

**Worth a Thousand Words?:
An Analysis of Georgia's Voter Identification Statute^{*}**

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M.V. Hood III
(th@uga.edu)

Charles S. Bullock, III
(csbullock57@hotmail.com)

Department of Political Science
104 Baldwin Hall
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602

706-542-2057

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Abstract: Georgia has joined the states seeking to require the presentation of a picture identification card before a person can vote. Democrats have seen this requirement as a Republican effort to limit participation of likely Democratic supporters. Specifically, opponents charge that this requirement makes it more difficult for African Americans, the elderly, the poor and those living in rural areas to participate. The most widely available form of acceptable identification is a driver's license or document issued in lieu of a driver's license by the Department of Motor Vehicles. We examine these claims by determining which registered voters lack a DMV photo ID. Multivariate models show that African Americans, Hispanics, and the elderly are less likely to have a DMV-issued photo ID. Having a photo ID is unrelated to wealth of the zip code in which a voter lives. Those without photo IDs are more likely to have voted in Democratic primaries in 2004, although those who have photo IDs are less likely to vote compared with other registrants.

Introduction

The long, drawn-out vote count in Florida that resolved the 2000 presidential election has stimulated unprecedented interest in election administration. The media and the public have become fascinated with questions about how votes are recorded and who is allowed to participate. Swinging chads and dimpled ballots triggered concerns about the accuracy with which voters' intentions are recorded. The switch by many jurisdictions to electronic voting has prompted calls for paper trails so that should it become necessary, voters' preferences could be verified through a hand recount. Recent elections have also been surrounded by claims that some eligible voters have been turned away. On the other hand, others have asserted that some who were ineligible to vote have actually been allowed to cast ballots (von Spakovsky 2006).

These concerns have prompted several actions. The experience of an election so narrowly divided has led to greater emphasis on insuring that all voter preferences be accurately recorded and counted. One outgrowth of these concerns has been the replacement of certain types of election equipment. The punch cards whose chads were carefully scrutinized by election officials in south Florida have largely gone the way of paper ballots.

A second reaction to the contested 2000 vote has been increased concern about the eligibility of those who cast ballots. After all, if fewer than 600 Florida ballots could determine the presidency of the United States, it would be possible for a relatively small number of ineligibles to control an outcome. This concern, linked to the broader debate about undocumented immigrants as well as much older suspicions about the political activities of the dead, has stimulated efforts to require more thorough identification of those seeking to cast ballots. Particularly controversial has been legislation requiring prospective voters to produce one of a limited number of types of photo identification.

Identification Requirements and Turnout

Requiring a picture ID is but a new component of a broader set of requirements for participation in the electoral process. Those most concerned about potential voter fraud favor the most demanding standards. In contrast, those seeking to maximize participation prefer minimal requirements for casting a ballot. Hans von Spakovsky (2006) makes a strong case for the potential of voter fraud. He notes a number of instances in which votes have been cast by non-citizens and also presents information from Florida where a dozen non-citizens have been convicted for registering and voting and where one ran for the Florida legislature (Department of Justice 2005). Conversely, many advocacy groups have argued that photo identification requirements unnecessarily disenfranchise legitimate voters, especially the poor, elderly, and racial or ethnic minorities.

Political science has long recognized that institutional requirements such as voter registration laws, designed to reduce fraud, can also impose costs on potential voters; thereby reducing the probability for some registrants of turning out to vote (see for example Campbell et al., 1960; Leighley and Nagler 1992; Nagler 1992; Rosentonse and Hansen 1993; and Rosenstone and Wolfinger 1978). More recent confirmation that registration requirements may hinder participation comes from research showing that states permitting election-day registration have higher turnout rates (Knack and White 2000). In much the same way voter identification requirements may also act as an additional impediment to the act of voting for some registrants.

States have implemented various voter identification requirements as a means of reducing voter fraud at the polls. Vercellotti and Anderson (2006) have grouped state voter identification requirements into five categories ranging from requiring that voters state their name, sign their

name, have their signature matched with one on file, provide some form of identification, or provide photo identification.¹ These various requirements form a continuum in terms of difficulty, with the most demanding requiring photo identification from prospective voters.

Relatively little research has been done on the impact of various standards as prerequisites for voting. One study of several southern states concluded that requiring voters to present a form of identification did little to reduce participation (von Spakovsky 2006).

The most comprehensive study to date related to the question of turnout and voter requirements analyzed county-level returns from all fifty states and individual-level data from the 2004 Census Bureau Current Population Survey (Vercellotti and Anderson 2006). The specific effects related to photo id requirements were mixed, with no effects present in the county-level data while the individual-level data predicted a 2.9% drop in voter turnout. Surprisingly, when registrants were examined separately by race/ethnicity the photo id requirement had a negative effect on white, but not black or Hispanic turnout. It is also interesting to note that in the Vercellotti and Anderson study non-photo identification requirements, and not the more restrictive photo id requirements, had the most consistent effects across all groups analyzed in relation to depressing voter turnout.

