What’s Remaining to Do Versus What’s Not: North Carolina Elections After the Help America Vote Act

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Abstract

Passed ten years ago, the Help America Vote Act addressed a variety of election reform issues, but emphasized modernizing voting equipment across the country (Kropf & Kimball, 2012). Several issues remain prevalent including ballot design issues, though states and localities took some actions (Kropf and Kimball, 2012; Kropf, forthcoming). Interestingly, however, our election institutions remain largely untouched; including the hyperfederalized division of labor (e.g., Ewald, 2008) and the selection methods of local election officials which allows many officials from all over the country to be elected in partisan elections (Kimball and Kropf, 2006; Kropf and Kimball, 2012). And, increasingly, the Voting Rights Act, which has attempted to minimize/prevent “retrogression” is increasingly coming under challenge among those who view the election of an African American president as evidence of our country’s progress in providing minority voting rights. Thus, an important question to ask is whether the last decade of reforms have enabled improvements in measurable indicators of the problems with election administration—here I focus on residual votes. This paper examines the relative effects of what our country has improved (voting equipment) and what we have not improved much (ballot design, partisanship of local election officials), taking into account the effects of the rise of early (in-person) voting. The present study focuses on a case study of North Carolina—a battleground state where about half the counties are Section 5 counties, early and absentee voting data are available by race and other demographics. In focusing on counties’ residual vote rates, I confirm the results of nationwide analyses: residual votes went down in North Carolina from 2004-2008. Not only that, but ballots marginally improved over that time period.
Introduction

More than ten years ago, the United States went through a crisis that made us question election administration broadly. Congress passed the Help America Vote Act in response to the 2000 election, wherein a number of longstanding administrative practices came under fire. In particular, voting equipment, provisional ballots, registration lists and voter identification issues were identified in HAVA as being among the most serious. The 2000 election also triggered a number of reforms at the state level including changes in voting equipment—some before federal funds for equipment were released. Also among the changes is an increasing number of states are allowing pre-Election Day voting (Gronke and Toffey, 2008). Several issues remain prevalent including ballot design issues, though states and localities took some actions (Kropf and Kimball, 2012; Kropf, forthcoming). Interestingly, however, many of our election institutions remain largely similar; including the hyperfederalized division of labor (e.g., Ewald, 2008) and the selection methods of local election officials which allows many officials from all over the country to be elected in partisan elections (Kimball and Kropf, 2006; Kropf and Kimball, 2012). And, increasingly, the Voting Rights Act, which has attempted to minimize or prevent retrogression of minority groups is increasingly coming under challenge among those who view the election of an African American president as evidence of our country’s progress in providing minority voting rights.¹

Thus, an important question to ask is whether the last decade of reforms have enabled improvements in measurable indicators of the problems with election administration. One of the most important measures (partially because it is relatively easy to calculate) has been residual
votes—the number of ballots cast in an election minus the number of ballots cast in any particular contest (CalTech/MIT, 2001; Ansolabehere and Stewart, 2005; Knack and Kropf, 2002; Kimball, et al., 2002; Kimball and Kropf, 2005, 2008). Often measured at the county level, residual votes does give scholars and policymakers a reasonable idea about how well voting equipment is performing or how well voters are able to interact with voting equipment and the main interface on such equipment, the ballot.

Yet most analyses have not separated out early, absentee and election day voting—which many times use differing equipment, depending on whether the vote was cast in person (early or election day) or by mail (absentee). Data were often not available to do so and even if it were, early and absentee voting methods have not been so common in the past as they are today; an analysis of six states in the 2002 election indicated that residual vote rates for absentee, early and election day voting were not significantly different by voting equipment (Kimball and Kropf, 2004). But as early in-person voting has become more popular, as has voting by mail (now done almost completely in Oregon, Washington and parts of California), this is a question that scholars should address. In order to analyze various election reforms (or lack thereof), I advance an in-depth examination of one state over time that has decent record-keeping—starting in 2004, giving scholars the ability to separate out early (absentee one-stop), and by-mail voting and extending to 2008. A number of significant election changes happened in the four years in the mid-2000s in the state, including more uniformity in voting equipment and ballots. Moreover, North Carolina provides detailed statistics on voting by race, gender and party, allowing scholars

