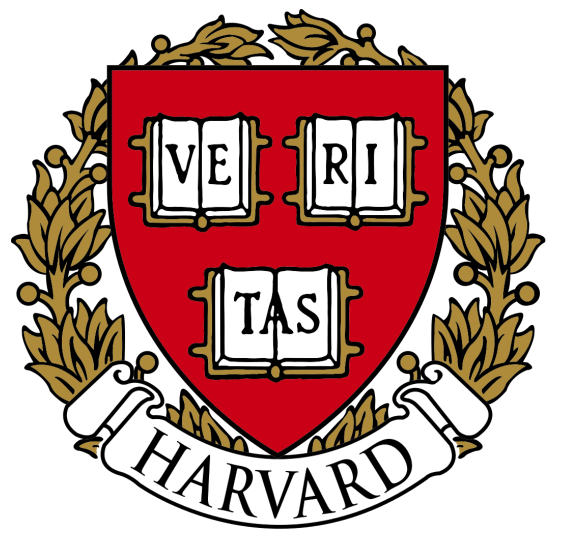


THE DOWNSTREAM CONSEQUENCES OF LONG LINES AT PRECINCTS

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ABSTRACT

Research question:

How does waiting in a line to vote change a voter's likelihood of participating in subsequent elections?

Hypothesis:

Waiting in a long line imposes an additional cost to voting and adversely affects confidence in the electoral system causing a voter to be less likely to vote in the subsequent election

Empirical strategy:

- Voter-level and precinct-level analyses
- Exact matching to eliminate bias from observed confounders
- Placebo tests to check for unobserved confounding

Findings:

- In-person voters in 2012 who experienced a line longer than 1 hour were 1 pct. point less likely to vote in 2014
- No such effect existed among those who voted by mail or did not vote in 2012
- Roughly 200,000 people did not vote in 2014 as a result of waiting in a long line in 2012

