



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

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Research Policy Update

Native Vote Regional Report: Western Region

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Native Vote initiative is a nonpartisan effort to promote American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) voter engagement throughout Indian Country. The purpose of this report is to share bi-weekly updates on the status of competitive elections during the 2020 election cycle for states in each NCAI region where turnout of the Native Vote may make a difference.



NCAI Western Region – Voting Age Population

For the 2020 election cycle, a number of close races have the potential to be impacted by the number of voting age AI/ANs who vote, especially if they are a significant percentage of the total population in the state. The NCAI Western Region includes the states of Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. Forty-eight tribal nations have land within the region. For the states in the Western Region, the AI/AN voting age population number and percentage of the overall population for each of the states is shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: AI/AN Voting Age Statewide Population Percentage for States in the Western Region

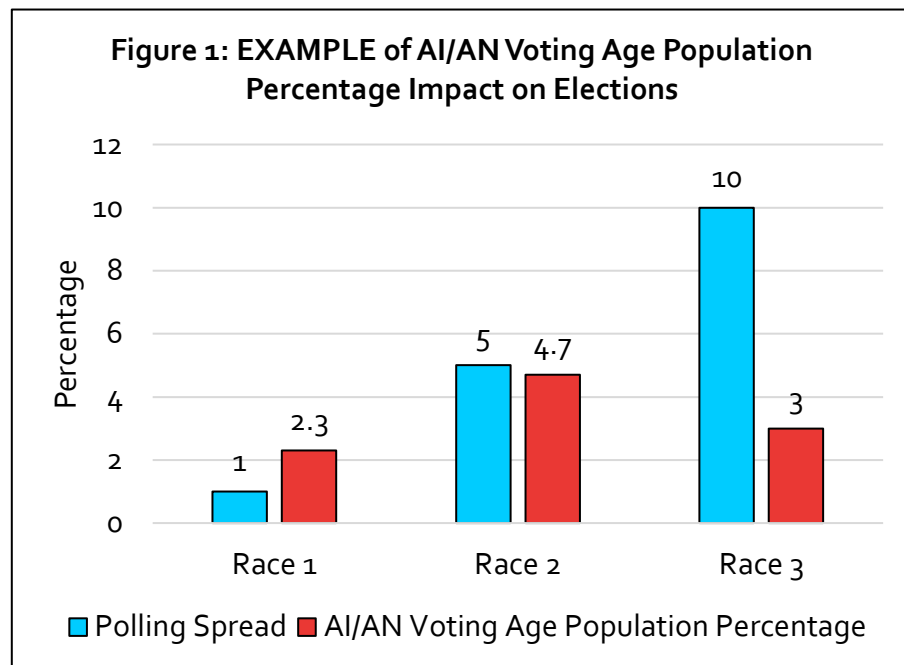
State	2019 State Total Voting Age Population Estimates	2019 AI/AN State Total Voting Age Population Estimates	AI/AN Voting Age Population Percentage of State Population
Arizona	5,638,481	315,531	5.60%
Nevada	2,387,517	61,561	2.58%
Utah	2,274,774	47,672	2.10%

Source: 2019 Census Bureau, 2019 Population Estimates, Tables SCPRC-EST2019-18+POP-RES and SC-EST2019-ALLDATA5.

The AI/AN voting age population has the potential to impact competitive national, Congressional district, and state legislative races where the margin of victory is estimated to be similar to the AI/AN voting age population percentage.

Figure 1 illustrates an example of how graphs are used in this report to illustrate how the AI/AN voting age population percentage can impact elections. The polling difference or margin between candidates is represented as a percent in the blue bars, and the AI/AN voting age population percentage of the total state population is represented in the red bars in the graph.

In *Race 1*, the AI/AN percentage in the example state (red) is larger than the polling difference between candidates (blue) in Race 1. Here AI/AN voters can clearly impact the outcome of the race.



In *Race 2*, the AI/AN voting age population percentage is close to the polling difference between candidates. AI/AN voters in elections like this example can potentially impact the outcome.

