grassroots way, in a populous way, making the argument why the policies of the president are not good for the Latino community or for Latino businesses, but then we understood that immigration was a very important issue, and somehow we needed to neutralize it. So we talked about Obama's failed promise on immigration, the promise on immigration he didn't deliver when he had a Democratic House and Senate, and we also brought up another issue, which was deportations, which wasn't talked at all in the campaign, where the president was attacking Mitt Romney for saying that Arizona was a model for the nation when he didn't exactly say that. But regardless, the Romney campaign didn't explain the governor's position very well.

But attacking Arizona during his first term, the president has implemented an enforcement policy that is much more punitive than the Arizona law, deporting more people than any other president in history, the majority of them, people without criminal records. So we ran ads in Spanish language about this, and we also topped it off talking about social issues, basically the president's position on lives, on marriage, saying the president is too radical for Latinos, understanding there's a big chunk of the Latino electorate that is very socially conservative, and will vote exclusively for those issues. And then finally we had a very strong get out the vote effort, persuasive calls. So, it was a very, an overall effort. Just to include, the

only state where Romney did better than McCain this time around was Nevada --

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay.

Alfonso Aguilar:
-- by about four points. That's nothing, right? But it's a coincidence? Perhaps, but I think it shows that if you invest in an effort and you have a broad message, a populous message, you can win, and again obviously we were outspent. Governor Romney had many very unfortunate statements during the campaign about immigration. He was handicapped from the beginning, I'd say he was mortally wounded from the beginning. However I would disagree with Dan in the sense that immigration was key.

Tamar Jacoby:
But that's what's so interesting, right? The asymmetry here is fascinating. For Democrats, they don't have to talk about it, because it's a threshold issue and they've passed that threshold. The Republicans were not over the threshold, and so we do have to talk about it all the time.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Right, right.

Tamar Jacoby:
That's a fascinating asymmetry. So, but what about -- let me press you a little bit on these social issues. I mean the polling is very mixed on that. I've been saying for years, you know, it's the great Reagan line about Latinos and Republicans. They just don't know it.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Right.

Female Speaker:
But on the social issues, the polling is starting to come up kind of mixed.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Well, the thing is that first of all, we understood as we went in, and this is a very important point, Latinos are not a monolithic community. This whole Latino vote phenomenon is an American phenomenon. You come here, you're from Cuba, you're from Nicaragua, you're from

Guatemala, you're from Mexico, you're not Latino. You come here and all of a sudden you are Latino. What does that mean?

We are seeing an incredible change in the Latino community. The Latino community 30 years ago was very different from the Latino community today. I think about 40 percent of Latinos today are foreign-born, generally. The rest, many, perhaps most, are the children of immigrants. So with the electorate, we're seeing that. I mean we still have multigenerational Latinos from the Southwest, Puerto Ricans in New York and Chicago who are very liberal, but we're starting to see the rise of foreign-born Latinos and their children, who tend to be more conservative. I mean just look at the Pew numbers. On abortion, still the majority believe that abortion should be illegal, compared to about 40 percent of the rest of the population. Marriage that is shifting, has certainly shifted in the past five years, but they're still a good chunk of that electorate that is very conservative when it comes to marriage. The question is with social issues is not are you going to scare voters away. We believe that those who vote exclusively for those issues are the mostly religious people who are going to vote for the candidate who has the traditional positions, and nobody's to going to vote against a candidate because of the position of life and marriage within the Latino community.

Tamar Jacoby:
Right, but it's scary to me, because it is a place where we're not looking, again, we're not looking to the future. I mean as a Republican, we're counting on the older ones, and not looking to how the vote's going to change.

Alfonso Aguilar:
But you will be surprised with the children of foreign-born Latinos. They're still much more conservative than the rest of the population.

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay, we'll come back to this. We'll come back to this. Roberto, your turn. So you're the analyst. I'm sure you are partisan somewhere deep down, but you're here and your non-partisan guys, professor in two different schools at the University of Southern California, the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, and the School for Policy, Planning, and Development, also director of the

Tomas Rivera Institute. So, tell us, do us a little John King thing for us here.

Roberto Suro:
[laughs]

Tamar Jacoby:
We're -- like, pretend we don't have that map with the counties, but --

Roberto Suro:
[inaudible], I've got spreadsheets.

Tamar Jacoby:
-- you know. Well, good. Okay, but everybody, you know, everybody nationally has been talking about this in a very undifferentiated way. To the degree they're talking at all they're talking about states, and they're giving us this image of big numbers. I think it's not quite like that, right? I think it's relative, although there's a very significant phenomenon, we're still talking about small numbers and relatively contained. So I mean, just setting it up for folks, I mean we know that in some of the swing states, Latino vote didn't matter, didn't make the margin at all. Ohio, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and New Hampshire, Latinos, you know had little if anything to do with it. In four swing states, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado, and Florida, you could have made the difference. So, what was involved in that? Do the Don King Suro. [laughs] What can you tell us?

Robert Suro:
All right. Well, I think you know that people have already spoken here about the importance of disaggregating this vote and you can cut it a lot of different ways. One of -- in trying to understand what happened in November, one of the -- a still nascent thought that's developing in my mind is trying to understand how Latino voters in different parts of the country function as part of the larger coalition that elected Obama. The focus has been traditionally very much and throughout this conversation as if these were actors operating in a void, but it's all about their characteristics, their identity, their views, when in fact we know that politics especially in this go round, the nature of coalition building in the end turned out to be one of the really critical factors, maybe the historical -- the lasting historical change in electoral

politics for these last two cycles is the effect of this coalition building. It really depends on whether it was a one off or not. That's another question.

So if you think about Latinos that way, as an element of the Obama coalition more so than just this isolated, sleeping giant, really unfortunate metaphor, which I've been dealing with since I first started writing about this too many years ago. One of the patterns that develops is the extent to which you see, with preliminary data still, that Latino voters in different parts of the country really did respond to circumstances. And that in the key states where they made a difference, the swing states that didn't matter in the end, Colorado, Nevada, Florida in particular, New Mexico is kind of an outlier because of its own peculiar politics and demographics, but in those states, you know, there's some very interesting places to look and see what you've got. So -- and to contrast places like Texas, where a lot of the future is going to play out.

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay, so take us into those places.

Roberto Suro:
Okay, so if you look at -- take a place like Clark County, Nevada.

Tamar Jacoby:
That's suburbs of --

Roberto Suro:
It's Las Vegas. It's a suburb of Los Angeles --

[laughter]

-- in more ways than one.

