

Deep in the Heart of Asian Texas



Part 2: Voices of AAPI Voters


September 2024





Mission

We connect Asian
and Pacific Islander
Texans to civic action
to build personal and
political power.



Vision

We envision a
future where all
people feel bold in
their belonging.

About Asian Texans for Justice

Asian Texans for Justice (ATJ) is a statewide nonpartisan, nonprofit organization founded to be a voice for our state's diverse Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community — to claim our space and inspire Texas to invest in our stories.

We do this by building coalitions with leaders and organizations across Texas and the country, building a talent pipeline with leadership development, and advocating for issues that can bring meaningful change to Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities.

We believe that civic action is a critical component of asserting our voices, strengthening our democracy, and creating a society in which all people feel bold in their belonging. Our civic action work is focused on four key areas:

1. Civic Engagement
2. Advocacy
3. Youth Leadership Development
4. Coalition Building

Learn more about ATJ and our work by visiting:
www.AsianTexansForJustice.org



Contents

Introduction 01

Key Insights 03

AAPI Perspectives 04

↳ Engagement in Civic and Community Causes 05

↳ Voting for Political Action and Change 08

↳ Perspectives on Policy Issues 13

AAPI Voter Personas 18

Conclusion 24

Acknowledgements 25

Technical Note 26

Introduction

Texas is home to one of the fastest-growing Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) populations in the United States.

With approximately 2 million AAPIs in the Lone Star State, the future of our state will be shaped by the growth of AAPI communities and our access to political power. Despite the significant increase in AAPI Texans, policymakers and political leaders still lack information about the policy preferences and civic engagement levels of AAPI voters.

Asian Texans for Justice (ATJ) believes that civic action is critical to asserting our voices, strengthening our democracy, and creating a society where all people feel bold in their belonging. ATJ is committed to increasing understanding and awareness of the AAPI community among policymakers and other political stakeholders.

This report is the second in a three-part series called [Deep in the Heart of Asian Texas: Insights on AAPI Voters](#). The series aims to provide deep analysis and increase understanding of AAPI voters in Texas so organizers, policymakers, and other Texas leaders can better engage AAPI voters and address the issues that matter most to them.

The AAPI diaspora in Texas is very diverse; however, AAPI voters are often portrayed as a monolith. In July 2024, ATJ, with support from AAPI Civic Engagement Fund, commissioned interviews with 50 AAPI voters to hear their stories and learn about their lived experiences in Texas. ATJ commissioned this research because there are few efforts to hear from AAPI voters about their diverse attitudes and experiences.

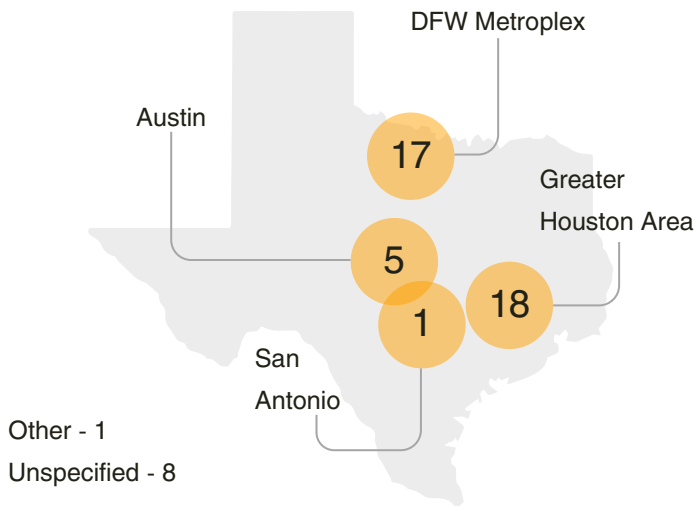
This report seeks to broaden the understanding of AAPI Texans by exploring their civic engagement, political participation, and views on key policy issues. Drawing from commissioned interviews, it introduces AAPI voter personas to enrich narratives and catalyze the engagement of AAPI communities in Texas.



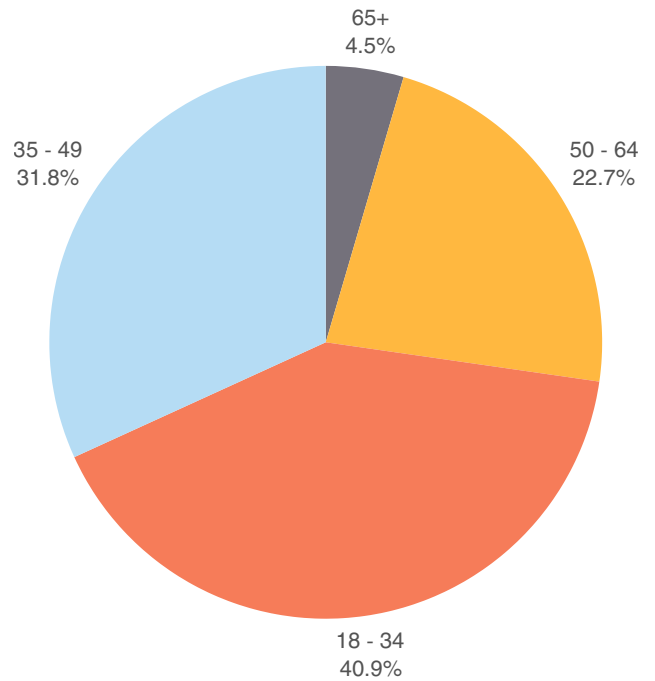
Who participated in AAPI voter interviews?