In *Race 3*, the AI/AN voting age population percentage is smaller than the polling difference between candidates. In this example, AI/AN voters may not have a big impact on the outcome.

In this report, data on competitive and potentially competitive elections may change over time and is monitored with the *Cook Political Report*, which is a non-partisan newsletter that regularly analyzes elections at the national and state level. The *Cook Political Report* ranks races as tossups, with either candidate having a possibility to succeed, or as “leaning” or “likely” to result in a specific outcome, Democratic (“D”) or Republican (“R”).

This report also uses current polling on competitive races as collected by *FiveThirtyEight*, which is a news media source and national polling clearinghouse. Finally, this report uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau on the number and percentage of AI/AN voters in election districts. For national and statewide elections [Electoral College (Presidential), Senate, and Gubernatorial races], the data on AI/AN voting age population is drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2019 population estimates. For all other elections, AI/AN voting age population data for U.S. Congressional districts and state upper and lower legislative house levels is drawn from the Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) Census Bureau dataset from 2018. These reports are compiled using the NCAI regions, which may differ from other organizational or federal department regional designations for tribal nations. The reports for each state in this NCAI region are illustrated below.

NCAI Western Region – Arizona



In Arizona, the latest *Cook Political Report* shows four competitive and potentially competitive races. **Table 2** illustrates the competitive races for Arizona, the *Cook Political Report* ranking, the voting electorate or district, and the AI/AN voting age population percentage in those districts. The races include the Senate race between incumbent Senator McSally and challenger Mark Kelly, the Electoral College (Presidential) race, and two Congressional district races. The Senate, Electoral College (Presidential), and Arizona’s first Congressional district races have all been ranked as potentially to result in a Democratic outcome, or “Lean-D.” Arizona’s sixth Congressional district ranks as a tossup, with slightly more likelihood of a Republican outcome, or “Tossup-R.” The *Cook Political Report* also considers control of Arizona’s upper and lower state legislative houses to be tossups.

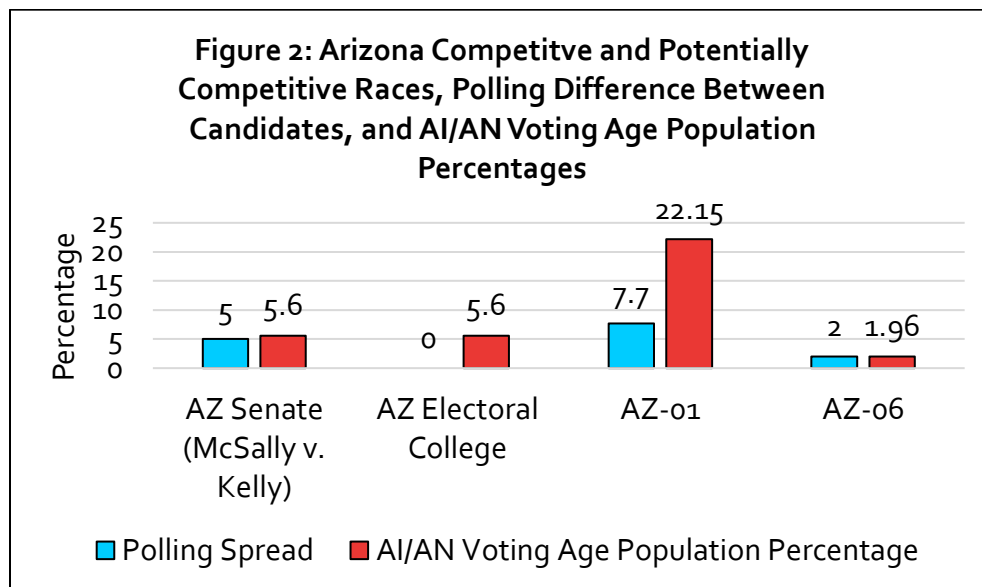
Table 2: Arizona Competitive and Potentially Competitive Elections