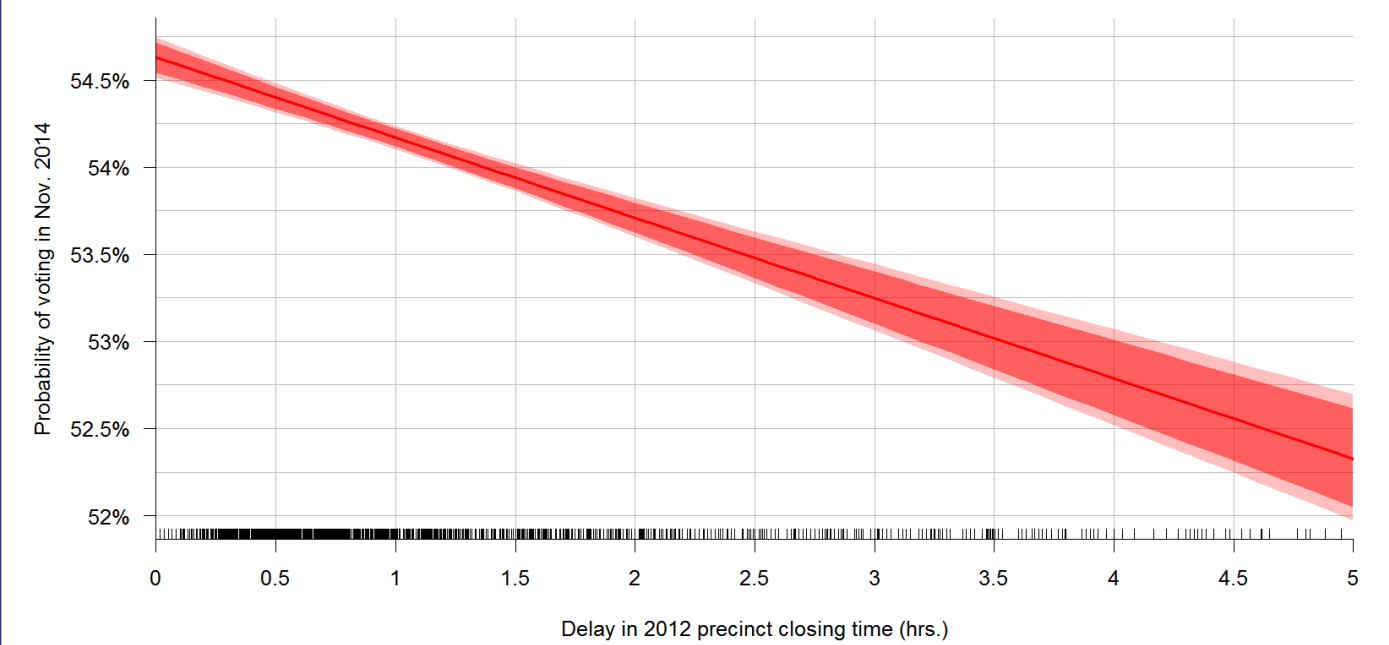
FLORIDA PRECINCT ANALYSIS

Data: 2012 closing time of 3000+ precincts in 17 Florida counties; state voter-file snapshots from 2012 and 2014

Why Florida? Multiple snapshots of the voter file allows tracking of voters across time, even if they move around the state or precinct boundaries are redrawn

Analysis: Looks at the 2014 turnout rates among those who voted in-person in 2012, regardless of mobility or re-precincting. Weighting ensures one observation per 2012 polling location.

Nov. '14 turnout of '12 voters by lateness of 2012 precinct closing



Control covariates (from voter file data): Nov. '10 turnout, % African-American, % Hispanic, % other race, average age, % Democrat, % Republican

	DV: Turnout in...		
	Nov. 2014	Aug. 2014	Nov. 2008 (placebo)
Intercept	0.343*** (0.002)	-0.082*** (0.001)	0.319*** (0.002)
Closing delay in hours	-0.005*** (0.0004)	-0.0003 (0.0003)	-0.0004 (0.0003)
Observations	3,334	3,334	3,334
R ²	0.152	0.105	0.161

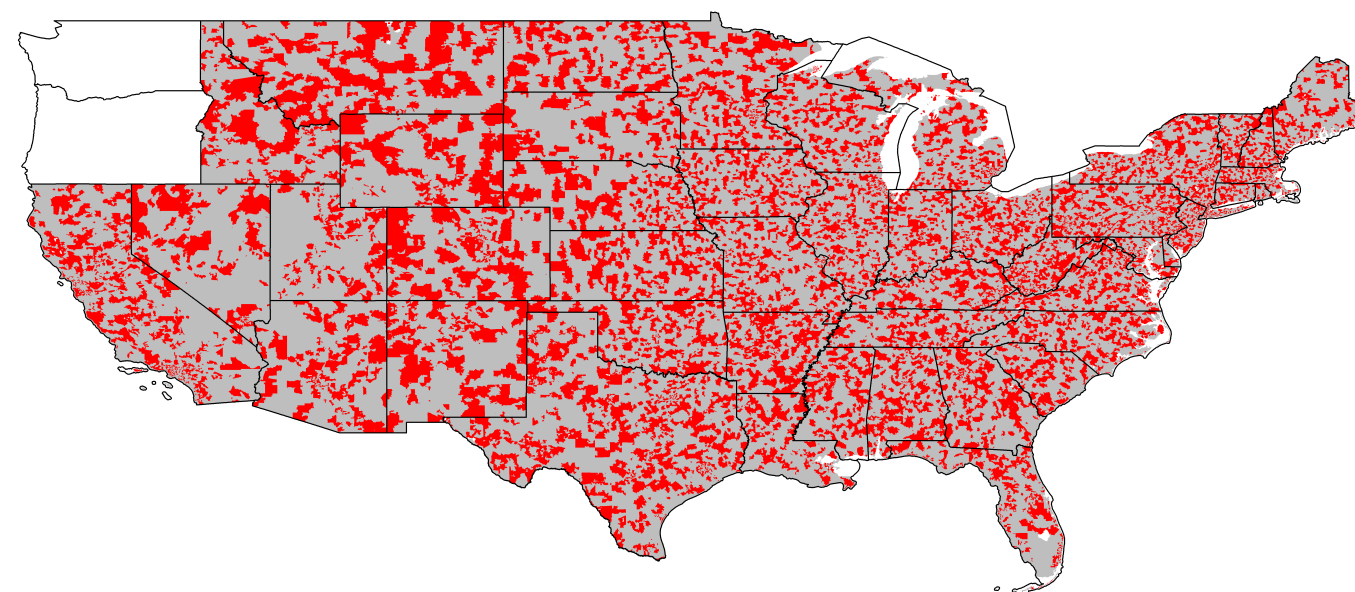
*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
County fixed effects included
WLS coefficients