The interviews captured a broad spectrum of AAPI voices across Texas, offering insights from diverse backgrounds and experiences. This variety of participants helps paint a fuller picture of the AAPI experience in Texas, highlighting the community's complexity and the range of lived experiences within the Asian diaspora. By bringing together these varied voices, the study offers a more nuanced understanding of AAPI voters in the Lone Star State.

By Geographic Location



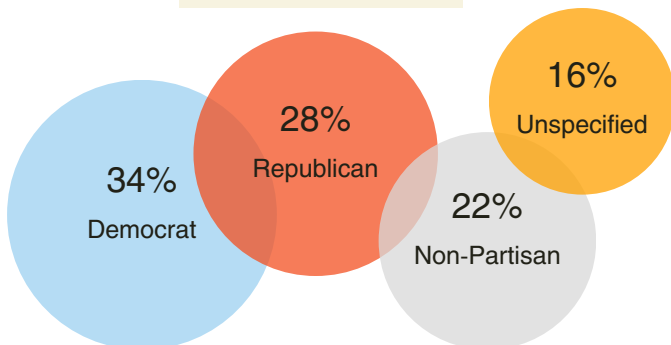
By Age



By Gender



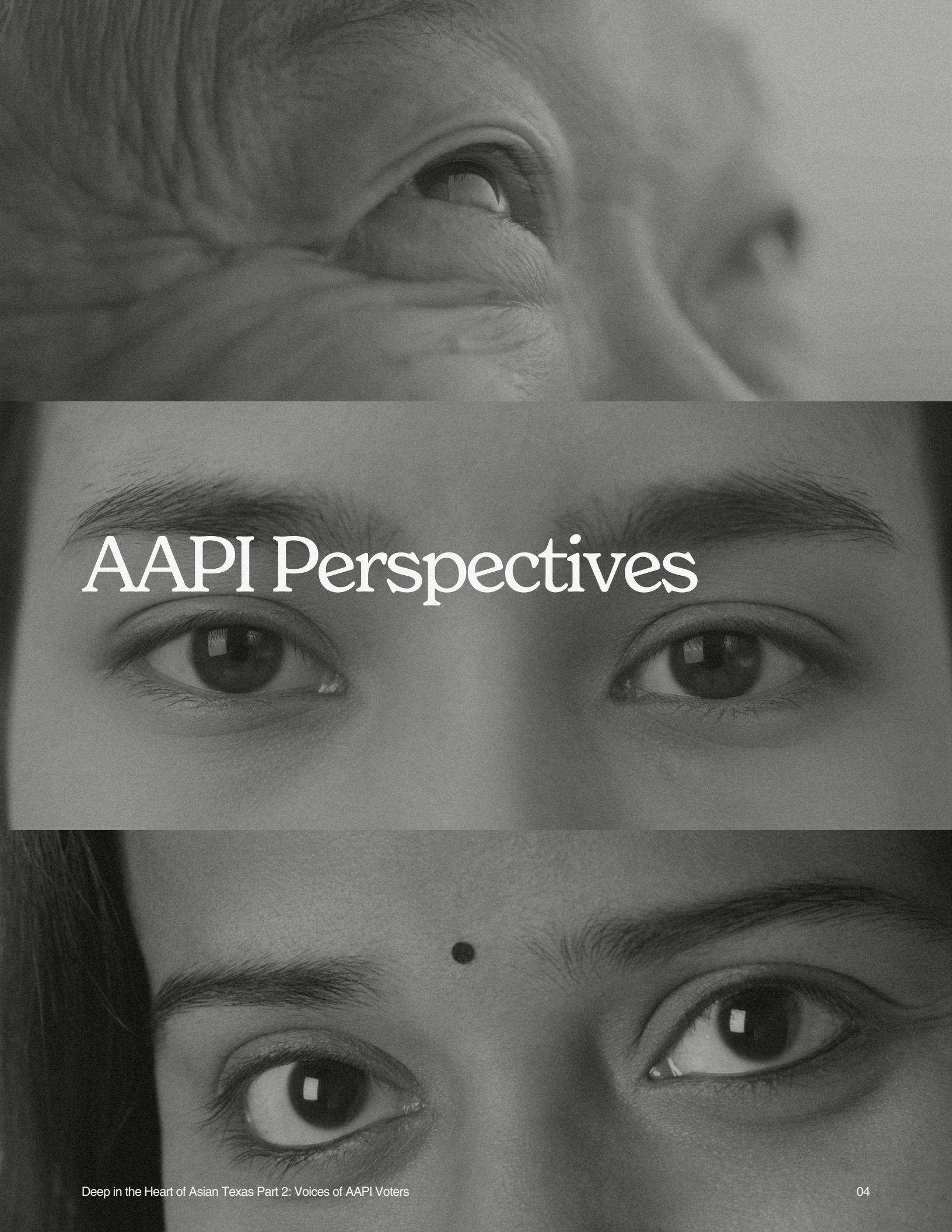
By Political Party



Key Insights

1. **AAPI Texans see voting as a fundamental right and essential civic duty.** They value the opportunities to express their views and have a say in the future of their communities and the state. Most interview respondents report voting consistently in major elections, and some report voting in every election cycle at every level.
2. **Lack of information prevents AAPI Texans from increasing their civic engagement.** Most AAPI Texans believe in the importance of volunteering, voting, and other civic participation but need help finding opportunities or information to become more involved. Stronger calls to action and more defined roles are critical to engaging AAPI voters.
3. **AAPI voters have mixed views about the performance of Texas' state government.** While many AAPI Texans believe the state is doing well economically, they are concerned about the state's social policies and stances. Many AAPI voters want increased protection of civil liberties and economic relief from rising costs and lack of affordability.
4. **Inflation, healthcare access, and safety protections are the most pressing issues for AAPI communities.** Like many Texans, AAPI voters are experiencing economic struggles with rising costs of living, especially when it comes to healthcare. In response to an uptick in hate crimes and racial discrimination, AAPI voters want more robust gun safety measures and protections.
5. **AAPI voters have diverse experiences, motivations, and attitudes toward civic engagement.** This report offers five AAPI voter personas to raise awareness and improve engagement strategies used by policymakers, organizers, funders, and other allies to increase civic action among AAPI Texans.





AAPI Perspectives

AAPI Perspectives

The AAPI diaspora is far more diverse than how it is represented.

Though Texas policymakers, journalists, and other stakeholders refer to AAPI Texans, if at all, as a singular group, the AAPI diaspora is far more diverse than how it is represented. Using monolithic terms can be beneficial in creating collective power and unity; however, it can also mask differences within AAPI communities.