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2 Kimball and Kropf found, “…that unrecorded votes are slightly more common for early and absentee voters than for voters at polling places on Election Day. Finally, we find that the ballot features, voting technology, and demographic indicators associated with higher rates of unrecorded votes at polling places also tend to be associated
to obtain a more nuanced examination of residual votes, even if at some aggregated level. Also, about half the counties in North Carolina are Section 5 jurisdictions under the VRA, so this variation allows one to examine how such status affects minority voting. All in all, because of the public nature of voting records in North Carolina, we are able to examine the effects of race, ballot design and voting equipment changes on residual votes.

**North Carolina Elections**

In 2012, North Carolina is far from the state that allowed a coup d’état of Wilmington’s local government (which included white Republicans and two black city councilmen) occurred in 1898. According to Rob Christensen in *The Paradox of Tarheel Politics*,

> The forced exile of the Republican leaders was followed by a voluntary exodus of 2,100 black residents from Wilmington, including many members of the black middle class. Within two years, Wilmington was transformed from a city with a small black majority to a city with a slight white majority. Wilmington would never recover its position as North Carolina’s leading city (2008: 25).

North Carolina as a state is not covered under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, but about half the counties currently are. Thus, all the counties in North Carolina request race information as a part of voter registration and supply publically.

At the point of the 2000 election, North Carolina’s counties found themselves with a patchwork of voting equipment and some very different ballots across the state (see Table 1). As of 2008, the state settled on voting equipment that allows voters to check the ballot for errors, and for which a paper record of votes can be verified by the voter (see Table 1).
Voting and registration in North Carolina are administered by a bi-partisan State Board of Elections, under the day-to-day direction of a professional, hired Election Director. Each of the 100 counties in the state mirror this organization, with Election Boards composed of three individuals—two of the governor’s party and one of the minority party. Indeed, research indicates that the actors in such bi-partisan systems behave in a “neutral manner” when compared to those local election officials who elected on a partisan ballot, or who are selected as single actors in a partisan-based appointment system (e.g., Kimball, Kropf and Battles, 2006). Yet, the Election Directors in the state of North Carolina do retain their own personal partisanship. Interestingly, research shows that city officials elected in non-partisan elections do tend to retain their partisan cast (Welch and Bledsoe, 1986) and that election officials do retain their own attitudes about federal programs (see Kropf, Vercellotti and Kimball, 2012). Thus, an important question for North Carolina—as well as our broader understanding of election reforms—is whether the personal partisanship of election directors affects election outcomes.

As suggested by the quote about Wilmington, North Carolina from Christensen’s explanation the contradictions in North Carolina politics, race has played a key role in the operation of elections in North Carolina, as it has in many other locations. Forty counties are covered by the Voting Rights Act Section 5, meaning the election procedures in those counties are frozen; if the county wants to make any changes in election procedures or institutions, then the county must receive approval from the Justice Department or the courts. Further, all of North Carolina’s counties keep track of the race of voter registrants, which helps the state (and others) evaluate whether African American voters are able to register to vote (it also means these data are available to scholars).

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3 However, it is important to note that voter databases are broadly available in North Carolina, allowing analyses of individual-level voting participation, though not whether someone under or overvoted and certainly not vote choice.
Early Voting (aka Absentee One-Stop Voting)

Since the late 1980s, but especially since the passage of HAVA, states have moved to convenience voting, that is, easing absentee voting requirements, and to institute early voting (Gronke, et al., 2008). Oregon and Washington have elections that are run completely by mail. Like many of its counterparts, North Carolinians have been able to vote early since 2002, and have been doing so increasingly since then.