Currently, seven states require photo identification at the polls: Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Ohio, and South Dakota (Requirements for Voter Identification 2007). These states can be further subdivided into two groups based on requirements for voters who do not come to the polls with valid photo identification. In Arizona, Indiana, and Ohio prospective voters lacking proper identification are required to vote a provisional ballot which is only counted if the individual can present valid identification before the vote canvass occurs. The

¹The National Conference of State Legislatures has a comprehensive and up-to-date summary of state voter identification requirements in their on-line report: *Requirements for Voter Identification*.

remaining states allow voters to cast a regular ballot if they swear an affidavit or provide some other form of non-photo identification. Several states, including Arizona, have recently adopted new requirements for photo identification as a prerequisite to voting.²

The recent Commission on Federal Election Reform, co-chaired by former President Jimmy Carter and James Baker, recommended that a uniform means of identification be required in all states and that this be incorporated into the driver's license or identification card in lieu of a driver's license. This information would require the individual's picture, date of birth, address and social security number (Commission on Federal Election Reform 2005).

The Georgia Situation

Georgia is the state where the most extended controversy over photo IDs has played out. A 1997 Georgia law allowed voters to use any one of 17 forms of identification. While some of these such as a state-issued driver's license contain a picture of the prospective voter, others, such as a recent utility bill or a social security card, do not.³ A new provision requiring a photo ID was adopted by the first Republican legislature in 130 years, prompting claims by Democrats that the new requirement had partisan overtones.

Acceptable forms of identification under the statute adopted in 2005 were a driver's license, a state issued identification card for non-drivers, a military identification card, a

²Recent statutes in Georgia and Missouri requiring photo identification have been struck down by various court actions.

³The valid forms of identification required for a voter are: a Georgia driver's license, an identification card issued by the state or federal government, a U.S. passport, an employee photo ID, a student ID card from any public or private college, university or technical school in Georgia, a Georgia license to carry a pistol, a pilots license issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, military ID card, a certified copy of a birth certificate, a Social Security card, naturalization papers, a certified copy of court records showing an adoption, name or sex change, a recent utility bill, a nursing home identification, a bank statement that shows the name and address of the voter, a government check which shows the name and address of the voter or any other government document that contains the name and address of the voter. Voters lacking any of these forms of identification can cast a provisional ballot which will be counted if they return and provide one of the accepted modes of identification.

government employee identification card, a tribal identification card, or any other valid picture identification issued by state or federal government, including an identification card from any state supported institution of higher education. Voters who lacked acceptable identification could purchase one from the state at a cost of \$20 for a card valid for five years or \$30 for a card valid for ten years. Prospective voters who could not afford these fees could have them waived if they provided an affidavit of indigency. A prospective voter who lacked proper identification would be allowed to cast a provisional ballot which would be counted only if proper photo identification were provided by the voter within 48 hours.⁴

Those who advocated requiring photo identification as a prerequisite to voting argued that this requirement would limit fraud. Specifically, they expressed concern that under the current system ballots could be cast by non-citizens and by people voting in place of now dead registrants. Another potential source of fraud might come from ballots cast by individuals whose actual registration may not be legitimate. An *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* newspaper reporter turned up 208 registered voters all of whom listed the same home address (Judd 2006). Others on the registration rolls gave public buildings, schools, and even the election office and the newspaper headquarters as their home addresses. A member of the Fulton County (Atlanta) Board of Elections claimed that almost 2,500 questionable registration applications had been received in his county alone (Wooten 2005b).

In trying to counter claims that a photo ID was too burdensome, Republicans pointed to polling data that they said showed 82 percent of all Americans, including three-quarters of

⁴Voters in Georgia can cast a ballot on election-day in person, in person prior to election-day (termed in-person absentee voting), or via absentee ballot by mail. It is important to note that the photo identification requirement applied to those registrants voting in-person prior to or on the day of an election, but not to those voting absentee by mail. In 2005 Georgia also passed legislation providing for no-excuse absentee voting by mail whereby any can request such a ballot without providing a justification.

Democrats, believe that voters should produce a photo ID before being allowed to cast ballots (Burmeister 2005). Supporters of the new requirement noted that many aspects of contemporary life require one to produce a photo ID (Jacobs 2005). Boarding an airplane, cashing checks, using a credit card, entering the state Capitol, or even renting a DVD at Blockbuster is contingent upon possession a photo ID.

African Americans were in the forefront of the legislators who opposed the photo ID bill. One black legislator refused to yield the floor when her time expired and instead launched into a song from the civil rights movement, “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around” (Campos 2005). The head of the Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials, who also serves as a state representative, said of the proposal, “It’s an erosion of voting rights and the beginning of turning back the clock on voter enfranchisement” (Jacobs 2005, C1, C5). Another member of the Legislative Black Caucus dropped a set of prisoner shackles on the desk of the House sponsor of the legislation (Wooten 2005a). Unable to vote the proposal down, African-American legislators staged a walkout in the House (Baxter and Galloway 2005).

Democrats, who generally objected to the photo ID, questioned the need for this provision. Secretary of State Cathy Cox (D), the state official responsible for overseeing elections and an opponent of the bill, reported that her office had received no complaints of ballots being cast by individuals who were not who they claimed to be (Jacobs and Tharpe 2005). Instead, to the extent that Georgia elections had been marred by fraud in recent years, the problem came from questionable absentee ballots and the photo ID requirement did nothing to make it more difficult for those who set out to abuse this option.