An in-depth qualitative study of AAPI voters in Texas reveals a rich tapestry of immigration stories, community leadership, political engagement, and policy perspectives. Understanding the incredible diversity among AAPI voters is essential for better engagement and more accurate stories that genuinely represent the lived experiences of AAPI Texans. The findings in this section offer a snapshot of what AAPI voters shared in interviews about their histories, political action, and hopes for the future.

Engagement in Civic & Community Causes

One of the main topics covered in our interviews with AAPI voters was their level of civic engagement and community participation. We asked respondents to share their actions to create change in their communities, how voting fits into their views of community change, if at all, and what it would take to increase their participation in their communities.

AAPI Texans volunteer and donate to the causes that matter most to them.

When asked about their actions to create change in their communities, AAPI Texans cite volunteering and community service as the most common way they give back. Whether volunteering their talents for a local nonprofit or donating to social causes, AAPI Texans are generous with their time and focus on raising awareness about important issues, such as education, elder care, and AAPI culture.

“

I find time to donate my time, goods, and money to national and local charities.

Female, age 35-49

“

I create and present educational lectures on topics ranging from history to public policy / economics in order to educate my community on the issues facing them and the broader context in general.

Male, age 18-34

Many, but not all, AAPI Texans see voting as an important way to influence change.

Voting is a core action valued by AAPI Texans and is seen as a fundamental way to have a voice in their communities. Though some AAPI Texans do not view voting as a way to contribute to change in their communities, the majority of interview respondents still report voting in elections consistently. For a small subset, voting is so vital that they take a leadership role in registering voters and informing their friends, family, and the broader AAPI community of crucial policy issues. Leaders in AAPI communities can have an outsized impact on mobilizing voters and increasing civic participation among their peers.

“

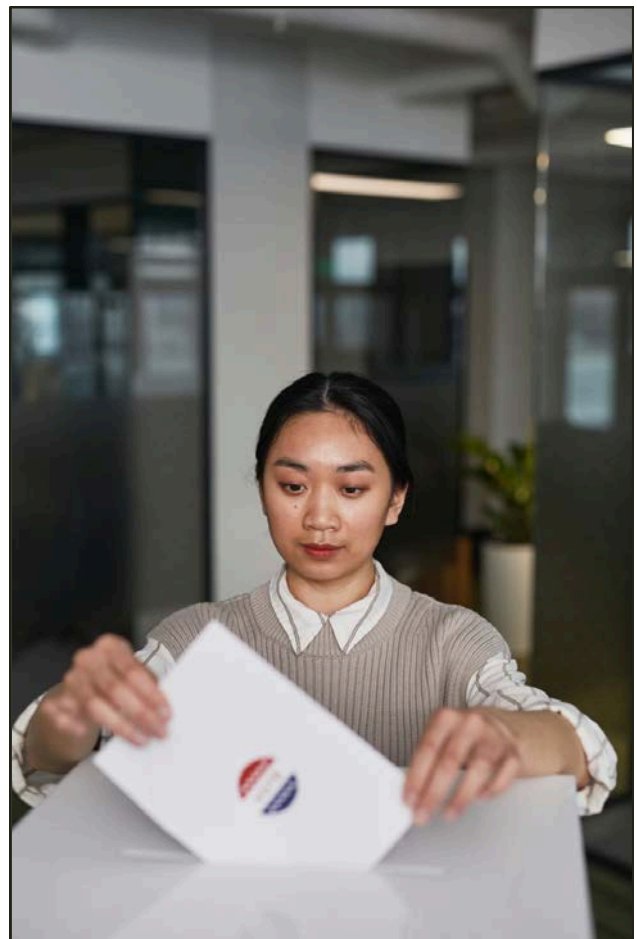
During election times, I go to my local temple to help register new voters and familiarize them with the election and voting process in the U.S. I let them know about any special proposed laws or regulations that may affect them as Asian Americans.

Male, age 50-64

“

I push friends and peers to actually get registered to vote and inform them of what happens if you don't vote and are simply passive viewers who complain that nothing changes.