In general, research suggests that early and unrestricted absentee voting do not dramatically increase voter turnout. In particular, early voting does not increase voter turnout (Stein and Garcia-Monet 1997; Stein 1998; Neeley and Richardson 2001), unless paired with mobilization efforts by political parties (Stein et al. 2004). Studies of unrestricted absentee voting (Wolfinger and Hoffman 2001: 92) and Oregon’s vote-by-mail program (Berinsky, Burns, and Traugott 2001) find that they modestly increase voter turnout, while Oliver (1996) finds that voters in states with more liberal absentee rules are indeed more likely to vote, but only where party mobilization is more active. 4 Yet, very little of this early research considered race as a factor; given the fact that our country elected its first African American president, this is key factor to consider—but according to the media, Obama’s campaign’s mobilization techniques were second to none. 5

As noted, the 2008 election included significant on-the-ground GOTV mobilization for Obama in states such as North Carolina. Yet scholars such as Philpot, Shaw, and McGowen (2009) found that nationally, African Americans who voted were more likely to vote on Election

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4 Patterson and Caldeira (1982) find that absentee voting is more common in states with stronger party mobilization efforts.

(see Kropf, 2012).
Day than at some time before Election Day. Further, Alvarez, Levin and Sinclair (2011) find that African Americans were not more likely than whites to vote early in person.

All in all, early and absentee voting tends to make voting more convenient and raise turnout for voters who, because of their socio-economic status, are most likely to vote anyway (Stein 1998; Berinsky et al. 2001). Yet, examining voter registration history in North Carolina, Kropf (2012) found that African Americans were most likely to vote early in 2008:

That African Americans are more likely to vote early and that those living in areas with lower spending potential for health insurance are consistent with what we know about the 2008 election and the Obama campaign on-the-ground mobilization efforts, especially for early voting. However, without a counterfactual (e.g., an election with a strong mobilizing campaign but a white/Caucasian candidate and health care is not the central issue), the evidence is not definitive about the mobilization itself.

Comparing those who vote early with those who vote on Election Day nationally (in 2000, 2004 and 2008), Pezzella and Kropf found that African Americans “who attend church more are more likely to have voted early in 2008, neither more or less likely to have voted early in 2004 and less likely to have voted early in 2000.” Pezzella and Kropf note that early voting in North Carolina allows for church members to vote together before Election Day—the NAACP coordinated “Souls to the Polls” allowing African American church members to vote together on Sunday after church.

All in all, there is reason to think that early voters and Election Day voters are somewhat different in terms of the likelihood of casting a residual vote. Scholars argue that to vote early or absentee requires some calculation: one must be educated enough to realize that early voting is available or have “the resources to know to arrange to vote in advance” (Hansen 2001: 2).

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Evidence seems to bear out this proposition. Those who are more highly educated and older actually vote early at higher rates than on Election Day (Gronke and Toffey, 2008; Stein 1998; Hansen 2001; Kropf et al. 2003). Hansen (2001) finds that “[t]he highest rates of absentee usage are among holders of graduate and professional degrees and among persons with the very highest family incomes” (3). He also finds that Anglos are also more likely to vote absentee than African Americans (Hansen 2001: 3; see also Dubin and Kalsow 1996). As one might expect, absentee voting is also most common among those who are college aged and those who are elderly (Hansen 2001). In terms of attitudes, those who are strong partisans are more likely to vote early (Neeley and Richardson 2001; Stein 1998), as are those who are most interested in the campaign and feel most efficacious (Kropf et al. 2003). In sum, the evidence paints a portrait of an absentee or early voter who is likely to be more educated, more partisan, and more interested in politics than the typical Election Day voter: in other words, those that might be less likely to cast a residual vote.