NATIONAL VOTER-LEVEL ANALYSIS

Cross-sectional regression analysis

Data: Catalist; 2012 CCES; 2012 ACS

Zip codes with line length data

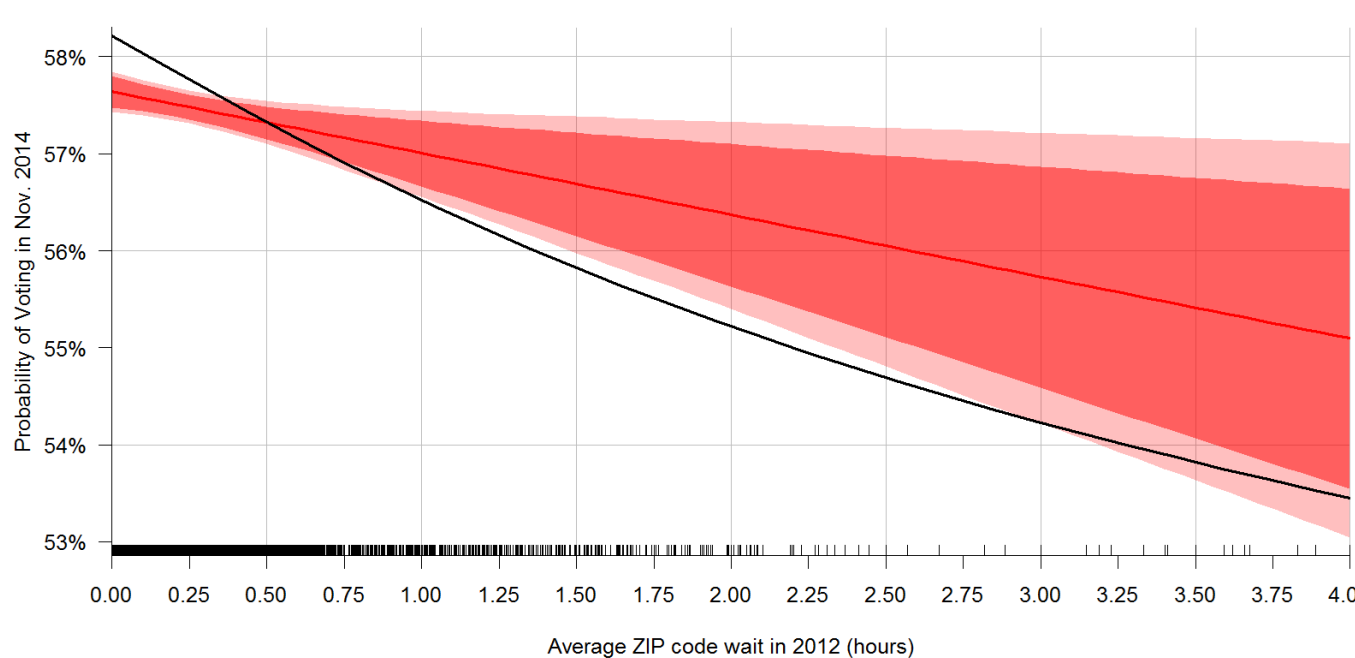


Control covariates:

- Voter race, age, education, turnout history ('06-'10)
- Census block group racial composition, pop. dens., non-Eng. speaking, median income
- State fixed effects

	DV: 2014 turnout among 2012...		
	In-person voters	Mail-in voters	Non-voters
2012 wait in hours	-0.006*** (0.001)	0.001 (0.003)	0.002 (0.001)
Observations	774,836	166,885	373,595