Male, age 18-34



Lack of information is a significant barrier to increasing civic engagement and participation.

While AAPI Texans understand the importance of participating in their communities, many need to be aware of opportunities to engage and want more precise information on how to contribute their time and resources meaningfully. Most AAPI Texans reside in the state's major metropolitan areas with large AAPI populations spread out over a large geographic region. Determining where to look and how to find opportunities to become more civically and politically engaged can be overwhelming.

It is important to note that AAPI Texans need help to identify civic engagement opportunities, and even more so when it comes to participating in AAPI-specific interest groups. Though many AAPI Texans find community through local churches and temples, the lack of AAPI-centric organizations focused on other forms of civic and political participation makes people feel isolated and less motivated. Being surrounded by other AAPI Texans who want to volunteer together makes political participation a less intimidating and more inclusive experience for all.

“

I can't find special interest AAPI groups in my city without it being a networking thing. If I could have some direction in finding special interest groups, that would be great.

Female, age 35-49

“

If there were more opportunities or promotion of current opportunities for participation in my community I would probably be more active in it. I feel like as of right now I would have to search for things to do in my community. If there was more education that is engaging and interesting about what is going on in politics, I would be more motivated to be more engaged.

Unspecified AAPI respondent



Voting for Political Action & Change

As Texas policymakers and leaders aim to engage AAPI Texans in the political process, it is essential to understand the voting habits and motivations that drive them to the polls. A major topic covered in the interviews was the role that voting plays in the lives of AAPI Texans, including why they vote, how they feel about the current state of politics, and how they stay informed about the news and current events.

AAPI Texans view voting as a fundamental right and essential civic duty.

Most AAPI Texans highlighted their commitment to voting and unwavering belief in its importance. Though there is variation in the frequency of voting and motivation to vote, interview participants held strong views about voting as an essential civic duty and a fundamental right they value. Voting is a primary way AAPI Texans can express their opinions and influence their government at all levels to better meet their needs. This sentiment about voting is true for interview participants across every age range and political party. Even when there is disappointment in or frustration with politics, AAPI Texans still prioritize voting because they want their voices to be heard and recognized.

“

I vote in all elections. It's my right and I believe every American should vote to have a voice.

Female, age 65+

“

I've voted in every presidential and state election since I became an eligible voter, and have gone to vote in almost every election when possible. I believe if you don't vote, then you have no right to complain about things being bad, which is why I vote no matter what.

Male, age 18-34

Some AAPI voters feel profound disillusionment with politics and our electoral process.

Despite a solid commitment to voting, some AAPI voters expressed deep disappointment with politics. Interview participants cited frustration with their representatives in local and state government, a lack of belief in the efficacy of their vote, and general hopelessness about policy decisions as deterrents to voting and civic engagement. For some, the disillusionment is so deep-seated that it hinders AAPI Texans from turning out to vote in elections. Others may continue to vote, but the experience is one of mixed, or even negative, emotions.

AAPI Texans vote regularly in presidential elections but less so for local / state elections.

Because of a strong belief in civic duty, AAPI voters tend to prioritize voting as much as possible. Some see it as a right to have a say in government decisions affecting their lives and communities. When asked about their voting habits, many interview respondents reported voting in all or most presidential elections, which receive more significant media coverage and tend to have more resources dedicated to organizing voters.

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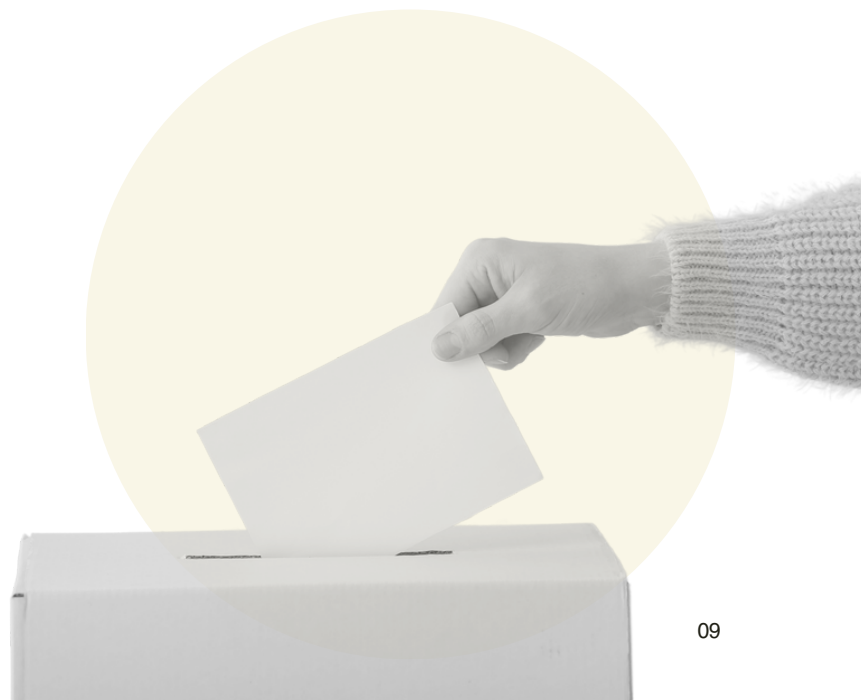
Quite frankly there are too many issues in the world that seem like they're crashing and burning. It gets disheartening to view them all. There's also the thought that no matter what I do, it won't make a difference, so a lot of people I know choose indifference because there is too much to care about that we are overstimulated.