Since Georgia is subject to Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, the photo ID provision had to be precleared by the federal government. Although representatives of civil rights groups

contended that African Americans are less likely to have driver's licenses and therefore would bear a disproportionate burden in obtaining the necessary photo identification, the Department of Justice (DOJ) approved this requirement.⁵ The attorney general's office explained its decision when responding to an inquiry from Senator Christopher Bond (R-MO) concerning approval of Georgia's photo ID requirement (Moschella 2005). The letter referenced two newspaper accounts that showed 5,412 Georgia ballots had been cast by dead people between 1980 and 2000 and more than 15,000 dead people remained on the state's active voter rolls. The letter went on to indicate that 6,464,319 Georgians had valid driver's licenses, a number only slightly smaller than Georgia's voting age population of 6,565,095 as estimated by the Census Bureau for July 1, 2005. The number of driver's license holders exceeded the 4.5 million registered voters in the state. The assistant attorney general noted that among those who had valid driver's licenses, approximately 28 percent were African American, almost precisely the share of the voting age population that is black.

When DOJ approved the photo ID requirement, attorneys representing groups often associated with the Democratic Party went into federal court seeking to enjoin the implementation of the requirement. They succeeded when federal district Judge Harold Murphy blocked implementation on the grounds that since an additional cost might be involved, the photo ID was a reincarnation of the poll tax. Accepting the claims made by the plaintiffs, Murphy's ruling noted that, "The photo ID requirement is most likely to prevent Georgia's elderly, poor and African American voters from voting. For those citizens, the character and magnitude of their injury—the loss of their right to vote— is undeniably demoralizing and extreme" (Rankin 2005, A1).

⁵In approving the Georgia statute, top DOJ officials overrode the negative evaluation made by the Section 5 staff (Eggen 2005).

While the statute made it possible to have the fee waived for the indigent, Judge Murphy speculated that, “Many voters simply may be too embarrassed over their inability to afford a photo ID or to request and complete an affidavit for a free card” (Rankin 2005, A11). The judge also noted that these cards were available only at offices operated by the Department of Motor Vehicles and that most counties had no such office, causing an inconvenience for those who would have to travel some distance to secure the necessary state identification.⁶ They also might have to wait in long, slow-moving lines which have become common in driver’s license bureaus in most urban areas. While the state had refurbished an old school bus that it sent into rural areas that lacked licensing bureaus, Murphy doubted whether a single bus could cover Georgia’s 159 counties.

In 2006, the General Assembly passed a new version of the photo identification requirement. This one waived any cost for getting the document in lieu of a driver’s license and made these documents available in all 159 counties.⁷ The new law also provided for a voter education program (per the previous federal court decision) to inform Georgians of changes in the state’s voter identification requirements. Again, the new statute was approved by DOJ but then challenged in the courts. Plaintiffs filed two challenges in 2006 with one in Federal court and the other in state court.

Former Democratic Governor Roy Barnes represented plaintiffs in the state court suit. He argued that the statute resulted from a Republican effort to exclude likely Democratic voters.⁸

⁶Only 50 of Georgia’s 159 counties had a Department of Motor Vehicle Safety where one could get a state-issued photo ID (Reed 2005).

⁷Voters lacking proper photo identification for voting would be allowed to obtain such identification at their respective county registrars’ office, all of whom were to be equipped to provide this service.

⁸An embarrassing moment occurred when Barnes’ lead plaintiff had to be replaced. After claiming that she would be unable to vote because she lacked a photo ID, Margaret Berry cast an absentee ballot for which no photo ID is required (“Did You Hear. . . 2006).

The state court judge concluded that while Georgia's Constitution establishes requirements for voting, a photo ID is not among them and therefore found the legislative effort to be unconstitutional (Campos 2006c). An angry Glenn Richardson, Speaker of the Georgia House, responded to the judicial setback. "These actions clearly reveal the intent of Georgia Democrats to secure voting rights for dead people, felons, and illegal immigrants" (Campos 2006c, A5). A unanimous state Supreme Court upheld the injunction.

The plaintiffs in the federal suit consisted of a coalition of groups that included Common Cause, the ACLU, the NAACP, the League of Women Voters, and the Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials. Their attorneys asserted that the photo ID requirement would make it more difficult for African Americans, the elderly, the disabled and the poor to vote since they are less likely to have driver's licenses. Judge Murphy blocked implementation of the 2006 statute on the grounds that it violated the right to petition the government guaranteed by the First Amendment as well as the equal protection and due process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment (Jacobs and Campos 2006). He also speculated that there was insufficient time for perspective voters to obtain the necessary identification in order to participate in the upcoming primary.

Georgia's requirement of photo identification even became a factor in the renewal of the Voting Rights Act in 2006. A number of legislators who argued that the work of protecting the ballot remained incomplete pointed to the Georgia statute as evidence that African Americans still confront discrimination. Using the Georgia statute to justify the need for a 25-year extension of the Voting Rights Act ignored the fact that the Department of Justice had *approved* both the 2005 and 2006 versions of the Georgia statute.

Although photo ID requirements have incited a great deal of passion, they have generated little hard data to support the claims that the requirements discriminate against certain segments of society. Governor Sonny Perdue estimated that 300,000 adults lacked a driver's license but of these one in six was in prison and therefore ineligible to vote (Tharpe and Badertscher 2005). The American Association of Retired Persons estimated that 150,000 elderly Georgians who lacked driver's licenses cast ballots in 2004 (Feds Should Kill . . . 2005). By another estimate more than a third of the electorate over 75 years old lacks a driver's license (Reed 2005).

The objective of this paper is to test some of these claims using recent data from Georgia. Specifically, we examine the extent to which Georgia's registered voters lack a valid driver's license or state issued identification card. Our research considers several types of voters who critics of this legislation and the judges who have enjoined implementation contend would be disadvantaged. Specifically, we examine the degree to which African Americans, Hispanics, the elderly, the poor, and those living in rural areas are less likely to possess a driver's license. Further, we also examine the relationship between possession of a driver's license and voter turnout in 2004 and finally, we attempt to shed some light on the partisan composition of those Georgians who lack a driver's license or state identification card.