2014 turnout probability based on wait in 2012

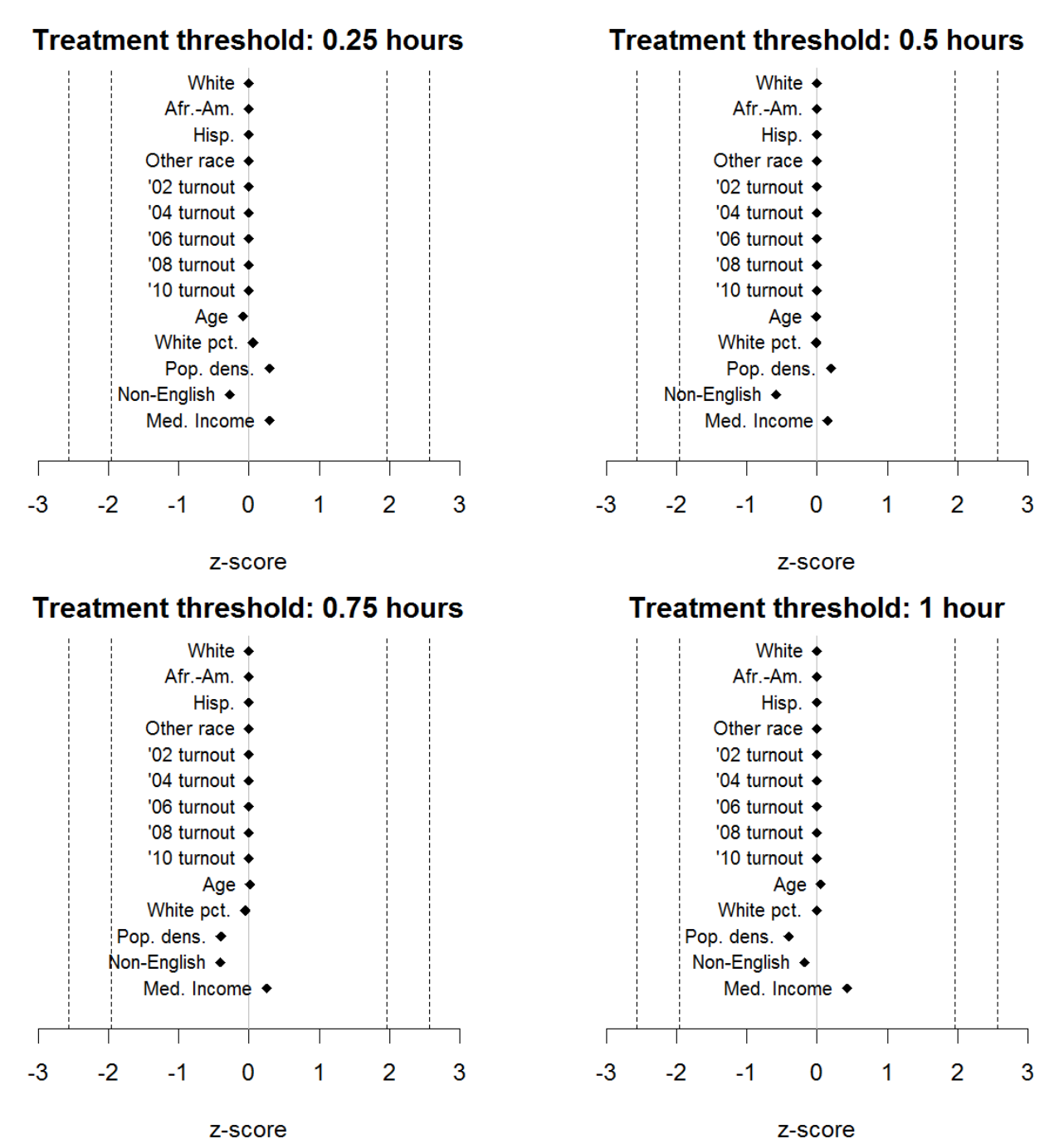


Exact matching analysis

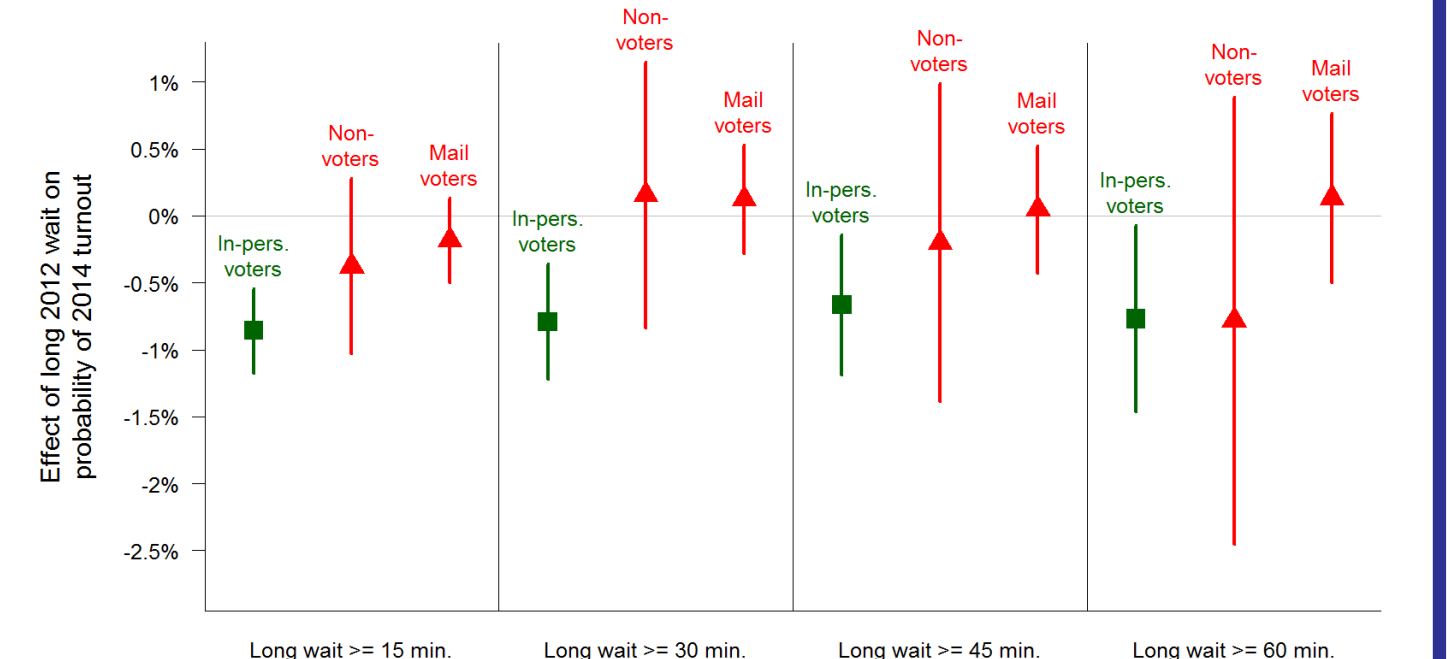
Matching covariates:

- Exact: State, voter race, education, turnout history ('06-'10)