Voting Equipment

While the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) contained a variety of provisions, Kropf and Kimball (2012) note that “[t]he main thrust of HAVA was to encourage states and localities to change their voting equipment in order to promote greater accuracy in the casting and counting of votes. The large majority of federal funding to states authorized by HAVA was intended to purchase new voting equipment.” Indeed, Kropf and Kimball, among other analyses, indicate that modernizing voting technology has reduced the incidence of residual votes. (And, as the

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6 Examining North Carolina voters, Kropf (2012) found that blacks were more likely to vote early in person in the 2008 election, but it was the first election in which black NC citizens were more likely to vote early since the advent of one-stop absentee voting (early voting).
reader will see, I am able to confirm this result in North Carolina; modern technology has the effect of reducing residual votes, controlling for the race of the voters). Most importantly, the modern technology should include a mechanism allowing the voters to check errors. According to Kropf and Kimball (2012):

In addition, section 301 of HAVA includes voting standards that encourage states to use technology that will detect and prevent “error.” Electronic voting machines (DREs) prevent voters from selecting more than one candidate in a contest and thus prevent any overvotes. In addition, some DRE systems remind voters about contests they may have skipped in a ballot review screen, and thus may reduce undervotes. Similarly, in precinct-count optical scan systems, the scanner is programmed to notify voters if the ballot contains overvotes. Precinct-count optical scan systems and DREs tend to reduce residual votes because of the error-prevention features in these systems. In contrast, punch card ballots and optical scan ballots counted at a central location do not offer such an error prevention feature and tend to produce higher rates of voting mistakes.

Importantly, between the 2004 and 2008 elections, almost all the North Carolina counties changed voting equipment to a type that could be checked for errors (optical scan precinct count or DRE). However, there are still those ballots that could not be checked—those that are cast provisionally and counted later and those optical scan ballots that are cast by mail. Thus, one might expect that residual votes may actually be higher for by mail voting and provisional voting.

**Ballot Usability**

HAVA implicitly considered ballot design, but it was not a central focus of the legislation by any means. According to HAVA:

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission, in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Standards and

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7 Neeley and Richardson (2001) find very few other demographic differences between early voters and Election Day voters in Tennessee.
8 Dubin and Kalsow find that income does not predict absentee voting (1996: 384).
Technology, shall submit a report to Congress which assesses the areas of human factor research, including usability engineering and human-computer and human-machine interaction, which feasibly could be applied to voting products and systems design to ensure the usability and accuracy of voting products and systems…

Five years after HAVA passed, the EAC issued voluntary federal guidelines concerning ballot design and election administration design more generally (e.g., voter materials such as signs posted at the precinct as well as various ballot designs and DRE screen design and usability suggestions). The EAC recommendations are based upon the initiatives of the AIGA’s Design for Democracy initiatives (see Lausen, 2007). In analyzing the guidelines, the Brennan Center for Justice notes that Voluntary Voting System Guidelines have not "required require vendors to fully support the ballot design recommendations made in Effective Designs for the Administration of Federal Elections.” And, in examining ballots from five states in the 2010 elections, Kropf (2012) found that less than 10 percent of the ballots analyzed had adopted the EAC recommendations.

Ballot design and usability has gotten far more attention from the scholarly community, from political scientists to graphic designers to law professors (Hernnson, et al., 2007; Kimball and Kropf 2005, 2008; Niemi and Herrnson, 2003; Lausen, 2007; Norden, et al., 2008). In particular, Kimball and Kropf (2005) analyzed the design of ballots for the 2002 election using graphic design techniques suggested by the research of Don Dillman, who has extensively analyzed what features of self-administered surveys lead to item and survey non-response. In the 2002 research, Kimball and Kropf (2005) identified seven ballot features associated with residual votes, overvotes and undervotes in gubernatorial elections. Further, the research indicates that

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well-designed ballots minimize the impact of race on residual votes (Kimball and Kropf 2005). Yet Kropf’s analysis comparing ballots from 2002 to 2010 in five states studied by Kimball and Kropf (2005) shows changes in ballot design have not been very dramatic, but some key features are improved, such as ballots she analyzed were generally less cluttered, but as one example, just as difficult to read (the grade level of instructions were not significantly different).