Female, age 18-34

“

I only vote during the presidential election because it has a lot of coverage in the media so we have more information on their standings on certain topics and we all know it's in November and everyone is highly encouraged to vote during that time and it's encouraged at work as well.

Female, age 18-34



Many people who do not vote in local or state elections cite their lack of awareness about local issues and candidates as a reason they do not participate. While lower turnout for local and state elections is not unique to AAPI voters, it is crucial to underscore the lack of organizing efforts, consistent media coverage, and available information as significant barriers to participation. Most AAPI voters who do not vote in local and state elections are doing so because of a lack of information, not a lack of belief in their importance.

Finally, making voting more accessible and convenient is critical for most voters. AAPI voters, like most people, are balancing jobs and personal commitments. They vote as much as their time allows, but fewer polling locations, limited hours, and long lines are strong determinants of whether or not AAPI voters make it to the ballot box. Voting rights protection, and perhaps expansion, is critical to increasing AAPI voter engagement.

“

I always vote in the presidential elections, never in state or local elections. I feel like the issues that matter the most to me are covered and dealt with in the presidential elections vs state and local elections.

Male, age 50-64

“

I primarily vote in presidential or congressional elections as a result of feeling more informed or having a stronger opinion. I wish that I had more bandwidth to research for local elections.

Unspecified AAPI respondent

“

I don't vote for the state and local elections because I don't know when the election opens nor the candidates or where their standings are. If I knew the dates or if there was a bigger/better PR marketing team for the state and local elections, I would be more inclined to vote. During the presidential election, they tell you where to vote, usually at the libraries or public places. For the state or local elections, it's very quiet and I don't know where to vote if I even know the dates that the voting period starts or ends.

Female, age 18-34

Having more compelling candidates that represent AAPI interests could spark greater political action.

One factor that could increase voting among AAPI Texans is increased representation within all levels of government. AAPI voters strongly emphasize candidates and whether their views align with their values and beliefs. Some AAPI voters feel that the government does not adequately represent their communities and interests, and having more AAPI candidates on the ballot could help voters feel a greater sense of connection. AAPI voters believe increased representation could yield tangible benefits for their lives and communities.

“

I would love to run for office. We need more Asian Americans who can help create and sustain positive actions within our state and community.

Male, age 50-64

“

Greater Asian representation would help. Currently, there are not many Asian candidates to support.

Male, age 50-64

“

Lack of representation of the AAPI community in the government or any higher positions in power is an important issue.

Female, age 18-34



AAPI voters consume news and political information in divided ways.

Interview participants indicated they stay informed about political issues or candidates through various sources, from friends and family to social media and mainstream media. The diversity in preferences for different information sources reflects broader trends for the general electorate. Peer influence, including friends and family, is a strong influence on how AAPI voters across all ages stay informed about politics and policies. Younger voters, particularly those under 35, are more likely to cite social media as their primary information source, whereas older voters prefer more traditional media like newspapers and television.

Most interview respondents stated receiving information more passively by scrolling social media feeds, hearing from friends or family, and getting push notifications from news outlets. A smaller subset of respondents are proactive in seeking information from various sources to stay informed because of concerns about bias and misinformation from some platforms.



“

[I stay informed] primarily through social media and friends for sure. Either Instagram or TikTok posts will get me interested if I do end up doing further research.

Female, age 18-34

“

I normally look through any materials emailed or mailed to me from political candidates, discussing their background, experience, and where they stand on issues. I also go online to get information.

Male, age 50-64

“

I watch the news, read articles, and add reputable and balanced news sources to my social media feeds. I try to stay informed and also question what I hear or read.

Female, age 35-49

Perspectives on Policy Issues

Looking ahead to the 2024 election, interview participants shared their views on the Texas Legislature, state leaders, and the policy issues driving AAPI voters to the polls. Interview respondents also shared their opinions about the most critical issues affecting their lives and AAPI communities in Texas.

Many AAPI voters are satisfied with Texas' economy but concerned about social and infrastructure issues.

Interview participants had mixed opinions about how well the Texas Legislature and other state leaders are doing to improve the lives of Texans. Differences in views from AAPI voters align with broader polarization trends across political parties and voters of different races and ethnicities. Those who identify as conservative voters praise the state's economic performance. In contrast, others who identify as liberal voters believe that the state is doing poorly when it comes to education, healthcare, reproductive rights, and other social issues.