- CEM: Voter age (in 5yr bins), Census block group race, pop. dens., non-Eng. speaking, med. inc. (each in 5% bins)

Balance checking:



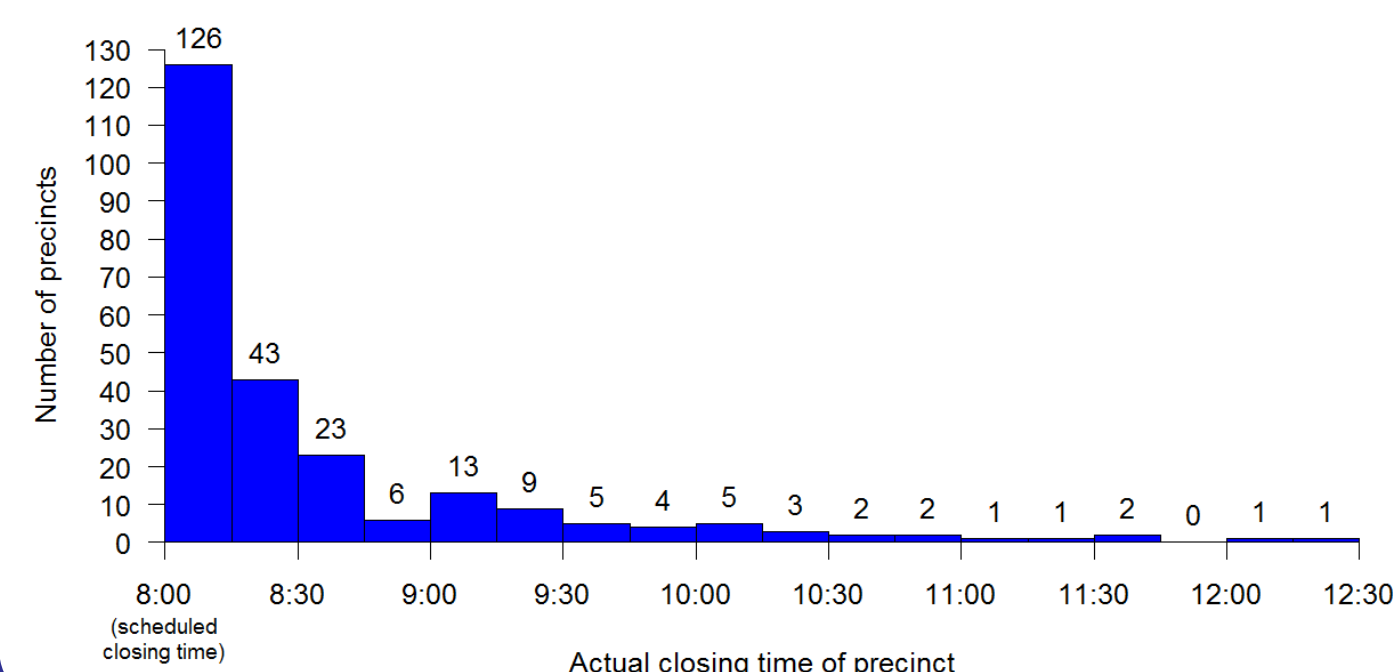
Effect of 2012 lines on 2014 turnout for various treatment cutoffs