Race	<i>Cook Political Report</i> Ranking	Electorate	AI/AN Voting Age Population Percentage
Senate (McSally v. Kelly)	Lean-D	Statewide	5.60%
Electoral College	Lean-D	Statewide	5.60%
Congressional 1st District	Lean-D	Congressional District	22.15%
Congressional 6th District	Tossup-R	Congressional District	1.96%
State Legislative Upper House	Tossup	State Legislative District	Varies by District
State Legislative Lower House	Tossup	State Legislative District	Varies by District

Source: 2019 Census Bureau, 2019 Population Estimates, Tables SCPRC-EST2019-18+POP-RES and SC-EST2019-ALLDATA5; Census Bureau, 2018 Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) by Race and Ethnicity, Table CVAP 2014-2018 t Year ACS Data; *Cook Political Report*, Accessed October 30, 2020.

AI/AN voters can impact races where the current polling shows the candidates are expected to gain a similar percentage of votes and in areas where the percent of AI/AN voters is larger than the difference in polling percentages between the candidates.

Figure 2 illustrates the AI/AN voting age population percentages and recent polling spread or percent margins for the Senate, Electoral College, and Congressional district races for Arizona. In the Senate and Electoral College, the AI/AN population is larger than the current polling difference between candidates, and in the sixth Congressional district the population percentage is close to the polling difference. AI/AN voters can impact the outcome in these races.



Source: 2019 Census Bureau, 2019 Population Estimates, Tables SCPRC-EST2019-18+POP-RES and SC-EST2019-ALLDATA5; Census Bureau, 2018 Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) by Race and Ethnicity, Table CVAP 2014-2018 t Year ACS Data; FiveThirtyEight, Accessed October 30, 2020.

In addition, eight Native candidates are running for office in Arizona according to *Indian Country Today*. **Table 3** illustrates each Native candidate running for state legislative office, their district race, and the AI/AN voting age population percentage in those state legislative districts.

Table 3: Arizona State Congressional Candidates and AI/AN Voting Age Population Percentage

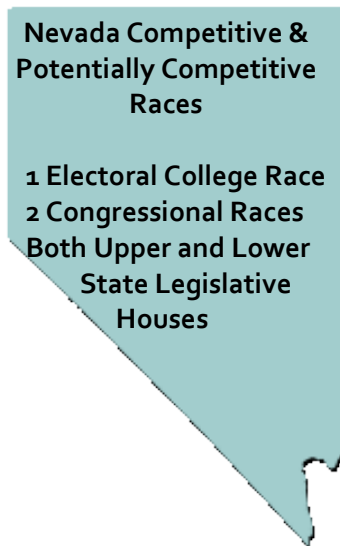
Candidate	District Race	AI/AN Voting Age Population Percentage
Domingo DeGrazia	State House District 10	1.17%
Felicia French	State House District 6	6.13%
Sally Ann Gonzales	State Senate District 3	4.11%
Jennifer Jermaine	State House District 18	2.18%
Jamescita Peshlakai	State Senate District 7	66.22%

Victoria Steele	State Senate District 9	1.48%
Arlando Teller	State House District 7	66.22%
Myron Tsoie	State House District 7	66.22%

Source: Census Bureau, 2018 Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) by Race and Ethnicity, Table CVAP 2014-2018 t Year ACS Data; Indian Country Today, Accessed October 30, 2020.

In five of the races, Native candidates are running in legislative districts with over 4 percent AI/AN voting age population, and for all races in the seventh district, the AI/AN voting age population percentage constitutes a majority. AI/AN voters can impact the outcome of these races if they are close.

NCAI Western Region – Nevada



In Nevada, the latest *Cook Political Report* shows two Congressional elections to be competitive and potentially competitive races. **Table 4** illustrates the competitive races for Arizona, the *Cook Political Report* ranking, the voting electorate or district, and the AI/AN voting age population percentage in those districts. The races include the two Congressional district races and the battle for control of Nevada’s state legislative houses. The Electoral College race and the Congressional district races all rank competitive and potentially to result in Democratic outcomes, or “Lean-D.” *Cook Political Report* also ranks Nevada’s upper and lower state legislative houses as potentially competitive and likely to result in Democratic wins, or “Likely-D.”