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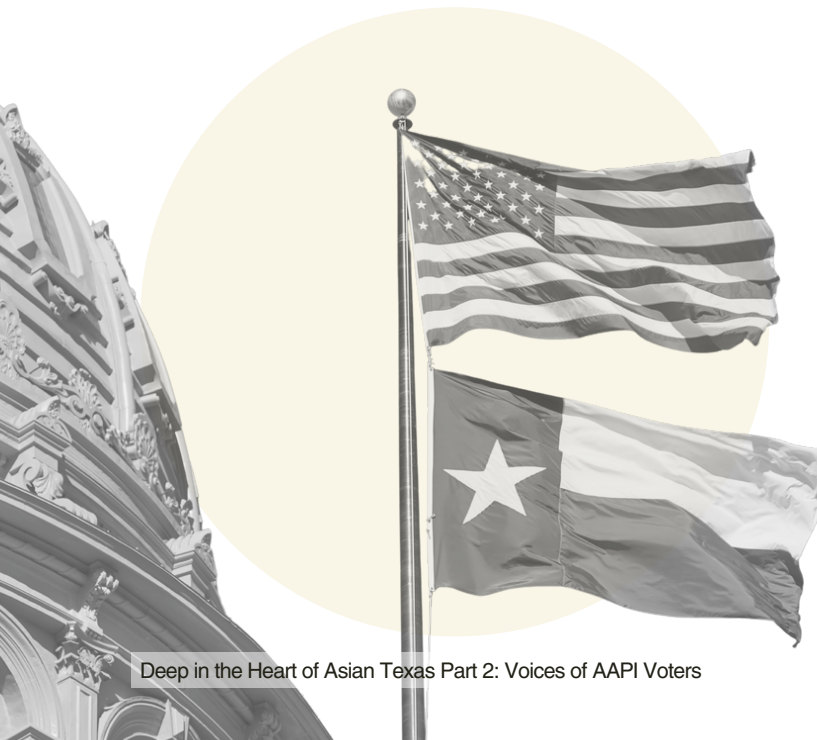
I would say that overall, Texas excels in economic development and maintaining a favorable business climate, however, addressing educational and healthcare disparities, as well as environmental challenges, would contribute to more balanced and inclusive progress.

Male, age 18-34

“

What they are doing that works is some minor reforms on issues like taxation and rural healthcare. On issues like political accountability, tax relief, education, voting rights, civil rights, reproductive choice, judicial independence, gun violence, healthcare expansion to low income Texans, infrastructure development, energy, corruption, and climate change, they have been doing a very poor job on these and a wide range of issues.

Female, age 35-49



AAPI voters across political parties and age groups share concerns about a reversal in investments in public goods, such as education and healthcare. For example, many interview participants wanted their state government to continue investing in public education by increasing teacher salaries instead of diverting funds from public schools through voucher programs.

While many interview respondents support the state's economic growth and performance, they are also concerned that it has not invested in the infrastructure needed to sustain its population growth. From roads to the energy grid, AAPI voters want to see more investments in infrastructure improvements that directly affect their daily lives.

“

I generally feel supportive of Texas politicians who align with conservative values and promote policies that prioritize limited government, individual freedom, and economic prosperity. However, I have reservations about certain policies such as vouchers, which may be seen as diverging from traditional principles of supporting public education.

Female, age 35-49

“

The role of government should be in maximizing the potential of the state. That means investments in its labor force, community, health, and infrastructure. Instead the government has used surpluses to cut taxes and deficits to cut services. We need to reinvest in Texas to maximize its potential once again.

Male, age 50-64



AAPI voters express a variety of policy concerns heading into the 2024 election.

Because the interviews were conducted in the summer of 2024, participants focused on policy issues leading into the November election. When asked about the most important issues driving them to the polls, AAPI voters cited various policy issues, including protecting civil liberties, inflation and cost of living increases, and border security. Economic issues, such as inflation, cost of living, and economic inequality, are the top priorities for AAPI voters in 2024.

The protection of civil liberties, including reproductive rights and protections for LGBTQ and transgender people, is a top priority for many AAPI women and men across political parties and all ages. AAPI voters are motivated to participate in the November election to ensure those rights are protected for generations to come.



“

The issue that is driving me to the polls this fall is the need for strong economic policies that will help businesses recover from the impacts of the pandemic and create job opportunities for all Americans.

Female, age 35-49

“

The most important issues to look for in a candidate for the election is women's rights, racial equality, healthcare access, lgbtq rights, gun safety, and their quality of character. I want a president who genuinely cares for this country and the citizens.

Female, age 18-34

“

I think to me what's most at stake are a lot of our civil liberties. I'm going to the polls as a response in fear of what's to come for Project 2025 should that come true. The status quo now is rocky, but I can see it getting a lot worse.

Male, age 18-34

The most important policies affecting AAPI Texans include cost of living, healthcare, and safety protections.

Interview participants were asked not only about the most critical policy issues for the November 2024 election but also the issues with the most significant impact on AAPI communities. While there is some overlap between the two issues, interview participants cited various policy issues with a unique effect on AAPI Texans. Addressing rising costs of living and improving access to affordable healthcare are top issues affecting AAPI communities.

In response to an uptick in hate crimes and racial discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic, many interview participants reflected on anxieties about the social climate, especially in the wake of increased anti-Asian sentiment and violence. There is notable demand for more robust legal protections and community support to combat these issues.

“

Public safety - especially as a result of the uptick in violence against AAPI community in recent years post-COVID...

Unspecified AAPI respondent

“

Mainly just DEI [diversity, equity, and inclusion] initiatives in the work space has had the biggest effect, as well as limiting resources on school campus.

Female, age 18-34



To address issues with the most significant influence on the lives of AAPI Texans, many want to see more AAPI representation at all levels of government. AAPI voters believe that with more AAPI candidates on the ballot, state leaders and other political officials will recognize their needs and interests. They hope that more AAPI representatives will result in more inclusive policies, greater language access, and better results for the lives of AAPI Texans across the state.

“

Asian Americans are hardly a blip on the TX government's radar/voting block so it doesn't seem like their interests are considered much.

Male, age 18-34

“

[There is a] lack of representation of the AAPI community in the government or any higher positions in power.

Female, age 18-34

“

[We have a] lack of voices in offices where legislation can be changed.”