BOSTON PRECINCT ANALYSIS

Data: 2012 closing time and post-2012 turnout of 255 Boston precincts; 2012 ACS

Why Boston?: Precinct boundaries have not changed in a century, so endogeneity from re-precincting is not a problem

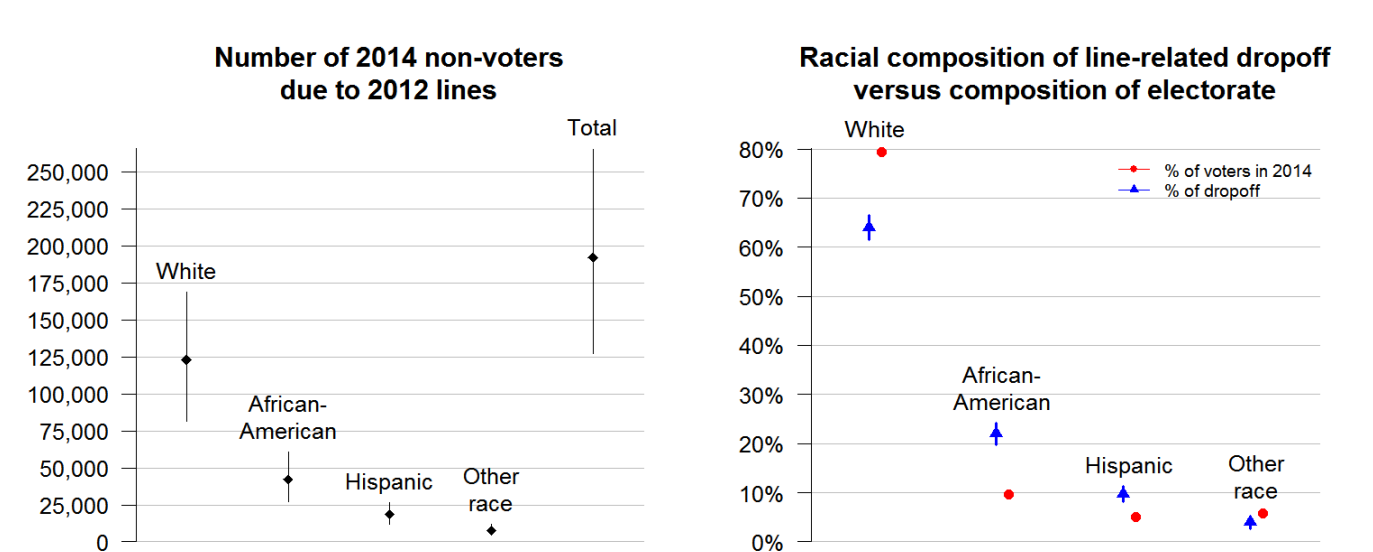


Control covariates (from Census data): Nov. '10 turnout, % white, median income, % under 18, % over 65, % college grads

	DV: Change in turnout from 2012 to...			
	Nov. '14	Nov. '13	Sept. '13	Nov. '08
Closing delay in hours	-0.006** (0.002)	-0.009* (0.003)	-0.006* (0.003)	-0.0003 (0.002)
Observations	245	245	245	245
R ²	0.654	0.617	0.213	0.036

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
OLS coefficients

IMPACT ON 2014 ELECTORATE



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Read the paper:

