Analysis of the Racial Composition of Incarcerated Registered Voters who Could Not Vote During Their Incarceration on the Weekend and Monday Before the November 2012 General Election

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This report evaluates the racial composition of the number of jailed persons in Ohio who were registered to vote and had not voted by absentee ballot, but could not exercise their voting rights during their confinement the three days before the election on November 6, 2012. It supplements the report, dated February 20, 2014, that provides the number of incarcerated adult registered voters in nine counties the weekend and Monday before the 2012 general election.¹

The February 20th report noted that 46 percent of the inmates that were in the database of the jails of the nine counties used to identify those who were not provided an opportunity to vote were Black. Here we limit the analysis to only those inmates who were incarcerated during the entire period of November 3, 2012 through November 6, 2012, and were found to be registered voters who had not voted absentee.

The issue of the possible disparate racial impact of the inability of registered jail inmates to vote in the final three days before the election can be addressed with the inmate data since race is included in the file.

The results of this analysis demonstrate the disproportionate impact on African American voters who were not allowed to vote. Table 1 below provides the total number of inmates by race who were eligible but not able to vote during the specified period. Twenty-eight percent (28.4%) of White inmates would have been eligible to vote, whereas almost half (45.5%) of the Black inmates were denied their voting rights. The difference is statistically significant at the 99 percent confidence level (z=4.14).

As noted in the earlier report, nationally, voter participation rates among African Americans in the 2012 election exceeded that of non-Hispanic Whites, 66.2 percent versus 64.1 percent, respectively. Ohio also had a higher rate of participation among African Americans than Whites in that election.²

¹ The analysis was requested by the Ohio Justice & Policy Center and data used in the analysis were supplied by that organization.
² The February report is titled “Supplement to Analysis of the Number of Incarcerated Registered Voters who Could Not Vote During Their Incarceration on the Weekend and Monday Before the November 2012 General Election”.

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Table 1: Race of Inmates by Whether They Were Denied Voting Right

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Eligible</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent Eligible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>