Tamar Jacoby:
That's true.

Roberto Suro:
Well it is, because --

Tamar Jacoby:
Spoken like a true Angelino, oh yeah, okay.

Roberto Suro:

-- but now that I mean it's, politically it is, and we see this in this election.

Tamar Jacoby:
What do you mean

Alfonso Aguilar:
Internal -- the migration from within the United States to Las Vegas over the last 10 years has been driven overwhelmingly by Californians, and mostly to Clark County. And as a result you now have this state where one urban area has got the biggest concentration of votes and the people in that urban area are distinctly different than the rest of the state.

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay.

Roberto Suro:
I mean and Latinos included, which you know to a certain extent have acculturated into a -- and now Clark County now has its own political life. The Democratic Party has its own political life there despite Alfonso's good efforts, the Republican Party there developed a Tea Party alternative and went way off the charts. And so it's an example of there. Denver as well, different kind of Democratic coalition, somewhat different roots, different flavor, different opposition, but in Denver County, and Arapahoe County, which is the southern eastern suburbs of Denver, you saw Latinos really functioning as part of a working coalition.

Tamar Jacoby:
So, what does that mean in terms of numbers? I mean help us understand that.

Roberto Suro:
Well, so in Denver Latinos make up 30 percent of the population --

Tamar Jacoby:
30?

Roberto Suro:
30, 30 percent of -- this is the -- yeah, 30 percent of the eligibles in Denver are Latinos, in Denver County. Obama carried it by 74 percent. Clark County, Latinos make up 20

percent of the electorate. Obama carried it by 56 and change.

Tamar Jacoby:
So, what you're saying, it's Latinos as part of a broader Democratic community?

Roberto Suro:
As part of a broader -- not as singularly making a decision on their own, but operating within a coalition. And I think that has real implications, both from the way you read these numbers. More importantly in the second part of the conversation, how you imagine them as political actors going forward, but I would contrast this for example to Bexar County, Texas, San Antonio herald it home of the Castro brothers, the future of the Democratic Party --

Male Speaker:
The good Castro brothers.

[laughter]

Roberto Suro:
Right, our Castro brothers.

Tamar Jacoby:
Mayor of San Antonio, and what's the other one?

Male Speaker:
[unintelligible]

Roberto Suro:
Fifty percent of the eligibles are Latino. Right?

Tamar Jacoby:
50 percent.

Roberto Suro:
50 percent and Obama carried it by 51.6 percent of the vote. So, this takes -- these numbers take some digging, but it's clear that there you had in Bexar County where this new -- the new coalition is being born, this place where, you know, Texas is going to turn purple and Bexar County is the new Boston. You've got to ask yourself about that Latino vote. It's a very middle class, very middle-of-the-road Mexican American vote, and in that context where there's a weaker Democratic coalition and a much

larger messaging from the Republican Party, you've got what would appear to be a much more even split. We would have to do precinct level analysis there to really try and figure that out.

Tamar Jacoby:
But there -- I mean actually as a sort of -- you know if you were an uninitiated listener, I mean what would be stunning here is that there are these places in America where it's 20 percent, 30 percent, 50 percent Latino vote, right? I mean that's the first --

Roberto Suro:
But that doesn't predict what the outcome is going to be.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yes, yeah.

Roberto Suro:
That's what I'm saying.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah.

Roberto Suro:
You can look at the Hispanic share.

Tamar Jacoby:
It doesn't tell you.

Roberto Suro:
And that doesn't tell you how it's going to turn out.

Tamar Jacoby:
By what was the split in San Antonio?

Roberto Suro:
Pardon me.

Tamar Jacoby:
What was the -- just among Latinos, percentage --

Roberto Suro:
We don't know.

Tamar Jacoby:
We don't know yet?

Roberto Suro:
No, we don't know yet.

Tamar Jacoby:
Oh, wow.

Roberto Suro:
All we have is the overall outcome, yeah.

Tamar Jacoby:
That's what we need to look for.

Roberto Suro:
Right.

Tamar Jacoby:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
But Miami-Dade is another -- you know, Florida is another place where it's -- Miami-Dade is now the home of a really interesting, complicated, mixed up political coalition. Where you have Cubans and non-Cuban Hispanics finding common cause with African Americans, Haitians, a big LGBT community, big arts community, a lot of internal migrants from New York, where the same way Clark County has been -- you've got a pot, a core of white Democratic activists that have brought California politics in Nevada. In Miami, you've got a core of New York, northeastern Democratic activists who brought those politics to South Florida. And within that you're now starting to see very effective Latino players, a Democratic Congressman who won a race against a highly flawed Republican candidate, but still won, who formed a coalition that, you know, went from Miami Beach through working class neighborhoods, all the way down to the Keys with very distinct different working class whites, gays, you know, snowbirders, and then a big chunk of Cuban and non-Cuban Latinos.

So, in the second part of it, you start thinking about identity politics in a different way. If you are thinking of a group that has flexed its muscles by virtue of being part of a coalition, as opposed to having flexed its muscles as being a plaintiff, as having been alone, as being outsiders saying, "These are my claims and I am pressing these claims alone," as opposed to saying, "I have

achieved a level of success by being part of a much larger political establishment."

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay. Okay, interesting. So Dan, you're nodding away. Come in.

Dan Restrepo:
A couple of things I agree with -- I think you need to see this and understand the Latino vote as part of -- and certainly Chicago viewed Latinos and this president from, you know, multiple years back, saw them as part of a coalition and of a governing of both a political coalition, but of also a governing coalition. And there is historical evidence obviously for Roberto was just talking about in terms of who engages what community, and their voting behavior later. Cubans are an interesting example, right? There's two big pockets of Cuban Americans in the United States, one in South Florida, which until this election was a predominantly Republican voting phenomena, and those in Union City, New Jersey who have, you know, electorally expressed themselves via the Democratic Party. And a lot of that goes to who engaged them when they showed up, and cultivated their political activity, and included them in the political activity that was going on at that time in those communities.

So I think there is a lot to be said for viewing the influence of Latinos in this cycle, and in particularly going forward as part of a broader coalition, and one that, you know, I -- and I've heard them time and time again. Everybody likes -- Republicans love to go back to the Reagan quote. The national exit poll this year shouldn't give you a lot of comfort.

Male Speaker:
Right.

Dan Restrepo:
It's, you know, two-thirds support for abortion rights, 60 percent support for the Affordable Care Act, almost 59 percent support for same sex marriage, of this among Hispanics in the national exit poll. That doesn't sound particularly socially conservative to me, no.

Tamar Jacoby:
So, what if --

Dan Restrepo:
And also the question I think at some level becomes, and this is more for the demographers and the people who I'm not a quant, which is a dangerous thing to say in this day and age, you know, are Hispanic millennials, more like millennials?

Tamar Jacoby:
Right.

Dan Restrepo:
Or are Hispanic millennials like traditional Hispanics, if such a thing exists?

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah, so save that thought. Save that thought. So, let's come back to you, let's dig a little deeper, and I'm trying to keep putting you on the spot on this --

Alfonso Aguilar:
No, no, no. I'm sure --

Tamar Jacoby:
And Roberto, I'm interested in your take too. You know, can Republicans appeal to the Hispanics, even if we can take the immigration thing off the table, can we appeal?

Alfonso Aguilar:
Let' me quickly respond to that. Look, I think on social issues and Latinos, we have to do a lot of research, because there's contradictory data. We have the exit polling. We have recent polling from Illinois showing the Latinos there are very -- the majority are for marriage and believe abortion should be illegal. I mean I think the Pew Hispanic Center numbers on abortion that contradict that exit polling. I never said that we were going to win the Latino vote exclusively with social issues. That had to be part of the mix. My point is that we're -- and going to Roberto's point, absolutely, I think that the Obama campaign did a marvelous, superb job in building coalitions, and really spending money, outspending us on Latino grassroots outreach incredibly. In some places there was absolutely no outreach from -- grassroots outreach from the Republican side, but it seems to me that at the end, it's not only about coalitions or about being in the community.

Yes, we have to be there early. We have to spend money in grassroots efforts. That is key to compete, but at the end with Latinos, ideas matter, and I go back to immigration. Republicans bought this idea fed to them by Republican strategists within the Beltway, some people that you know about, that you've heard about, Mr. Rove and I keep saying this because everybody says, "I wish you'd go back to Karl Rove's concept of the big tent." Now, for Karl Rove, the big tent is big, but it's empty --

[laughter]

-- because it's just to talk about the economy, talk about the economy, talk about the economy, don't talk about immigration. We went into Nevada. People said, "Don't talk about social issues. Don't talk about immigration," and I said, "I'm going to talk about social issues, and I'm going to talk about immigration." We need -- the problem was that they thought that -- the strategists thought the Republican candidates to win the primary, you have to move to the extreme right on immigration. You have to sound like a restrictionist and that is wrong. Every study shows the American people, Republicans and Democrats, support immigration reform. He could have had a much more constructive message from the beginning of the primary, and if -- and I think he would have been much more competitive in the general election. Now, I'm not saying that if you just have a good position on immigration that you're going to win enough support form Latino voters, but at least --

Tamar Jacoby:
They hear you.

Alfonso Aguilar:
-- they're not going to tune you out, because we were tuned out completely. They were not listening to us, and again I go back to Spanish-language media, which I did a lot, you know, I was part of the Univision coverage of election night. And it sounded like we're covering the presidential election and immigration because of the emphasis on immigration. It was all about immigration. So it can go a very long way. Ideas, ideas matter, and to finish, I think that also the last Pew Hispanic Center polls on party affiliation is very revealing. I think it shows that up to 51 percent of Latinos today, in terms of party affiliation, identify as independent. You know, I would not reach the

conclusion that Republicans have lost the Latino vote forever and Democrats, you know, are really winning over the Latino vote. Latinos at the end didn't vote for Obama because they were enamored with Barack Obama. I know that's what the campaign thinks, but that's not what happened. We had a terrible candidate. We ran a lousy campaign, and it had terrible positions on immigration.

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay, so I want to go down the row, starting with Roberto.

[applause]

Starting with Roberto, assuming Republicans could wipe the slate clean on immigration, you know, next week, which we all know is not going to happen, it's going to be a long, hard road to get to solve it, how long is the memory of this going to last? I mean when African Americans vote today, you know, so lopsidedly Democratic, they're not remembering the 1960s and '70s, but at some level they're remembering the 1960s and '70s. I'd like to hear all of you talk about what's the half life. You know, even if we could get it right now, how do you see that playing out?

Roberto Suro:
Well, you know, if you -- judging from -- we don't have a lot of past performances to base this on except for one very dramatic one, which is California, where the Republican Party succeeded in the mid 1990s as painting itself as the party taking a hard line on immigration, and one that was exuberant about rhetoric that was -- and images that were quite graphically demonizing --

Tamar Jacoby:
They keep coming.

Roberto Suro:
Right, they keep coming. That was Pete Wilson's ad in the 1994, his successful reelection. Much harsher rhetoric than anything we've seen, much more memorable, still on YouTube and playable, but had a really lasting impact. One of the dynamics of the immigration issue that I think seems quite clear is that it works very well, always has, as a negative mobilization issue. You can mobilize people to anger over immigration on both sides of the issue. It's worked both ways. It's actually worked much -- it has a much longer and effective history of animating political

behavior towards restriction than it does towards generous policies. But you could also as the Republicans have shown in the last 10, 15 years quite consistently, you can really get -- you can create grudges among people by demonizing them through immigration. So how long does it last? How deeply was -- is the wound here? You know, it's really hard to say. You look at the presidential level of a particular -- the Republican share has bounced around, you know, to some extent. I mean it -- George H. W. Bush got up to the mid 30s. Ronald Reagan brought it up to the mid 30s. Bob Dole in the midst of the anti-immigrant sentiment of the 1990s took it back below 30. George W. Bush got it back up to the magic 40 percent that Karl Rove thought was the jumping off point for neutralizing all of these questions.

So, you know, we're talking about a fairly small margin of voters here. So, if you -- you know, a 10 percent shift in the Latino votes moving 1 million to 1.3 million, you know, the actual -- what the turnout is, we don't really know yet. It's going to take a while. The exit poll numbers are losing credibility as time goes on, but that's -- I don't want to get too --

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah.

Roberto Suro:
-- you know, geeky with you, yeah, but say you know --

[laughter]

-- a shift to a million voters, million and a half voters, and Romney would have been in the mid 30s in terms of his share, and everybody would have said, "That was a pretty good night for a Republican." Now, what would have happened in terms of actual states, I knew you were going to ask that --

[laughter]

Tamar Jacoby:
And then I want to go down the row, getting everyone.