Data and Method

The data for this project come from two primary sources: the voter registration and history databases maintained by the Georgia Secretary of State and from a report produced by the Georgia Department of Motor Vehicles. In June of 2007 the State Election Board requested that the Department of Motor Vehicles produce a list of registrants who do not possess a valid driver's license or state identification card. Matching records in their database with the voter

registration database, the DMV determined that 305,074 registered voters (6.04%) likely did not possess a valid driver's license or state identification card.⁹ Of these, it was determined that 106,522 registrants were never issued either of these forms of identification. The remaining 198,552 registrants had expired, revoked, or suspended driver's licenses or identification cards (Campos 2006a).¹⁰

Per the previous court ruling the State Elections Board planned on using information from this query as part of a statewide education effort concerning the new voter identification law. In October of 2006 the State Elections Board sent out notices to these individuals using a mailing list created from the DMV query (Campos 2006b). Using Georgia's Open Records Act we requested and received a copy of this mailing list. A copy of the state's voter registration database was obtained from the Secretary of State's Office.

We added a field to the voter registration database to denote registrants identified as lacking a DMV photo ID by running a series of queries in which names and addresses were matched between the two datasets. Using this method we were able to match 93% of the cases from the mailing list back to our copy of the state registration database.¹¹ This dichotomous identifier was used in subsequent analyses to denote registrants who possessed valid state issued

⁹The Federal Highway Administration calculates that 89.8% of Georgia's voting age population had a driver's license in 2004 (von Spakovsky 2006).

¹⁰An initial list of registrants compiled by Secretary of State Cathy Cox (D) indicated that 675,684 Georgia registrants (or 1 in 7) lacked a driver's license (Harris 2006). In the aftermath of that startling announcement, questions arose that suggested problems with the matching. A Republican member of the State Election Board challenged the results, noting that the list of voters without driver's licenses included his father and a neighbor, both of whom were licensed drivers (Evans 2006). There was even evidence presented at a hearing suggesting that Judge Murphy had shown up among those without a driver's license (von Spakovsky 2006). Our analysis relies on the more refined list produced by the State Elections Board discussed in the text.

¹¹We were able to match 282,602 of the 305,074 cases identified in the mailing list produced by the DMV.

identification (coded 0) from those who did not (coded 1). In our dataset 5.80% of the cases did not possess a valid driver's license or state identification card.

Using the state registration and history databases gives us some degree of additional leverage over similar studies that have examined effects related to voter requirements. To begin, these data sources provide information on the population of registrants and voters in Georgia. While it is risky to argue that one has data encompassing the entire population of a given group this large, using such data does make generating inferences about the target population all the more straightforward. Second, while other research has made use of individual-level data in this area, we do not have to worry about questions relating to the inflation of self-reported turnout. In addition, as opposed to measuring laws concerning voter identification at the contextual level (i.e. state), we know which Georgia registrants do not possess a valid driver's license or state identification card.

The first model specified is designed to differentiate Georgia registrants who possess a driver's license or state identification card from those who lack these forms of identification. A number of independent variables relating to registrant race/ethnicity, age, sex, geographic location, and income are included in the model. Georgia is one of a handful of states that records a registrant's race and ethnicity.¹² Using white registrants as the comparison category we include a series of dummy variables to denote *Black*, *Hispanic*, *Asian*, and registrants of *Other Race/Ethnicity* in our model.¹³ We also include a dummy variable for *Gender* (1=Female;

¹²The other states are Louisiana, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

¹³For purposes of this analysis we combined registrants from the *other* and *unknown* categories.

0=Male). *Age* of registrant, calculated from the recorded date of birth, is also included in the analysis (18-106).¹⁴

In addition to these individual-level variables we also included several contextual variables that may be related to the probability of a registrant possessing a diver's license. One of the assertions made by critics of the photo ID bills has been that registrants' incomes may be related to whether they own automobiles and, therefore, have obtained drivers' licenses.¹⁵ Unfortunately, we do not know registrants' actual incomes. We can, however, place them within a particular geographic context which can then be linked to a measure of income. Using a registrant's residential zip code we included a measure of 2006 *Per Capita Income* calculated for that geographic unit. In Georgia, there are a total of 689 valid residential zip codes which provides a large degree of variation. By zip code, per capita income in Georgia ranges from a low of \$3,784 to a high of \$107,035, with mean and median levels at \$22,651 and \$19,787 respectively.

A second set of contextual measures analyzes the effect of residence on the dependent variable in question. We classified Georgia's 159 counties as rural, suburban, or urban. *Urban* counties (9) were those that were part of a core metropolitan statistical area (MSA) using the Census Bureau designation. *Suburban* counties (30) were those counties located in an MSA but outside the core and *Rural* (120) counties were those located outside an MSA. For the models specified, dummy variables were included to denote urban and suburban counties with rural counties serving as the excluded comparison category.

¹⁴The voter registration database contained a number of obvious errors related to age. While it is difficult to know exactly how to truncate the age range, the oldest Georgian alive in 2006 was 106 years of age. We therefore restricted the range of valid cases from 18 to 106.

¹⁵The cost to obtain either a driver's license or state identification card valid for a 5-year period is \$20.

