Public Opinion Reinforces the Exemplary Work of Local Election Officials on November 8

Polling places proved secure and a positive experience around the country on Election Day; Minority communities express greater concerns about election problems

WASHINGTON D.C. – November 21, 2016 – According to a new national survey conducted by the Democracy Fund in the days following the election, 85 percent of voters say they had a pleasant experience on November 8th, including overwhelming majorities of voters who supported either President-elect Donald Trump or Secretary Hillary Clinton.

“Despite rhetoric about potential widespread election rigging or hacking, local election officials successfully ensured that ballots were securely cast and accurately counted. Their efforts are clearly reflected in a positive voter experience and the fact that no significant improprieties have yet come to light in canvasses or audits,” said Adam Ambrogi, Elections Program Director, Democracy Fund. “Even if your candidate did not win, Americans can take pride in our decentralized, transparent, and secure election system.”

The voter experience is critical because it fosters trust in electoral outcomes. The Presidential Commission on Election Administration (PCEA) put forward its recommendations in large part because inefficient or poor administration decreases trust in the outcome, and bad voting experiences might cause the public to disengage in future elections.

Data shows that large swaths of Democrats and Republicans express nervousness about key safeguards within the system, including the idea that fraud, rigging, or hacking may actually have impacted the outcome of the 2016 presidential election. In fact, there is even substantial concern among voters who believe that the 2016 election outcome was “very fairly” determined – meaning that even the voters who are most trustful of the system after the election still have considerable concerns about specific threats to the process.

Perceptions of Election Abnormalities in 2016

Percent of voters who are “very” or “somewhat” concerned that each of the following nation-wide phenomena might have affected the outcome of the 2016 presidential election.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instances of voter fraud, like people voting multiple times or voting even if they are ineligible</th>
<th>All U.S. Voters</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Voters Believing Election Was Very Fairly Determined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>39%</td>
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| A candidate or party changes the election results to create false of inaccurate vote counts | 38% | 44% | 33% | 46% |

| An electronic security breach or hack impacted the vote counts | 39% | 47% | 31% | 30% |

| A voting machine miscalculated votes | 38% | 41% | 36% | 30% |

| Successful interference on Election Day by an outside country | 36% | 50% | 23% | 25% |
“The Democracy Fund is committed to working with local election officials to help educate voters about the transparent and decentralized safeguards in place so that they can be confident in the outcome and trust the results,” said Natalie Adona, Elections Research Associate, Democracy Fund.

The newly released survey also points to a need for continual efforts to guarantee that all Americans feel safe when they cast their ballots. Twenty-three percent of African American voters, and 18 percent of Hispanic voters, say they felt fearful, intimidated, or had problems voting, compared to 12 percent of white voters.

“In a heated election, passions and rhetoric can sometimes rise, but it is imperative for our democracy that all voters feel equally comfortable going to the polls,” Ambrogi said. “Some of these disparities in the voter experience are troubling, and should cause all of us to examine this issue before the next election.”

This online survey of 1,500 U.S. adults was conducted November 9–11 via VeraQuest, Inc. Panelists are required to double opt-in to ensure voluntary participation in the surveys they are invited to complete. Adult respondents were randomly selected to be generally proportional of the age, sex, region, race/ethnicity, income, and education strata of the U.S., based on Census proportions, and quotas were established for demographics to confirm sufficient diversity of the sample in proportions so that they would resemble that of the United States.

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About the Democracy Fund
The Democracy Fund is a bipartisan foundation established by eBay founder and philanthropist Pierre Omidyar to help ensure that the American people come first in our democracy. Today, modern challenges—such as hyper partisanship, money in politics, and struggling media—threaten the health of American Democracy. See the Democracy Fund’s report on the progress made towards more secure and smooth elections since the Presidential Commission on Election Administration’s recommendations were released in 2014: [http://bit.ly/PCEAProgress](http://bit.ly/PCEAProgress).

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