Roberto Suro:
It's interesting, because it doesn't -- it would have -- I'll leave it to the pundits to determine whether, you

know, what, you know -- if the exit polls were correct, which is an F, and you shifted 10 percent, took 10 percent of the Latino vote out of Obama's column and put it on Romney's column, Romney would have squeaked Florida, would have clearly carried Florida, would not necessarily have carried Nevada or Colorado, but they would have been close. Nevada would have been very -- I mean whisper, whisper close, and Colorado would have been closer. It would have been close, it wasn't even close. So, it's not -- that would not have been a panacea. You know, a lot of this Latino vote is just, is padding states like New York and California. You know, Obama had this much touted margin of 4,500 -- 4.5 million votes among Latinos, right, 3.5 million Latino votes, but 40 percent of that margin, it sits in New York, California, and Illinois. Just where he got ridiculous amounts of votes, but it doesn't -- you know, I mean you could --

Tamar Jacoby:
It doesn't matter.

Roberto Suro:
-- you could spend a lot of time and money racking up those votes, and it's bragging rights for one night.

Tamar Jacoby:
So, Dan --

Dan Restrepo:
-- but we did actually, but we did, right, and then the interesting thing is those are places where, you know, again, it's one of these counter-factual -- what would a targeted campaign to turn out Latinos look like and what would the effect be if, you know, Pete Wilson hadn't done us the favor in California a couple of decades ago?

Roberto Suro:
Let me -- one other thought that I forgot that's important to this -- that will move this conversation forward, briefly. The other part of this -- the narrative of immigration in this election, I think, is really one of the extraordinary achievements of the Obama campaign, was to deflect all blame for anything that has happened on immigration and make this an issue in which the Republicans were consistently the bad guys.

Tamar Jacoby:

Well, that's a poor candidate. Yeah, yeah.

Roberto Suro:
This really -- but forget Romney. Leave Romney out. Romney just, you know, they put a giant pile of doo doo there for him and he stepped into it, but they put the doo doo there in a remarkable way.

[laughter]

Tamar Jacoby:
What an image. Okay.

Roberto Suro:
One key statistic in all of this, since the day Barack Obama was inaugurated, one out of every 10 Mexicans living in the United States has been deported.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah.

Roberto Suro:
One out of 10. Nobody mentioned that.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah. Yeah, except Alfonso at the town hall. [laughs]

Roberto Suro:
Well, you didn't get very far in this.

[laughter]

[talking simultaneously]

Roberto Suro:
Everyone kept saying you're -- under me you're going to self-deport. Well, the answer was under you they're being deported.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Just quickly --

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay, but let's go down --

Dan Restrepo:

It's also the Republican Congress who raised the funds to do that. It has a lot to do with it.

Tamar Jacoby:
But then talk about --

Dan Restrepo:
But rather than get into an immigration debate --

Tamar Jacoby:
-- talk about this long-term thing.

Dan Restrepo:
Yeah.

Tamar Jacoby:
How -- I mean, when your view, how long is this -- are we scarred forever? You know, can we forget this? Can we get over this?

Dan Restrepo:
This goes to Roberto's point. Republicans have a huge brand problem right now among Latinos, and it's SB-1070. It's, you know, Sensenbrenner, right? I mean, it's -- and a lot of it stems --

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah.

Dan Restrepo:
-- from the immigration issue and how it's been handled by the two parties. I think that -- but -- and this is somewhat dangerous on what the word "ImmigrationWorks" behind me to say. I mean, I think immigration -- I think there's an immigration-related lesson -- there's a danger of over-learning immigration-related lesson for both parties. I think Republicans are fooling themselves if they think they fully solve their Latino problem by now coming to the table on comprehensive immigration reform, and I think Democrats are fooling ourselves if we think we've locked this up. You know, the president gets this done and we've locked this up for time immemorial. The result -- what we saw in '12 obviously had an immigration overlay, had a Republican branding -- but it also was the result of a very deliberate incorporation of Latinos into the governing coalition into -- and into the kind of daily life of the Obama administration, right?

And it's little things. It's inviting the anchors we see on Telemundo to the pre-State of the Union lunch that before it was just the mainstream media that got invited. It was -- it's the, you know, speaking Spanish from the White House podium for the first time ever during a White House -- regularly scheduled White House press brief. It's -- there's a -- and a lot of this grew, you know, into respect, right?

Tamar Jacoby:
Respect, respect?

Dan Restrepo:
Issues matter tremendously.

Tamar Jacoby:
Respect.

Dan Restrepo:
Respect is a part -- has to go with the issues, and I think it's that combination and, again, 60 percent support for the Affordable Care Act. A middle-class mentality within Latinos who appreciate what the President has done and that the president's priority was on the middle class and his opponent's was elsewhere.

Tamar Jacoby:
But I like --

Dan Restrepo:
And so those -- the kind of -- that combination, I think, is what worked and what will continue to work, but Democrats make a big mistake if we go, you know, "We've locked this up. This is ours, you know, all we have to do to really nail it down is comprehensive immigration."

Tamar Jacoby:
And that wouldn't be good for Latinos either.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Tamar Jacoby:
I mean, the last thing Latinos want to be is African Americans.

Dan Restrepo:
Right, is to be segmented.

Tamar Jacoby:
Taken for granted.

Dan Restrepo:
Right, right, right.

Tamar Jacoby:
Taken for granted by one and ignored by the other, right? That's the last thing.

Roberto Suro:
I don't think you can get away with that --

Tamar Jacoby:
Well --

Dan Restrepo:
-- Tamar.

Tamar Jacoby:
Because of the size.

Roberto Suro:
Well, because of the precedent thing.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

[laughter]

Alfonso Aguilar:
Well, let's -- let me say these two things very quickly.

Roberto Suro:
The ignoring part of it? I don't think that works anymore.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Going back --

Roberto Suro:
I think African Americans kind of scored some points there with the --

Tamar Jacoby:

Yeah, with the --

Alfonso Aguilar:
Going back quickly to the deportation issue, when we ran that ad in Nevada, it was just Nevada. I had never seen the Obama campaign reacting so quickly. I mean, they issued several statements. That ad, which again was just run in Clark County, Nevada, got coverage from CNN, from all the major media outlets. At that time I said we're on to something. Hopefully the Republican Party, the conservative super PACs will get it.

Tamar Jacoby:
But what's your --

Alfonso Aguilar:
It didn't happen.