Subsequent models utilize our primary variable of interest, *No Driver's License*, as an independent variable to predict voter turnout both in the general election and Democratic primaries. While a number of different dependent variables are examined in this manuscript, all those utilized are binary. Given this fact we use logistic regression for the analyses presented. In order to control for issues related to heteroskedasticity we also specified the use of robust standard errors clustered by zip code.¹⁶

Findings

The first model examines a number of potential correlates related to a registrant possessing a valid driver's license or state identification card. The results of this model are presented in Table 1.¹⁷ In comparison to white registrants, all four racial/ethnic categories included in the model have a significantly higher probability of not possessing either a driver's license or state identification card. Women and older Georgians were also significantly more likely to be without a license or identification card. Among the contextual variables, the per capita income of the zip code in which a registrant lived was inversely related to the probability of possessing identification, however this result was not statistically significant. Counties classified as suburban did see significantly lower rates of registrants without identification compared with both urban and rural counties. The difference between urban and rural counties was not statistically significant.

<Table 1 about here>

¹⁶Models presented were estimated in Stata 9.0 using the logistic procedure.

¹⁷Given that the dependent variable in this model is extremely skewed with 5.8% of registrants not possessing a driver's license, we also specified a rare events logit model to compensate for this issue (King and Zeng 2001). The results of both the rare events logit and logit model are virtually identical in terms of sign, direction, and size of coefficients. We opt, therefore, to present the results from the logistic regression model. Output for the rare events logit specification is available upon request from the authors.

As logistic regression coefficients are not directly interpretable, we created a series of comparisons between various groups using simulated probabilities estimated with *Clarify* (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003). Holding the other variables in the model at their mean or modal values we evaluate the change in the probability of a registrant possessing a driver's license while manipulating values on key variables of interest. Figure 1 presents a series of estimated probabilities based on the results detailed in Table 1.

The largest effects, in terms of probability shifts, are related to race/ethnicity and age. Non-white registrants are less likely to possess a driver's license compared with white registrants. For example, the probability of a black registrant not possessing a license is .068, a difference of .031 from a white registrant at .037. The probability differences between white registrants and all other racial/ethnic groups are statistically significant. Figure 1 also demonstrates that the probability of an 18-year old registrant in Georgia not possessing a valid license is .027, compared with .037 for someone of average age (46)—a full point higher. The gap is even starker when a registrant at the far end of the spectrum is utilized for comparison. In this case the estimated probability for a 95-year old registrant is .065, a statistically significant difference of .038 compared with an 18-year old registrant.

<Figure 1 about here>

The other differences in Figure 1 are not as substantial as those for race and age. Registrants living in the zip code with the lowest per capita income are only .006 (not statistically significant) more likely not to possess a driver's license compared with registrants residing in the zip code with the highest level of per capita income.¹⁸ Likewise, there is little discernable difference between registrants living in urban and rural counties (.055 vs. .051);

¹⁸This finding does not rule out the possibility that a relationship between income and possession of a driver's license may exist at the individual-level.

however there is a noticeable decline for those living in suburban counties at .037. The difference between rural and suburban counties at .014 is statistically significant. Contrary to expectations, voters in both rural and urban areas were less likely to possess a driver's license when compared to suburban registrants. Figure 1 also indicates that women are less likely than men to have a driver's license. The difference, at .003, while very small is nonetheless statistically significant.

The second facet of the analysis seeks to ascertain the level of prior electoral participation comparing registrants who possess a driver's license with those who do not. We used the state's voter history file to determine whether a registrant had voted in three elections from the 2004 election cycle: the presidential preference primary, the general primary, and the general election. Models examining turnout in these elections are presented in Table 2.¹⁹ Possession of valid identification becomes an independent variable used to predict whether these Georgians are less likely to have voted. In these models the dependent variable is coded 1 for those registrants who voted in the election of interest and 0 otherwise. The set of cases for these analyses included only those registrants qualified to vote in the election in question.²⁰

The results of the three models related to turnout are presented in Table 2. In each election analyzed, registrants who lack a valid driver's license are significantly less likely to have voted (as denoted by the negative coefficients for *No Driver's License* across the three models presented in Table 2). In order to examine this particular effect in more detail another set of estimated probabilities is presented in Figure 2. The largest difference is found with turnout in the general election where the probability of voting for registrants with identification is

¹⁹In 2004 registrants did not have to present a photo identification to vote but could use any of the 17 forms of identification detailed in footnote 1.

²⁰As required by Georgia law, a potential voter must be registered thirty days prior to an election in order to participate.

estimated to be .767, almost double of that for those without a driver's license at .382. The turnout differentials for the general primary and presidential preference primary, while not as substantial at .240 and .105 respectively, are nevertheless still sizable as well as statically significant. Given that registrants without a driver's license are already less likely to vote, requiring certain forms of photo identification to vote would most likely diminish turnout among this group even further.

<Table 2 about here>

<Figure 2 about here>

Other results from Table 2 show black registrants significantly more likely to vote in the presidential preference primary than were whites. This finding may be related to the degree of contestation present in the Democratic presidential primary in 2004, in contrast with the GOP primary in which George Bush faced no opposition in his bid for renomination. Since blacks are the core constituency of the Democratic Party in Georgia it is not surprising that higher proportions of this group participated in the presidential preference primary. White voters, many of whom are now Republicans, stayed at home as there was no contest to resolve on the GOP side. The same logic may explain why women voted at higher rates than men in the presidential preference primary. While the gender gap has narrowed in recent Georgia general elections, women remain more likely to participate as Democrats. In the 2004 primary elections approximately 58 percent of all voters in the Democratic primary were women, compared with only half of the GOP primary participants.²¹

The second column in Table 2 reports results for participation in the partisan primaries held during the summer of 2004. In this election the turnout rate between blacks and whites is

²¹Calculated from figures in the post-election audit conducted by Georgia's Secretary of State.

no longer statistically significant as there were numerous contests to be resolved on both the Republican and Democratic ballots. Other racial/ethnic groups, however, were significantly less likely to vote in the party primaries. Women and older registrants were more likely to vote in the summer primaries. Participation in the summer primaries was not linked to affluence as measured at the zip code level.