Table 4: Nevada Competitive and Potentially Competitive Elections

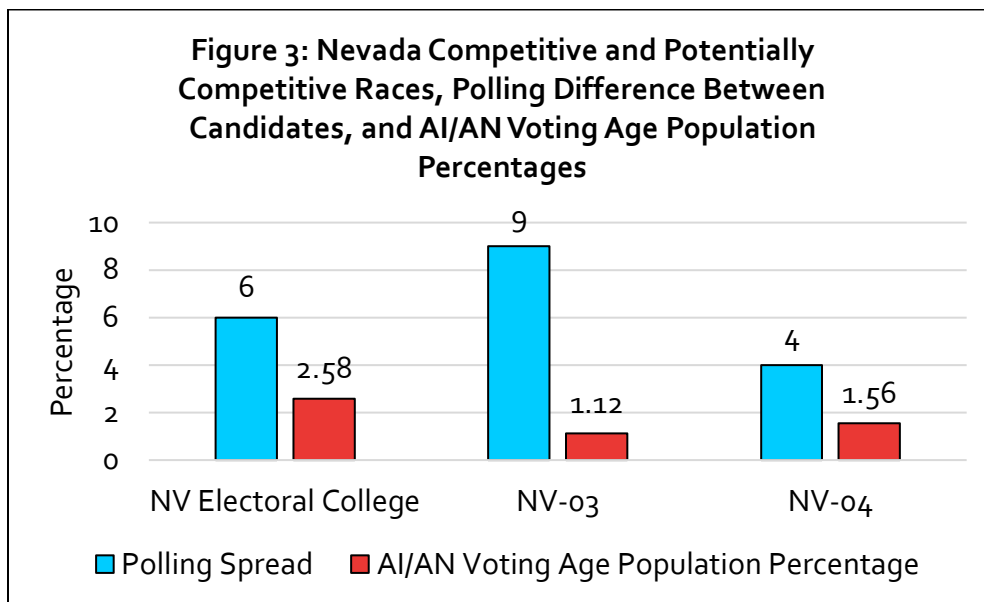
Race	<i>Cook Political Report</i> Ranking	Electorate	AI/AN Voting Age Population Percentage
Electoral College	Lean-D	Statewide	5.60%
Congressional 3rd District	Lean-D	Congressional District	1.12%
Congressional 4th District	Lean-D	Congressional District	1.56%
State Legislative Upper House	Likely-D	State Legislative District	Varies by District

State Legislative Lower House	Likely-D	State Legislative District	Varies by District
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Source: 2019 Census Bureau, 2019 Population Estimates, Tables SCPRC-EST2019-18+POP-RES and SC-EST2019-ALLDATA5; Census Bureau, 2018 Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) by Race and Ethnicity, Table CVAP 2014-2018 t Year ACS Data; Cook Political Report, Accessed October 30, 2020.

AI/AN voters can impact races where the current polling shows the candidates are expected to gain a similar percentage of votes and in areas where the percent of AI/AN voters is larger than the difference in polling percentages between the candidates.

Figure 3 illustrates the AI/AN voting age population percentages and recent polling spread or percent margins for the Congressional district races for Nevada.



Source: 2019 Census Bureau, 2019 Population Estimates, Tables SCPRC-EST2019-18+POP-RES and SC-EST2019-ALLDATA5; Census Bureau, 2018 Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) by Race and Ethnicity, Table CVAP 2014-2018 t Year ACS Data; FiveThirtyEight, Accessed October 30, 2020.

While the *Cook Political Report* does consider both Nevada’s upper and lower state legislative houses potentially as competitive, no Native candidates are running for state legislative office in Nevada.