Tamar Jacoby:
What's your prediction of, you know, how can we get over this? Like --

Alfonso Aguilar:
Well, absolutely. The great thing about Latinos is they're very independent minded. I don't know if you can really poll this, but they are, and this is a community in flux. And that's what we have to understand, that again, I think that if we engage them they'll respond favorably to the conservative message. Barack Obama wasn't the first one. Again, this idea that he was the first one to invite Jorge Ramos and Maria Elena Salinas and Jose Diaz Balart to the White House, you know, I was in the Bush Administration. I remember President Bush being extremely good with Spanish-language media. I mean, we -- President Bush and the campaign in 2000, 2004 was extraordinary in terms of the Latino media. Can Latinos forget? Absolutely. I mean, you mentioned the Pete Wilson debacle in California. Well, only a few years later George W. Bush was winning with 40 to 44 percent of the Latino vote, 2004, only eight years ago.

Roberto Suro:
Not in California.

Dan Restrepo:
Not in California.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Not in California. That's right. Not California.

Dan Restrepo:
California is deep blue.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Not California. No, no. Not California, not in New York. That's right, but we were extremely competitive. I don't think Latinos have forgotten about that. I think Latinos understand that Ronald Reagan was the last one to pass immigration reform. They understand that George W. Bush worked very hard for immigration reform and I think what we allow ourselves is for a small group within the GOP to hijack this issue and become the vocal voice on immigration. The problem with Republicans is the majority remained silent, remained silent. Can we take over? Absolutely, but I don't think Latinos are going to keep this in their mind. If they have a Republican candidate who's good on immigration, who can make a populous case for why limited government and a free economy is better for Latinos, they will support the Republican candidate, no problem.

Tamar Jacoby:
Good. Dan, so now -- and take us back also --

Dan Restrepo:
Yeah.

Tamar Jacoby:
-- say what you're going to say, but then take us back to your millennial voter question, because I think that's really interesting. I'd like you all to think about that. What is the millennial Latino voter going to look like?

Dan Restrepo:
And I'll grant you that the Bush family has got it right in terms of how to message the Latinos, right? You can go to school on the ad Jeb Bush -- [unintelligible] that Jeb Bush ran in his re-election campaign.

Alfonso Aguilar:
It wasn't only the Bush family.

Dan Restrepo:

You can go -- George W. Bush ran an ad that is inconceivable of a Republican candidate running today where the only flag that the candidate waved during the ad was the Mexican flag.

Tamar Jacoby:
Oh my gosh.

Dan Restrepo:
In his hand. I mean, again, if you just watch the image it looked like he was running for president of Mexico, not president of the United States.

Roberto Suro:
He's a Texan.

Dan Restrepo:
Right. No, no. It's a different -- right. It's a different sensibility.

Roberto Suro:
It's a Nixon-to-China thing.

Dan Restrepo:
Right. It's a different sensibility and --

Roberto Suro:
Confidence about that.

Dan Restrepo:
Right. Again, I think we as Democrats need to be very careful to think this is over with Latinos. It's not. I think the playing surface is a beneficial one to the Democrats right now and I think there's plenty of work.

Male Speaker:
Sorry.

Dan Restrepo:
But the work needs to continue to solidify that. They -- this is an electorate that is too diverse. There's generational change happening in it. You need to stay engaged. You need to -- you know, those 800,000 to a million Hispanics who are aging into the electorate need to be reached out to, need to be cultivated, need to be worked, you know, quite frankly, by both parties. I'm hoping the Republicans won't.

[laughter]

As a partisan. And then there is this question and I don't know -- I don't think the research has been done yet and Roberto can correct me if I'm wrong here, in terms of this kind of millennial question.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah.

Dan Restrepo:
The Latino electorate is young and getting younger, and the question is how -- are they going to behave like millennials? Quite frankly, are millennials going to behave like millennials as time goes forward?

Roberto Suro:
When they're not millennials.

Dan Restrepo:
When they're no longer millennials, right.

Roberto Suro:
But when they're somebody else being millennials.

Dan Restrepo:
[laughs] Right, exactly.

Roberto Suro:
Millennials are 30 years old.

Dan Restrepo:
Right. Yeah.

Roberto Suro:
Yeah. Right.

Dan Restrepo:
So you can, again, you can over-learn the lessons in any given moment politically quite easily, but again, the Latino millennials, or these Latinos who are coming of age, aging into the electorate, in places like Texas is one experience and they're liking to have one set of kind of values and voting behavior and when they're aging into the electorate in South Florida it's a different thing. So,

again, we got to be very careful to over-think this and over-simplify this as we do the analysis.

Roberto Suro:
Actually, you know, it's not so hard.

Tamar Jacoby:
But we can talk about things like Spanish language media and issues, can't we? I mean, isn't it --

Roberto Suro:
Well, there's -- let's just talk about this part of it first. There's -- it's not -- you don't need to over-think it. There's actually -- there is a very good political analyst who's not much in favor in many circles these past few weeks for his predictive skills.

[laughter]

And for his actual arithmetic skills on camera.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
Karl Rove --

Dan Restrepo:
Yes.

Roberto Suro:
-- worked these numbers in 1992, '93. He was -- I mean, I remember hearing him talk about this stuff in Texas in the 1980s. I mean, the people we're talking about who were going to make all those predictions, were already born then.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
Right? So the demographics haven't changed. He laid -- I mean, his numerology argued that Republicans, to be competitive in the demography of this decade, had consistently reached between 40, 45, sometimes high 40s of Latino vote nationally. Doesn't have to win it.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
And you're not talking about a huge dramatic shift that where Latino voters are, and this is banking on a series of assumptions, right? And there are a number of assumptions that you -- that then peel away from those numbers. I mean, one of them is what was not anticipated, and it's a really important factor in all this is the recession and its effect on population trends. So people have stopped moving, right? We have very low rates of internal migration, which was one of the factors that was transforming the politics of places like Virginia, North Carolina, metropolitan Texas.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
Houston, Dallas had been converted politically by people coming from elsewhere. The Intermountain West. So if you halt that, you know, and when you're thinking about Latinos as part of a coalition, the key element of that coalition was this mixture of newcomers. Latino newcomers and newcomers from other places, particularly if you think to the future of some place like North Carolina or Georgia, even at congressional district level. So if you halt that, that's one thing. The other question is what do you --

Tamar Jacoby:
Or halt it permanently. It's --

Roberto Suro:
Well, no, but for how long?

