

Political Grab Bag

By Steve Bagby, Sr. Political Action Committee Chair

This November 2022 Political Grab Bag will be short as it will focus on the important topic at hand. . . . the November 8, 2022, General Election. Yes, the last day to vote is fast approaching. By now I hope that many of you have already voted, but if you have not, please do so as you just have a couple more days to exercise your right to vote in this important election that can make a big difference to us individually and collectively. Our Church membership comes from a wide geographical area and the different cities in which we live have different offices/measures on the ballot that are particular to that jurisdiction. However, there are some offices that are countywide and statewide that are on all of the ballots. I don't intend to reference those offices/measures here as you have all received your ballots and know what they are. (You may want to refer to Parts 1 and 2 of the October 2022 Political Grab Bag which is set forth on the website at www.secondbaptistchurchla.org and also in the SBC LA Newsletters sent out via email on October 2nd and October 16th for previous information/comments about the offices/measures on the ballot.) What I do want to focus on is the need for us to **MAKE SURE WE VOTE!!!** There are some very competitive races out there and the polls are tightening!! When the "pollsters" talk about the various races and indicate what the polls reflect based upon a recent survey taken, they always talk about the "margin of error." I heard an interesting statement by commentator Van Jones of CNN on the October 31, 2022 nighttime broadcast. Mr. Jones stated something to the effect that, "it is not the margin of error that is important, but the **margin of participation.**" That comment impacted me because it is true--- if we participate in the election process and get out there and vote, it may not matter what a poll reflects in a particular race **because we can change the outcome of that race "by our participation!!!"**

The import of that comment makes me think back to the chart that was previously included in the June 2022 Political Grab Bag (and discussed prior to

that date as well) that highlights the number of African Americans who did not vote in the 2016 Presidential Election in a particular state versus the number of votes by which Trump won in that particular state. The chart has been included again for your perusal as it is startling to see the figures set forth therein:



The numbers are staggering as they show that the number of African Americans who didn't vote in a particular state substantially outnumbered the number of votes Trump won by in that state. If more African Americans had just come out to

vote, the result would have been different in the 2016 Presidential race. This also makes me think of what happened many years ago in 1982 when Mayor Tom Bradley ran for Governor of California. Upon losing the race to George Deukmejian by a relatively small percentage margin, there was “discussion” that some African Americans were complacent and did not come out to vote because they assumed that since Mayor Bradley was so popular, he would win. The situation in 1982 with Bradley and the situation in 2016 with Trump reveal a dynamic that should not continue to happen regardless of the reason for it . . . i.e., African Americans not participating in the voting process. We must increase our **“margin of participation!”** We have a responsibility and obligation to do better!!

There is a shift taking place in the country and a very obvious move afoot to go back in time and eliminate the “hard fought for” gains reflected in the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. We must do everything within our power to resist these efforts and to maintain the rights for which our forefathers and predecessors fought. We must remember the words of the late Congressman and Civil Rights activist John Lewis, who stated in his address to the Democratic National Convention in 2012: **“My dear friends, your vote is precious, almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have to create a more perfect union.”** As we know, there are several close races shaping up in Los Angeles County and in the State of California for offices on the November 8th ballot. Let us all exercise our “hard fought for” right to vote which is “precious, almost sacred,” as stated by Congressman Lewis and which is subject to attack in various states. Do your part! Drop off your ballot at a Drop Box or Vote Center by November 8th or vote in person at a Vote Center. The bottom line is . . . we all must vote so our voices will be heard! If you need any assistance, contact the Church office at 213/748-0318 and your number will be forwarded to a member of the Political Action Committee who will contact you. Don’t take anything for granted. **Vote, Vote, Vote!** Call your family, friends, neighbors, those who just turned 18 and anyone else with whom you associate and make sure that they, too, have already voted or will vote by November 8th. As Congressman Lewis stated, our vote **“is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have to create a more perfect union.”** **Make sure you exercise this most precious right and encourage others to do so as well! Our “margin of participation” is important!**

Thank you for reading!