The last column in Table 2 contains results for turnout in the 2004 general election. The results indicate higher turnout rates among men and non-Hispanic white registrants. In addition, older registrants, as well as those residing in suburban and urban areas were also more likely to vote in the 2004 presidential election. Finally, in contrast with the models specified to explain turnout in the party primary elections, income is positively and significantly associated with the probability of voting in the 2004 general election.

Georgia is an open primary state which means that voters do not register by party. Voters decide when they arrive at the polls if they want a Republican or Democratic primary ballot.²² The models in Table 3 help to determine whether more Democratic than Republican voters may be affected by the state's photo ID law. These models include only registrants who voted in the 2004 presidential preference or general primaries. The dependent variable is coded 1 for those who voted in a Democratic primary election and 0 for those who voted in a Republican primary.

<Table 3 about here>

The results of the models indicate that registrants without a driver's license are significantly more likely to vote in Democratic, as opposed to Republican, primaries. Racial/ethnic minorities, women, older Georgians, and urban dwellers are also more likely to choose a Democratic ballot, while suburbanites and wealthier Georgians (in the general primary)

²²A third option does exist in that Georgia voters can select a non-partisan ballot to vote on issues unrelated to party primaries. The few those voters who selected the non-partisan ballot option were not included in the models presented in this analysis.

are more likely to cast a vote in the GOP primary. Figure 3 displays a set of predicted probabilities based on possession of identification and turnout in Georgia's Democratic primary elections in 2004. In the presidential preference primary the probability of those without a valid driver's license choosing a Democratic ballot was estimated to be .723, compared with those with identification at .695—a .028 gap. The differential between these two groups of interest in the general primary was even greater at .046. The results of these models indicate that voters without a valid driver's license or state identification card are more likely to vote in the Democratic primaries, lending support to the contention that a photo ID requirement would more likely impact Democratic partisans.

<Figure 3 about here>

Discussion and Conclusion

Several of the suppositions concerning the effect of requiring a driver's license or other government-issued photo identification card as a prerequisite to voting are supported by this research. Registered voters are significantly less likely to possess a driver's license if they are from minority groups, especially blacks and Hispanics, and if they are older. This finding provides some degree of corroboration for plaintiffs who have challenged Georgia's photo ID laws claiming these requirements would not affect voters of different ages and races equally. When affluence is measured in terms of the per capita income of a zip code area, no evidence is found to support the supposition that requiring a photo ID such as a driver's license would discriminate against the poor. The idea that rural residents might be less likely to have access to driver's licenses because many rural counties do not have a state highway patrol post where one can obtain a license also found little support in this research. While suburbanites were

significantly more likely to have driver's licenses than were rural residents, rural residents were no worse off than urban dwellers in these terms.

Georgia's voter ID legislation drew opposition from leading Democrats and the litigation in this matter has been filed by groups associated with liberal causes. The evidence suggests that it is indeed Democrats who are less likely to be in possession of a valid driver's license.

Unlicensed voters were more likely to be Democratic, as opposed to Republican, primary voters in 2004. Plaintiffs in the lawsuits challenging Georgia's photo id requirement have also contended that the statute would lead to lower voter turnout, with those without a valid driver's license significantly less likely to participate than licensed drivers. Our research revealed a sizable turnout differential between Georgia registrants with and without driver's licenses, even after controlling for a number of factors. This finding suggests that those registrants who lack driver's licenses are generally less engaged politically and may be even less apt to participate if more restrictive identification restrictions are put in place.

While our findings generally support the claims of those who fear that requiring a government-issued photo ID as a prerequisite to voting would deter participation, our research is not conclusive. We have no information on the extent to which those who may lack driver's licenses might have other acceptable forms of identification such as student ID card from a public institution of higher education or a passport. It is almost certain that the numbers of individuals who would be affected by the legislation are smaller than the figures for registrants without a valid driver's license or state identification card. Again, we know many of these registrants are not as likely to vote even with less restrictive identification requirements in place. It is possible then that tightening identification requirements might affect only a fraction of

Georgia registrants, namely those who regularly participate on election-day but lack some form of sanctioned photo identification.

Finally, it should be noted that concerns over voter disenfranchisement must be viewed in the same context with efforts to reduce voter fraud. While social scientists are beginning to provide some degree of insight concerning the effects of voter identification laws, little systematic research has been performed to determine the extent to which voter fraud may exist and what types of voter fraud may be more prevalent than others. For example, in the Georgia case any registrant can request an absentee ballot by mail without providing photo identification. If research finds evidence of voter fraud and such fraud is primarily confined to the area of absentee voting by mail, the ability of voter identification requirements to curb this type of fraud would rightly be called into question. Future research efforts in this area then must also concentrate on the issue of voter fraud, as any policy evaluation of voter identification requirements must also weigh the ability of these statutes to offset or counteract fraud.