NCAI Western Region – Utah



In Utah, the latest *Cook Political Report* shows two competitive or potentially competitive races in the Electoral College race and the race for Utah’s fourth Congressional district. In addition, there is one Native candidate Darren Parry running for office in Utah’s first Congressional district according *Indian Country Today*. **Table 5** illustrates the competitive and potentially competitive races for Utah, the *Cook Political Report* ranking, the voting electorate or district, and the AI/AN voting age population percentage in those districts. Utah’s Electoral College (Presidential) race ranks potentially competitive and likely to result in a Republican win, or “Likely-R.” Utah’s fourth Congressional district ranks as a tossup with a slight lean toward a Democratic outcome, or “Tossup-D.”

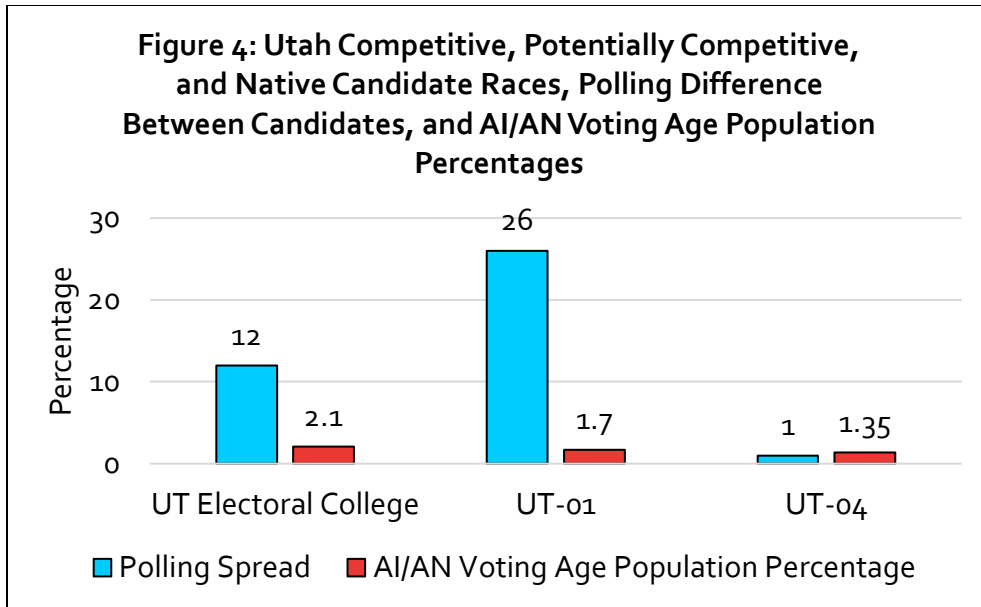
Table 5: Utah Competitive and Potentially Competitive Elections

Race	<i>Cook Political Report</i> Ranking	Electorate	AI/AN Voting Age Population Percentage
Electoral College	Likely-R	Statewide	2.10%
Congressional 1st District	Unranked	Congressional District	1.70%
Congressional 4th District	Tossup-D	Congressional District	1.35%

Source: 2019 Census Bureau, 2019 Population Estimates, Tables SCPRC-EST2019-18+POP-RES and SC-EST2019-ALLDATA5; Census Bureau, 2018 Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) by Race and Ethnicity, Table CVAP 2014-2018 t Year ACS Data; Cook Political Report, Accessed October 30, 2020.

AI/AN voters can impact races where the current polling shows the candidates are expected to gain a similar percentage of votes and in areas where the percent of AI/AN voters is larger than the difference in polling percentages between the candidates.

Figure 4 illustrates the AI/AN voting age population percentages and recent polling spread or percent margins for Electoral College and Congressional district races for Utah. In Utah’s fourth Congressional district, the AI/AN population percentage is larger than the current polling spread between candidates. AI/AN voters can impact the outcome of this race.



Source: Census Bureau, 2018 Resident Voting Age Population by Race and Ethnicity (CVAP), Table CVAP 2014-2018 t Year ACS Data; FiveThirtyEight, Accessed October 30, 2020.

The *Cook Political Report* does not consider Utah’s upper or lower state legislative houses as competitive or potentially competitive this election cycle, and no Native candidates are running for state legislative office in Utah.

For more information, email research@ncai.org or visit NCAI’s Native Vote website at: <http://www.nativevote.org/>

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