Male, age 50-64



AAPI Voter Personas

As the most diverse racial group, representing over 50 ethnicities and 100 languages, AAPI Texans have different motivations for civic engagement and voting. This research study is meant to highlight stories from interviews with AAPI voters and provide actionable insights for policymakers, grassroots organizers, and community leaders who want to invest in AAPI stories and engage AAPI Texans. To do so, stories and insights from the AAPI voter interviews informed the creation of five distinct AAPI voter personas.




The personas provide generalized archetypes of AAPI voters in Texas to increase awareness of the diverse experiences among AAPI Texans. They are intended to provide general insights and are composite sketches based on interviews with AAPI voters. They do not model specific individuals who participated in the interviews.

Community Influencers

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

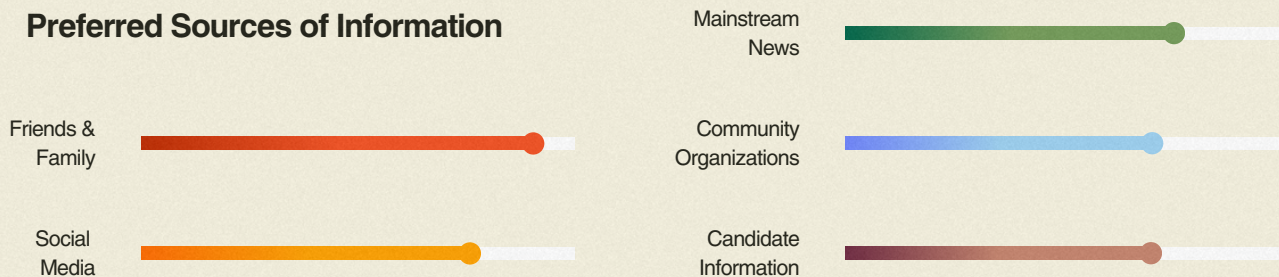
Community Influencers are beacons of light for their communities, leading others to follow and taking on visible leadership roles for causes and issues that matter the most to them. They serve on nonprofit boards, volunteer their time, and rally others to join the cause. Others look to Community Influencers for inspiration, direction, and guidance.



 Motivations for Civic Engagement	 Attitudes Toward Voting	 Frustrations That Deter Voting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation and commitment to their communities • Passion for creating change and being a positive force in the world • Excitement and support for the success of other AAPI leaders • Desire for greater representation in civic and political leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes voting is a fundamental civic duty and never misses an opportunity to express their views • Votes in nearly all elections at every level • Leads the way in registering others to vote and organizing them during election seasons • May be more likely to have strong political views and party affiliations because of their deep involvement in specific groups or causes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of time to balance all of their commitments • Lack of connection with others who share their values and beliefs • Not seeing the direct impact of their actions



Preferred Sources of Information






Information Seekers

“I need to be informed about current events and policy issues.”

Information Seekers have a strong hunger for knowledge. Although they may not take on visible leadership roles in their communities, they do everything possible to keep up-to-date on what is happening in the world and what affects their lives and communities. Information Seekers have an independent, even skeptical, streak and are not content to passively receive information. They do their own research and form their own opinions.



 Motivations for Civic Engagement	 Attitudes Toward Voting	 Frustrations That Deter Voting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing their knowledge, talent, and skills to benefit their communities • Wanting to have an informed say in who represents them • Desire for their opinions and views to be heard by those in power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes voting is a fundamental civic duty • Has consistent voting habits, whether voting in most, if not all, elections or type of election (national, state, local) • May be more likely to have strong political views and party affiliations because they proactively seek information about specific candidates and policy issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of connection with others who share their values and beliefs • Not finding an outlet where their opinions and views will be heard • Lack of clear opportunities to volunteer or engage in a way that leverages their expertise



Preferred Sources of Information



Persuadable Followers

“I rely on my friends and family to keep me informed and engaged.”

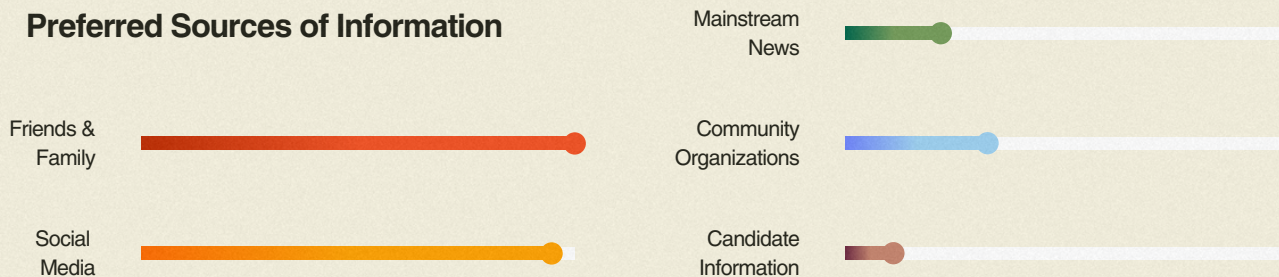
Persuadable Followers rely on trusted peers and family to inform them of the news and other current events. Staying informed on policies, elections, and candidates can be overwhelming, so they turn to their friends and families to filter through the noise and lead the way. Civic engagement is a group activity for Persuadable Followers. The more the people in their lives are engaged, the more likely they will be too.