**Methodology**

Using records available on the North Carolina State Board of Elections website, I am able to determine who voted in using what method in North Carolina (e.g., absentee by mail, absentee one-stop, or Election Day voting—and provisional voting). However, since early voting is simply considered absentee in person voting before an election, the fact that a North Carolina citizen voted early was not recorded in vote history lists in the state in the years 2004 and before (at least not consistently; in the process of conducting this research, I found one county that recorded “absentee-one stop” versus “absentee-mail”). However, one can compare election day voting in 2004 and 2008, since “absentee” voting is separated from “in-person” (election day) voting. From these data, I am able to determine how many North Carolina voters in every county voted on Election Day. In a separate file containing election results, I am also able to calculate the number of votes cast in every contest in every county. Thus, I am able to calculate residual votes for about 78 counties in both 2004 and 2008, allowing a longitudinal comparison similarly to that conducted by Stewart (2006; see also Kropf and Kimball 2012, Chapter 3). The only difference is that I include a “number of African Americans/Blacks” voting, to partially take into account the mobilization of African American voters (who because of the African American
presidential candidate, may be less likely to cast a residual vote). Also, in this analysis, I am able to show the effects of ballot design.

However, I am also able to compare early, absentee and election day residual votes in every county in 2008, controlling for race, partisanship, gender and average age of voters in each county. For this analysis, I am focusing on race, because a persistent research finding is voting equipment and ballot problems seems to have the most effects on African American voters (e.g., Kimball and Kropf, 2005): future analyses will examine partisanship, age and gender of voters. I can also include the county’s Section 5 status (is it covered or not). I am also able to determine how many votes were cast using each method for each office in North Carolina. The present analysis examines the presidential election and the Senate elections in 2004 and 2008, since this is the time period within which the biggest improvements in voting equipment and ballot design took place.

Finally, using a coding scheme developed by Kimball and Kropf (2005) and used in Kropf and Kimball (2012, chapter 5) and Kropf (2012), I analyze the North Carolina ballots for the existence of several important ballot features. I am able to compare ballots from 2004 and 2008.11

Findings

Table 1 indicates that new voting equipment made a significant difference in both the Senate election and the presidential election, consistent with the findings of past research. What is inconsistent with expectations is that the number of African American voters had a negative and statistically significant relationship with residual votes for Senate, but not for the presidency.

11 Please see Kropf and Kimball (2012) for a discussion of the coding scheme.
Since this analysis only focuses on Election Day voting, it may be that the most motivated African American voters voted early in North Carolina (see Kropf, 2012).

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

This analysis indicates a change in North Carolina from 2004 to 2008, but an open question is how much did ballots improve in North Carolina. Table 2 shows a bivariate analysis comparing the ballots from 2004 and 2008. The most important observation to make is that the ballots in 2008 do not vary across the counties for the features which may affect the Senate and Presidential race residual votes! Nevertheless, I am able to compare the ballots obtained for the 2004 National Science Foundation study to the same counties in 2008 to see how the ballots compare.

Table 3 presents the results of a cross sectional analysis of residual votes in North Carolina in 2008, directly comparing residual votes cast early or on Election Day (in person voting, where a voter has a notification for errors) versus whether the voter cast the vote by mail (functionally, this variable would compare the precinct count optical scan v. central count, since I also include a DRE variable); by mail voting is central count voting. There are some disadvantages to a cross sectional analysis, as laid out in Stewart (2006); simply put, there is possible omitted variable bias (spuriousness), since the factors that determine voting equipment selection could affect the residual vote level.

Overall, Table 3 indicates that the voting in person tends to reduce residual votes, which is not surprising. These voters are notified if they have made an error and have a chance to correct it. However, what two things are surprising about this particular analysis: As in Table 2,
the number of African Americans voting was not significantly related to residual votes for the presidency (!) but were related negatively to senate residual votes. This takes into account the number of African American voters who voted each different way, not just the total number who voted. This warrants further investigation—an example cited by many is straight party ticket in North Carolina, which does not include the presidential race.