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Table 1. Logistic Regression Model Predicting Georgia Registrants without Driver's License

Variable	Coefficient
Black	.6405*** (.0286)
Hispanic	.7179*** (.0418)
Asian	.1131*** (.0417)
Other Race/Ethnicity	.2852*** (.0242)
Gender	.0938*** (.0121)
Age	.0121*** (.0013)
Per Capita Income	-.0000018 (.0000025)
Suburban	-.3211*** (.0420)
Urban	.0938 (.0677)
Constant	-3.4354*** (.1091)
<i>N</i>	4,750,308

Notes: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses.

DV: 1=No ID; 0=ID

* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001

Table 2. Logistic Regression Models Predicting Voter Turnout in Georgia, 2004

Variable	Presidential Preference Primary	General Primary	General Election
No Driver's License	-1.276*** (.0139)	-1.3229*** (.0160)	-1.6585*** (.0264)
Black	.4666*** (.0342)	.0028 (.0286)	-.2170*** (.0264)
Hispanic	-.6785*** (.0406)	-1.0867*** (.0457)	-.5754*** (.0306)
Asian	-.8522*** (.0394)	-.9987*** (.0306)	-.4984*** (.0330)
Other Race/Ethnicity	-.4707*** (.0251)	-.8665*** (.0238)	-.8256*** (.0212)
Gender	.0340*** (.0085)	.0189** (.0072)	-.2316*** (.0075)
Age	.0370*** (.0004)	.0343*** (.0003)	.0256*** (.0004)
Per Capita Income	-.0000057 (.000017)	-.0000029 (.0000016)	.000011*** (.0000017)
Suburban	.1244** (.0340)	-.3329*** (.0457)	.2102*** (.0298)
Urban	.3581*** (.0461)	-.09948* (.0465)	.1042*** (.0307)
Constant	-3.5032*** (.0482)	-2.0537*** (.0487)	-.3387*** (.0436)
<i>N</i>	3,576,437	3,774,407	4,056,103

Notes: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses.

DV: 1=Voted; 0=Did Not Vote

* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001

Table 3. Logistic Regression Models Predicting Primary Selection in Georgia, 2004

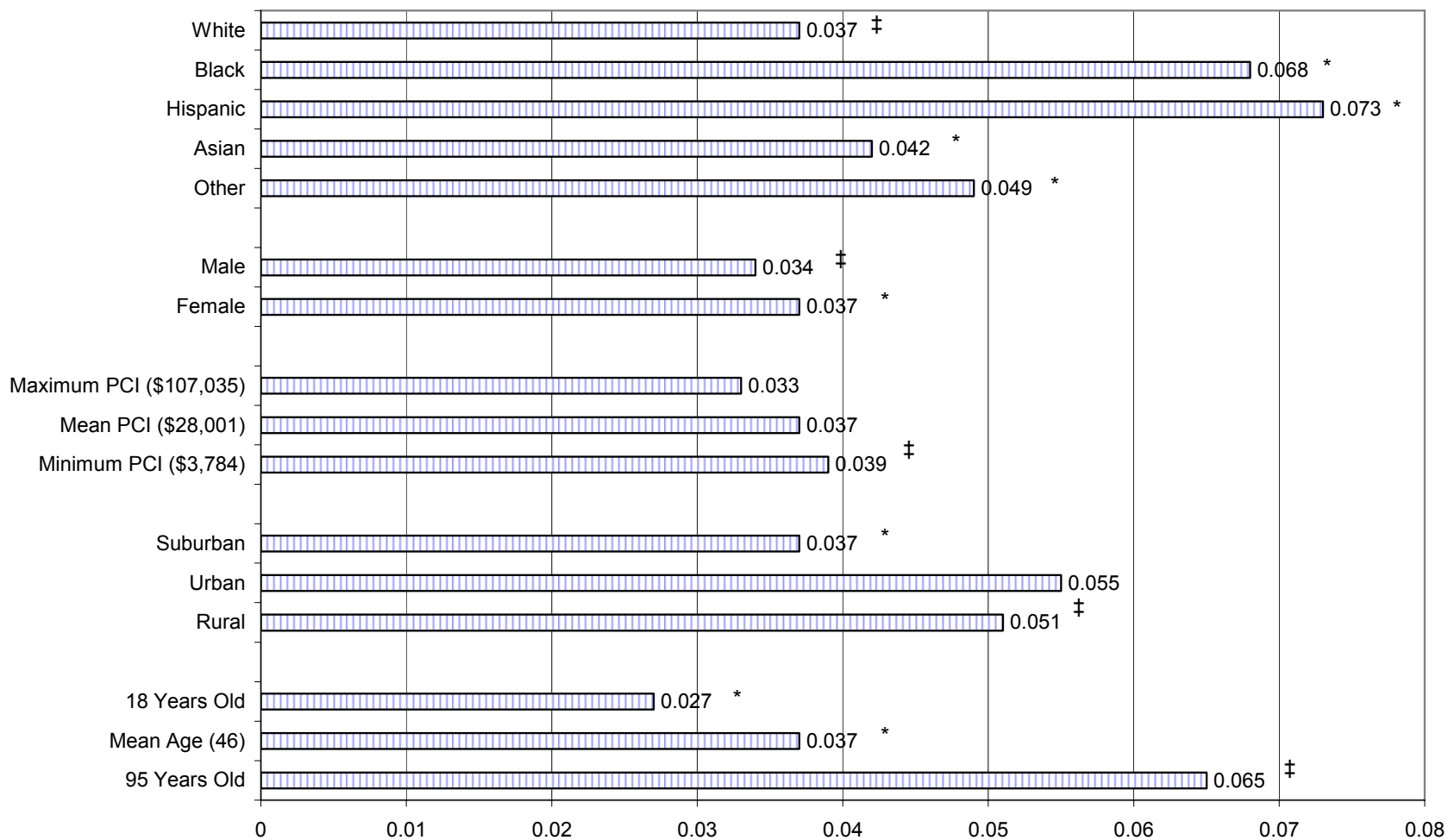
Variable	Presidential Preference Primary	General Primary
No Driver's License	.1346*** (.0238)	.1847*** (.0237)
Black	3.2013*** (.0533)	3.4581*** (.0658)
Hispanic	.6404*** (.0646)	.6777*** (.0716)
Asian	.8120*** (.0760)	.7589*** (.0806)
Other Race/Ethnicity	.9249*** (.0469)	1.0163*** (.0606)
Gender	-.0793*** (.0071)	-.1556*** (.0087)
Age	.0063*** (.0009)	.0049*** (.0008)
Per Capita Income	.0000026 (.0000027)	-.000029*** (.0000061)
Suburban	-.1974** (.0648)	-1.6432*** (.1235)
Urban	.4862*** (.1093)	.3167* (.1606)
Constant	.4061*** (.0800)	.5281*** (.1485)
<i>N</i>	738,639	1,303,327