Tamar Jacoby:
-- slow now, but --

Roberto Suro:
We're into a five-year lag, so when does it pick up? How long does it take to get back to the levels of migration that created this political environment, which was created 10 to 15 years ago. And, you know, by the time this Latino electorate gets to voting age, you know, will they start voting early? Always a question.

Tamar Jacoby:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
Not, you know, it varies from one cycle to another. Very hard to tell.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
Very difficult to understand what mobilizes people when they're young.

Tamar Jacoby:
Well, when will they be educated enough? Because that will change their voting patterns, right? Like, how --

Roberto Suro:
Well, that's -- you know, then as much as who are they.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
What are their values? Where do they fit? Do they vote as Latinos? Do they vote as people who didn't go to college, who had a very hard time going to college?

Tamar Jacoby:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
Do they vote economic interests? And we have a good idea of what those economic interests are likely to be, where the country is now.

Tamar Jacoby:
Low income issues. Low income issues.

Roberto Suro:
Low income working class, many of them.

Tamar Jacoby:

Right. Yeah.

Roberto Suro:
Their parents don't have the money to easily send them to college. The public education system is doing terribly with them. College-going rates are up, but they're not going to four-year degrees.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah.

Roberto Suro:
So, there are a lot of reasons to assume that what -- the economic shape of this, and if you take the idea that they're coming -- they're going to come into politics as coalition players. Then is -- you change the nature of identity politics then somewhat. You know, you're looking at a different kind of coalition that's not based on Hispanicity necessarily.

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Roberto Suro:
But rather --

Tamar Jacoby:
Let --

Dan Restrepo:
Sorry.

Tamar Jacoby:
-- Dan and then Alfonso.

Dan Restrepo:
I think we're agreeing. Like, the point here is it behooves -- building off the very last thing you said -- it behooves whomever wants them to be a part of, you know, their electoral -- to keep them engaged in the coalition, right, and not to think this one issue has kind of permanently made them a member of the coalition.

Roberto Suro:
Right. Absolutely.

Alfonso Aguilar:

And this is the key for Republicans, and I agree that we can't over-think it. I mean, what are the projections? What are going to be their interests? It's hard to say right now, but one thing is clear. Republicans cannot engage Latinos two months before a general election. I was in Tampa and I was talking to one of the co-chairs of the Romney Hispanic effort, and I was complaining that I hadn't seen anything going on in battleground states where Latino vote is decisive, and he looked in my eyes and said, "Alfonso, now is when the campaign starts." And I'm like "Oh my God."

[laughter]

We're going to lose big.

[laughter]

And we did. But it can't be either six months before the election. It has to be a continuous --

Dan Restrepo:
Right.

Alfonso Aguilar:
-- effort to engage Latinos continuously. And, again, as I said, to explain to them why policies based on limited government and free economy are good policies for Latino businesses. Latinos are opening businesses three times as fast as the national average. I don't think they have still understood the impact that, say, Obamacare is going to have in their businesses, but they soon will, and -- but if we don't engage them, if we don't explain that to them, they're not going to understand. So this is key. And then finally, if you're -- obviously I go back to the issue of immigration. I mean, you need to have -- those who've remained silent for so long at this point have to raise their voices. The great thing is that now there's an avalanche of Republicans coming forward and saying I'm for immigration reform, from Rick Santorum, the latest.

Roberto Suro:
Stop.

Alfonso Aguilar:
To Sean Hannity who says he's evolved and now he's for immigration reform. Well, you're going to see a lot of

people who remain quiet on the issue coming forward and saying you know what, I'm actually going to tackle this issue. I'm conservative and I believe in immigration. And finally, conversations are starting in the House and the Senate, and so I am hopeful. I am hopeful. But again, if we have a good position on immigration, if we don't engage the Latino vote directly, understanding its diversity -- for so long Hispanic outrage from the Republican side has been talking to Hispanic business elites. I remember one event that a Hispanic organization did and -- I mean, I love this organization. They do great work. But they did it at the Doral Resort in Miami.

Tamar Jacoby:
We were both there.

Alfonso Aguilar:
And I just didn't really get it. I think there were really more Latino voters in the kitchen than out --

Tamar Jacoby:
Out.

Alfonso Aguilar:
-- and I mean, but it says something.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah, out.

Alfonso Aguilar:
It says something about where are we engaging them. You know, I think we have to go to the communities. The basic community organizations that are conservative are the evangelical churches. Let's use them. Let's go to the grassroots, but that hasn't happened.

Tamar Jacoby:
Right. Okay. So let's open it to audience questions. Somebody's got a microphone. Let's start on the ledge there. Anybody sitting on the ledge deserves to get the first question.

[laughter]

Dan Restrepo:
Hopefully only literally, not figuratively, right?

[laughter]

Tamar Jacoby:
Please identify yourself.

Cynthia Arnson:
Sure. Thanks very much. Cynthia Arnson from the Latin American program here. Alfonso, you mentioned, you know, the record rate of deportations under Barack Obama. I'm wondering if you can sort of all of you look ahead into your crystal ball, we all know that if there is immigration reform it's going to involve, you know, a compromise between things that, you know, Democrats want and that Republicans want. What do you think are the elements of a potential immigration reform that will most turn off Latino voters in terms of trading off, you know, some form of, you know, legalization of people already in the country in exchange for, you know, tougher enforcement, a bigger wall, all that sort of -- where do you see the politics of this kind of driving wedges into the community?

Alfonso Aguilar:
Right.

Tamar Jacoby:
Well, frankly I think that if we do legalization, if we do path to citizenship, the other stuff will not be that significant in the Latino community.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Right.

Tamar Jacoby:
But...

Alfonso Aguilar:
I agree. If it's legalization that provides them at least some form of legal residency, I don't think it will be an issue. Tougher enforcement is not going to be an issue to Latinos. Question here is the path to citizenship. I can already see the Democrats saying "Well, the Republicans are against a path to citizenship." I think Republicans there would have to say we're against a special path to citizenship. Ideally I would like to see a path to citizenship, especially for the young dreamers, but I think I agree with Tamar. Legalization has to be part of this.

Tamar Jacoby:
Dan.

Dan Restrepo:
I'm curious as to what Tamar meant by legalization, but --

Tamar Jacoby:
I meant that that piece is much more important than the rest.

Dan Restrepo:
Yes. Yes.

Tamar Jacoby:
That's the turkey in the middle of the table, but they know exactly what the vegetables are.

Dan Restrepo:
Any path to citizenship is --

Tamar Jacoby:
Not that important.

Dan Restrepo:
I think path to citizenship is the turkey on the table -- in the middle of the table.