 Motivations for Civic Engagement	 Attitudes Toward Voting	 Frustrations That Deter Voting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to friends and family members who share information on current events • Feeling connected to a community interested in the same causes and topics • Having people with whom they can vote and volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Votes when it is convenient and top of mind to do so, likely only in presidential elections • Could have inconsistent policy opinions because they are relying on other people for direction • Needs others to motivate them to participate and inform them when and how to vote • May not have a strong affiliation with a political party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overstimulation from too much information from too many sources • Feelings of isolation and lack of inclusion • Not being surrounded by a group of people who are engaged and informed



Preferred Sources of Information






Issue Voters

“I prefer depth over breadth when it comes to civic engagement.”

Issue Voters are deeply passionate about and motivated by a single issue or limited number of policy issues. They don't feel a need to be informed or have a deep understanding of every topic. Issue Voters seek information about their preferred issue, look for opportunities to volunteer for organizations focused on that topic, and vote for candidates who will best address that policy issue. For AAPI Issue Voters, the most common policy interests include the economy, healthcare, and immigration.



 Motivations for Civic Engagement	 Attitudes Toward Voting	 Frustrations That Deter Voting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering for organizations focused on the cause(s) they care about • Significant coverage and dialogue about the policy issue(s) they are focused on • Finding a candidate with a platform that addresses their main policy issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely to only vote in national and state elections when there is more coverage and debate on major policy issues • Casts their vote based on a candidate's stance on a specific issue(s) • May be more likely to vote for a straight-party ticket because they will pick the party aligned with their view of a particular policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-specific engagement opportunities that don't create a direct impact on their preferred issue • Lack of attention to their preferred policy issue(s) • Lack of a candidate or party platform that addresses their policy issue(s)



Preferred Sources of Information



Candidate Supporters

“I want to support someone who shares my beliefs and values.”

Candidate Supporters are swayed by a compelling candidate or a strong aversion toward a candidate. They may be less informed about the details of different policy issues and instead focus on the narratives surrounding specific candidates. Candidate Supporters need to feel connected to a candidate to feel motivated to vote, volunteer, or participate. They pledge their vote to the person who best represents their interests, not the political party.



 Motivations for Civic Engagement	 Attitudes Toward Voting	 Frustrations That Deter Voting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of connection to a candidate who can offer a compelling narrative about their personality, background, and performance • Having an AAPI candidate on the ballot or a candidate that could represent their interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have inconsistent voting habits because they are driven by the slate of candidates instead of policies • More likely to vote in national and state elections with more media coverage of candidates • May not have strong loyalty to a political party • May be willing to vote for candidates of multiple political parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of connection to the candidate(s) up for election • Not having a strong opinion about or preference for any candidate • Lack of representation in leadership roles that could inspire them to be civically engaged



Preferred Sources of Information



Conclusion

As the AAPI population in Texas continues to grow, the need for more information, research, and other analyses focused on AAPI Texans is critical. Even more important is understanding the perspectives and lived experiences of AAPI Texans in their own voices. This report offers insights and stories from AAPI voters themselves, and more research is needed to continue unpacking the rich tapestry of AAPI stories and experiences in Texas.

By lifting the voices of AAPI voters in Texas, Asian Texans for Justice (ATJ) aims to increase awareness of the diverse experiences and perspectives of AAPI Texans. Texas' political and civic leaders cannot ignore the growth in the state's AAPI population. To stay in power and govern effectively, these leaders must engage AAPI voters. Political and civic leaders need tailored messaging and engagement tactics that address the motivations, habits, and goals of different AAPI voters.

AAPI Texans are poised to influence the future of our state for generations to come, but only if we engage, participate, and vote. Realizing the potential of our AAPI communities will require increased civic engagement, community involvement, and political action by every AAPI voter in the state. Expressing our views and claiming our space is non-negotiable — our futures depend on it.

Acknowledgements

This report is the second in a series of three reports from Asian Texans for Justice called “Deep in the Heart of Asian Texas: Insights on Asian and Pacific Islander Voters.” The first report shared trends and data about demographics, education, employment, household characteristics, and regional profiles of the largest AAPI communities in Texas.

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Technical Note

Change Research interviewed 50 Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) voters in Texas from July 19 to July 31, 2024. We used the following sources to recruit respondents: text messages sent via the Switchboard platform to cell phone numbers listed on the voter file for individuals who qualified for the survey's sample universe based on their voter file data.

Respondents were directed to a survey hosted on SurveyMonkey's website. The interviews were conducted in English. The interviews were commissioned by Asian Texans for Justice, with the support of AAPI Civic Engagement Fund, and conducted via text message by Change Research.

Survey Questions

1. This study is about learning the perspectives of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Would you mind telling me a bit about your family's immigration story? Who in your family was first to immigrate to the US (yourself/parent/grandparent) and from which country(ies)?
2. What, if any, kinds of actions do you take to try to create change in your community? Where does voting fit into that?
3. What would help you increase your participation in your community? What would motivate you to be more politically and civically engaged?
4. Thinking about your voting habits, how often do you vote in elections, including presidential, state, and local? What are the main factors influencing why you choose to vote or not vote?
5. How do you usually stay informed about political issues or candidates? Do you actively seek out information on political issues, or do you primarily receive it through social media and friends?
6. How would you describe how the Texas state government is doing? What are they doing that works? What are things they should be doing but aren't?
7. What do you think are the most important issues of this coming election in November? What issue is driving you to the polls this fall?
8. What do you think are the most important issues affecting your life and the AAPI community in Texas?

