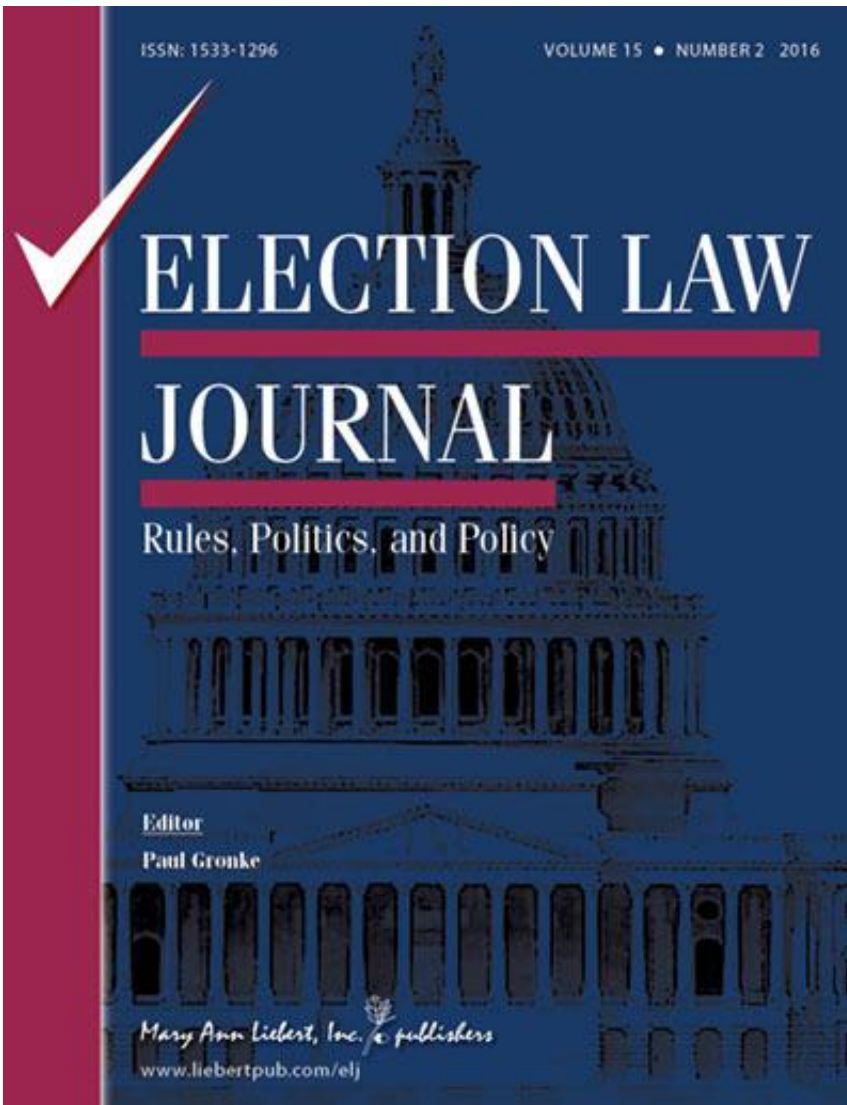


Does early voting affect political campaigns and election outcomes?

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A study of early voting patterns in states that have adopted an extended voting period shows several important trends related to voter age and partisanship (voters with strong party affiliations versus independents). The study results and their policy implications are discussed in an article in *Election Law Journal*.

Vivekinan Shok, Mary McGrath, and Eitan Hersh, Yale University (New Haven, CT), and Daniel Feder, Benenson Strategy Group (New York, NY), compared the demographic characteristics of early voters in the fall 2012 elections and those who voted on Election Day. In the article "The Dynamic Election: Patterns of Early Voting Across Time, State, Party, and Age", the authors note that currently about 25-33% of votes in the U.S. are cast prior to Election Day.

"Typically, most observers think of the 'early vote' as one homogenous mass of voters who choose to cast their ballots prior to [election](#) day. These authors discover that 'early' early voters tend to be older and more partisan, while 'late deciding' early voters are younger and more likely to be independents," says *Election Law Journal* Editor Paul Gronke, Reed College (Portland, OR). "This has important implications for the way we understand early voting returns in elections. We need to look very skeptically at the first voting totals that will be reported in mid-October; they are far from representative of the final electorate."

More information: Vivekinan Ashok et al, The Dynamic Election: Patterns of Early Voting Across Time, State, Party, and Age, *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy* (2016). [DOI: 10.1089/elj.2015.0310](https://doi.org/10.1089/elj.2015.0310)

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