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah, well.

Dan Restrepo:
I think, again, --

Tamar Jacoby:
Probably the wrong metaphor.

Dan Restrepo:
Right, yes, but if there's a path to citizenship with a reasonable amount of time, I'm not quite sure what reasonable is right now, then I think the rest of it falls into place quite simply from a kind of Latino activism perspective. The -- I think, quite frankly, that's going to be as, I think, you've just heard in these two answers where there's still a lot of bridging to be done in Washington and, I think, within the Republican Party in terms of how far they're willing to go on the question of path to citizenship, not just second class status here in

the United States. That's the -- I think will be the real rub in the debate.

Roberto Suro:
Yeah, I have to respectfully disagree. It --

Tamar Jacoby:
Why we invite you.

[laughter]

[talking simultaneously]

Roberto Suro:
That's not the only reason. If you think back over the last 10 years or so of failure in immigration policymaking -- actually, more than 10 years, 15 years, 20 years, depends on how long -- far back you want to go -- it starts making me feel old. One of the developments, particularly since the mid 2000s has been the emergence of a fairly vigorous immigrant's rights movement in this country and a litigation power and a protest power that didn't exist before. You all talk -- all of you have talked here as if you missed the key to all immigration legislation in the past -- maybe you'll be different this time -- has been in the details. So, a legalization, just means nothing.

There are two things that I think we know from past experience about the nature of these proposals. One is that a legalization proposal is going to be a giant game of chutes and ladders, right? With all kinds of qualifications, a process for getting into it. There are going to be right to the last minute bargaining over "let's set the start date here or here," and you're tossing a million people one way or the other depending on a deal that's made, you know, in one of those gilded rooms in the Capitol building when it goes to conference, right? So we know that. All that stuff will be litigated. It will be a process -- the process of legalization itself given the current framework is designed to be long. So it is going to be litigated and is going to be a process people are going to be going through for a long time.

The other thing we -- and that will be full of potholes, full of questions about implementation ability, rights to counsel. I mean, we're talking about taking a framework

now legally that is intensely hostile to the legal rights of the foreign-born. A Democratic artifact by the way --

Tamar Jacoby:
Right, right.

Roberto Suro:
But let me continue --

Tamar Jacoby:
No, but we have five minutes and lots of other questions.

Roberto Suro:
All right, and one last point, the other piece of the architecture of immigration policy that we -- that I think that we can be pretty confident about is that as you build an umbrella under which certain people are sheltered, life outside that umbrella gets harsher.

Tamar Jacoby:
No question.

Roberto Suro:
Right? No question. So, outside -- that means whoever doesn't get in is going to face a much more wicked situation in terms of much higher rates of deportation, fewer rights when --

Tamar Jacoby:
Presumably they're going to blame both parties, right? Presumably if they -- you know, in the ideal world where we make a deal --

Roberto Suro:
I'm just saying -- but this is -- people are portraying this as, oh, you know, by April we'll pass this law and then Latinos will forget about it. It will be a living, breathing controversy in Latino communities for the next decade.

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay, next question, and we have lots of questions so please make your questions brief and maybe we'll accumulate a few now. Man with the microphone.

Male Speaker:

I have a question about -- immigration, it seems, has been discussed more as a unilateral issue here. Where does Mexico have a role here? This is in many ways a foreign policy question. The Obama administration has little or no real relationship with Mexico, at least even the new president, and I do wonder whether this will ultimately become a matter of solving this as two nations can rather than just one.

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay, next question. The man right there in the blue shirt.

Miguel Diaz:
I'm Miguel Diaz [spelled phonetically], I'm a foreign service spouse. Great panel, my kudos to the Wilson Center for hosting it. I have two questions if I may --

Tamar Jacoby:
Well, one, one, we have --

Male Speaker:
One question. I could only speak for myself as a Hispanic that voted for Obama, but I'm not sure whether I did it because I was scared the bejesus out of the Romney campaign or whether I did it for love of what the Democrats have done for Hispanics. And I guess my question for Roberto is, I mean, can you quantify these sentiments, the fear of the Republican Party versus the love of the Democratic agenda and to what extent those different approaches inform the way that the different campaigns might go after the Hispanic vote in the future?

Tamar Jacoby:
That's a great question. The woman in front of you in the red shirt. Please identify yourself.

Andrea Barron:
Yeah, Andrea Barron, George Mason University. Yeah, I'm wondering whether you think the Latino position on abortion is more like that of Joe Biden who said he personally opposes abortion but he would not impose his views on the rest of the country, or whether they're more similar to Paul Ryan who believes that his particular religious views should be imposed on the rest of the country who might not share them?

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay, tricky. The man right here in the white shirt. You guys -- you're going to have to put all this together fast.

Male Speaker:
My name is [unintelligible]. I have a concern that Republicans -- like, I did vote for Barack Obama four years ago but this time not because I think he betrayed most of his promises, and I would like to see his Nobel Prize withdrawn too. This would be the first recall of a Nobel Prize. Given that I think that Republicans should move, in my opinion, to the left of Democrats, which means you've got to get rid of your right-wing fascists you have in the party, and that's the only way to win and I hope --

Tamar Jacoby:
What's your question? What's your question?

Male Speaker:
So, my question is will the country move just like we gave George Bush two terms even though he had screwed up after the four year? Is it that if Hillary Clinton runs as a Democrat she will get the big hammer for all the failures of the Obama administration and the Republicans will by default win?

Tamar Jacoby:
The last question -- well, we have lots of questions still. Let's take this around and then see if we have some time left over. Try to -- we do only have a few minutes so treat this as your -- yeah, treat this as your last word to see what you want to say.

[laughter]

[talking simultaneously]

Roberto Suro:
Do you want me to start?

Tamar Jacoby:
Yeah.

Roberto Suro:
Well on the question of dealing with Mexico, you know, you can imagine a situation particularly if there is some kind of movement on some kind of legislation here where there

are conversations with Mexico about security and immigration, and particularly Central America and migration through Mexico which is -- I think there is likely to be increase in traffic is going to come through -- there are already signs this year of really substantially mounting migration that some of those countries are disintegrating. Mexico -- there are conversations through the new administration, they have really great concerns about having essentially failed states next to them and looking to the U.S. for help in dealing with them. That could be a way of -- right now there's ground there and there are, you know, at the government ministerial level there is thought being put into how you approach that. There are think tanks working on it. We'll see if that agenda develops.