The second surprise is that DREs perform so much worse compared to precinct count optical scan equipment. Compared to precinct count optical scan, DRE equipment is positively related to residual votes. Again, this warrants further examination. One thing to note about some DREs in North Carolina is that multiple offices do appear on the same screen, which has been cited as a problem elsewhere.

**Conclusion**

The reader is cautioned that this analysis is preliminary; as suggested above, there are other variables about actual voters I will be able to add in order to have a more holistic look at reform in North Carolina, that should help me make conclusions about reforms more generally. However, there are two things to be especially optimistic about in this analysis: residual votes went down due to newer equipment used in North Carolina\(^{12}\) and a voter who votes an optical scan ballot in North Carolina will vote a ballot that is marginally better than the type of ballots that were used in 2004 and earlier.

The issue of usability is not just about paper ballots, despite the bulk of empirical work presented herein. While we discuss the weaknesses in the butterfly ballot, policymakers should not forget the poor ballot design is that of Sarasota County, Florida in 2006 one of the counties in the 13\(^{th}\) Congressional district. Two different contests appeared on one DRE screen—making it
difficult for voters to tell the difference between the contests (and in North Carolina, that is a common practice). Evidence indicates that many voters failed to cast a vote for the second race: the 13th district congressional race (Frisina, et al., 2008) because of the design (see also Kropf and Kimball, 2012). The combination of the federal legislation and concerns about computer security with Direct Recording Electronic voting machines has certainly meant that paper optical scan ballots are now the most popular way of registering citizen electoral preferences. Thus, ballot design—and at this point in time, especially that of paper ballots—is more important than ever, especially important since scholarly research has indicated that ballot design does affect the ability of the voter to express his or her preferences in voting. All in all however, using computerized interfaces to register citizen preferences will continue to grow. And, policymakers designing computerized user interfaces (including overseas/absentee voting on the internet) should take a lesson from survey design and the ballot design literature more generally. Survey methodology scholars who examine web-based data will likely give us even more lessons for the future (Couper, 2008).

12 Assuming one supports electronic equipment.
Sources


Table 1: Election Day Residual Votes (2004-2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>(Model 1)</th>
<th>(Model 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual Votes for Presidency</td>
<td>Residual Votes for Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Had New Equipment</td>
<td>-0.356** (0.158)</td>
<td>-0.223* (0.116)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American Voters</td>
<td>-0.000006 (.000004)</td>
<td>-0.00001** (0.000005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year (2008)</td>
<td>-0.0789 (0.181)</td>
<td>-0.139 (0.145)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-4.043*** (0.103)</td>
<td>-3.550*** (0.0920)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lnalpha</td>
<td>-0.657*** (0.115)</td>
<td>-0.997*** (0.101)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2: Comparison of Optical Scan Ballots in 2004 and 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballot Feature</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level of Instructions</td>
<td>10.11</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readability of Instructions</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction Font Size</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Font Size</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovals v. Connect the Arrow Optical Scan</td>
<td>100% oval</td>
<td>44.9% arrows 42.9% oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain Shading (to guide voter)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the Candidate Names Stand Out?</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Cross Sectional Analysis of 2008 Residual Votes, Taking Race and Section 5 Status into Account

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>(1) Residual Votes, Presidency</th>
<th>Residual Votes, Senate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voting in Person (have error correct)</td>
<td>-0.844*** (0.0911)</td>
<td>-0.360*** (0.0742)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American Voters</td>
<td>-0.000004 (0.000006)</td>
<td>-0.000008** (0.000003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5</td>
<td>-0.310*** (0.0866)</td>
<td>-0.0380 (0.0765)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>-0.0288*** (0.00834)</td>
<td>0.00374 (0.00776)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRE (v. Precinct Ct. Optical Scan)</td>
<td>0.725*** (0.0941)</td>
<td>0.554*** (0.0743)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.353* (0.700)</td>
<td>-3.917*** (0.657)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inalpha</td>
<td>-1.361*** (0.149)</td>
<td>-1.841*** (0.147)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1