The fear/love question with Latinos, you know, I -- you know, there is -- you have to -- this vote has to be disaggregated and a big chunk of it has to be set off to one side. I'd say 50 percent of it, maybe 55 percent of it that's just not going to be in play.

Tamar Jacoby:
What do you mean?

Roberto Suro:
The Puerto Rican voters in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts are a very -- they're among the most liberal Democratic voters there are. They voted for Obama 80, 90 percent. They were against -- they were the most vocal Democratic constituency opposed to the war in Iraq in 2003. I mean, they're just -- I mean, they're a very distinctive part of our political landscape. They're not going to change. Latino Democrats in coastal California, it's just really hard to see where you get -- Republicans can hope to get more than 25 or 30 percent out of that big chunk. In the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, in Chicago and its suburbs you're starting to talk -- it starts to add up. I think in Cuba a new dynamic has set in. I think Obama's opening of travel to Cuba has totally changed the game for the way Cubans think about it. So you're talking about large chunks of this electorate that are solidly Democratic and there's a solid base there, so the game has been and will continue to be about a fairly small margin of this electorate in key places.

Tamar Jacoby:
Okay.

Dan Restrepo:
I'll do these as quickly as I can. I'm still enjoying what happened in November of 2012 to think about November 2016. So, I'll skip on that one. A two word answer to your question, Joe Biden, which is a segue over to your question -- I would take exception with the premise of your question in terms of the Obama administration not having a relationship with Mexico. In my prior existence before my summer vacation I was the president's main Latin American policy advisor at the White House for three and a half years. And this is kind of an anecdote and it over simplifies, but I had 34 countries that I was responsible for at the NSC. I visited no country more than -- no country other than one more than three times. I visited one country 17 times in the three and a half years that I was at the White House, and that country happens to be Mexico.

The intensity of the relationship between the two governments -- the prior government and now you've seen with Peña Nieto coming to meet the president just before his inaugural, Vice President Biden going to the inaugural, and this vice president doesn't go to a lot of inaugurations so I think you should read into that. There's an intensity of a relationship between the governments of the United States and Mexico across a broad range of issues. The media focuses on security questions but it goes a lot further than that. So I think you will see that continuing.

Immigration's a complicated question to deal with in the bilateral context. I think President Vicente Fox of Mexico kind of learned a lesson -- a political lesson in Mexico of staking too much on affecting the immigration debate in the United States over something that he really couldn't affect and paid a political price at home for failure to deliver something that was never in his power to deliver, which was comprehensive immigration reform in the United States. I think Peña Nieto has learned that lesson, and I don't think you'll see him being particularly assertive of what should happen in the legal construct in the United States.

I think you're exactly right that the question of transmigration has the Mexican government -- the prior Mexican government and this Mexican government very concerned and they are looking at the problem in a very

different way than they traditionally have. What comes of that, how you wrestle with it, that's not clear. I think that will be part of the conversation between the two governments. Central America, I know, is a part of the conversation and has been for several years between the two governments and will continue to be. So I think there is a very intense relationship between the government of the United States and the government of Mexico across a broad range of issues. On the particulars of what an immigration deal in the United States looks like, I don't think you'll see a whole lot of public and, I think, even private interaction on that question.

Tamar Jacoby:
You want to say a quick last word on the Latino vote?

Dan Restrepo:
Actually, let me go to [unintelligible] question. I think it is really hard to disarticulate what happened in that sense. There was clearly concern, again, going back to the brand problem that Republicans have, of what a Republican victory would mean for Latino voters, but there was also, I think, a growing recognition among Latinos that they were part of a coalition, that they were wanted, and they were included, and they really were part of a going forward vision. Which one and where factored more, hard to say, but I think therein lies the lesson of this election from a political standpoint. The inclusion in a very real way -- and I think this is a two-way street actually. Organized political Latinos also have to think about what they do now. Do they do their own thing or do they incorporate themselves in multiple places into the coalition here in Washington and across the country, and I think that'll have a lot to say about the shape of Latino politics moving forward, whether it really takes on this coalition nature or whether it's still this other that has a, you know, a variable relationship, and it may very well be that there are different answers to that at different levels of government.

Tamar Jacoby:
Different today.

Alfonso Aguilar:
Well, very quickly, I agree with the issue of Mexico. Sadly, in 2000 we began -- we thought before 9/11 that we were going to move immediately on immigration reform. The

relationship with President Fox was extraordinary, very, very close. After 9/11 it took a hit because of Mexico's position on a number of issues including the effort in Iraq. However, I think the relationship continued to be very intense. I don't think -- I think most experts would agree that the relationship with Mexico has weakened dramatically. I think that -- well, perhaps Dan would --

[talking simultaneously]

Alfonso Aguilar:
But I just don't see the same type of rapport or relationship with Mexico that we had under the Bush administration. I mean, how the Fast and Furious thing was handled -- I mean, it was President Calderon himself who criticized the U.S. for that whole botched effort.

On abortion, I will say that poll after poll, every single study that I've seen with the exception of the exit polling shows that the majority, the majority, of Latinos believe that abortion should be illegal compared to 40 percent of the rest of the population, so I think they would agree with Mr. Ryan, which is the position of the Catholic Church and the Christian churches which means that the churches have a lot of influence in the Latino vote.

Then, finally, on the Latino vote. Look, it's really hard to say. Again, we're not a monolithic community, and I think, as Dan has said and Roberto, I think both parties, but I think the Republican Party has to do a major effort -- overhaul of its efforts towards Latinos and begin now. They cannot wait until the election. It has to be an ongoing effort, but going after not only about immigration but about every single other issue explaining why conservative policies are good for Latinos. I don't believe at the end, like Governor Romney said, that Latinos voted for President Obama because of gifts. I honestly don't think it because of Obamacare or anything else. I think it had to do a lot with immigration and the lack of inclusion in efforts towards Hispanics.

Tamar Jacoby:
Great. So, thank you very much. Thank you -- I apologize to those of you who didn't get to ask a question. I think the speakers will be around for a few minutes. You know, I love the fear and love question. I mean, it really, I think, gets to a lot of -- you know, politics are about

issues -- in a way we've parsed this out so well. Politics are about issues, politics are about outreach and the machine, politics in this case is about this one big issue that we've got to get off the table, but really what this is about is the future and how dynamic this is and how both parties, particularly Republicans I'm afraid, have a lot of work to do.

So, thank you all so much for being here. Thank you to three terrific panelists and two other -- all five terrific panelists.

[applause]

[end of transcript]