Notes: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses.

DV: 1=Voted in Democratic Primary; 0=Voted in Republican Primary

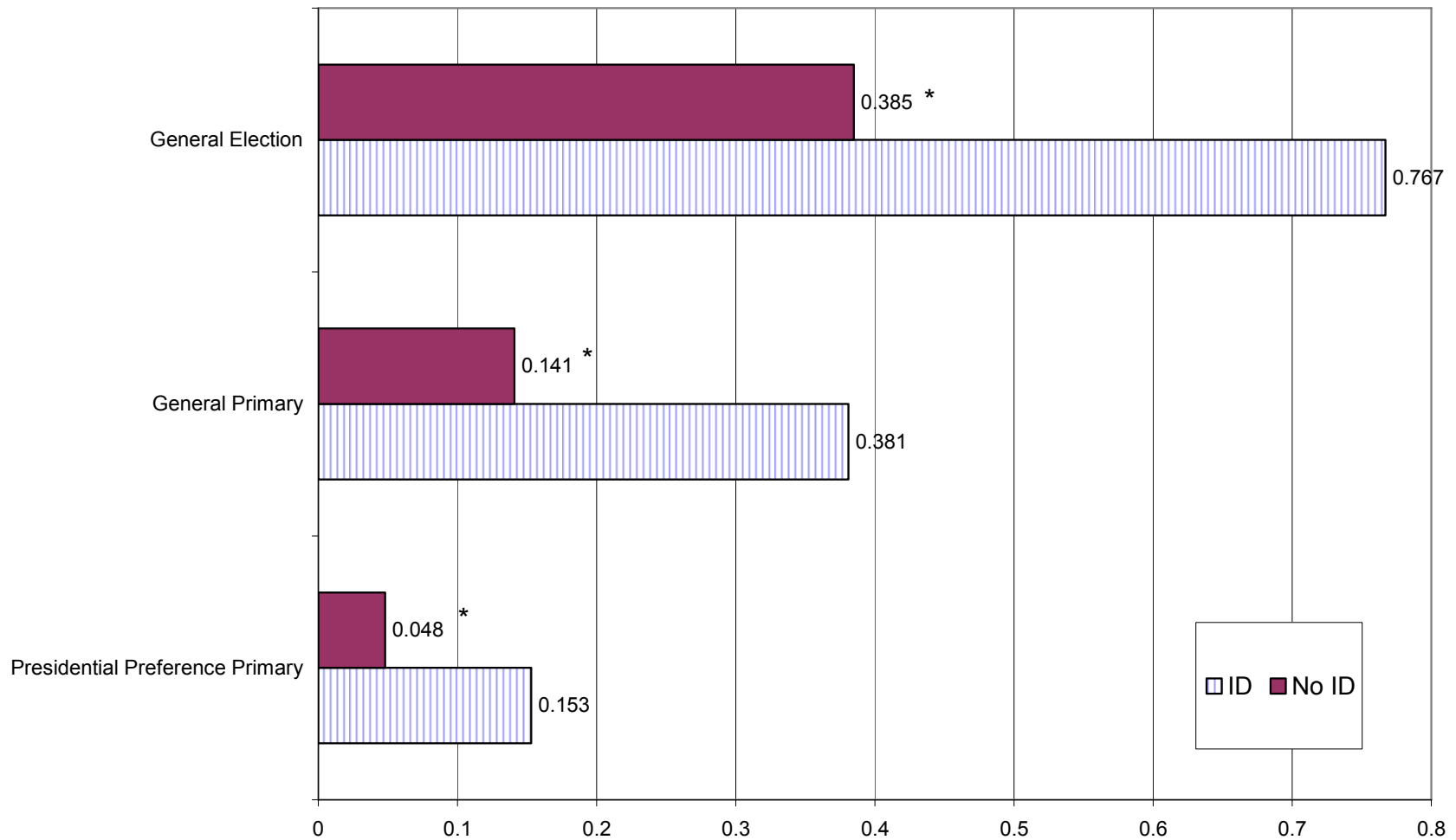
* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001

Figure 1. Probability of Georgia Registrant not Possessing Driver's License



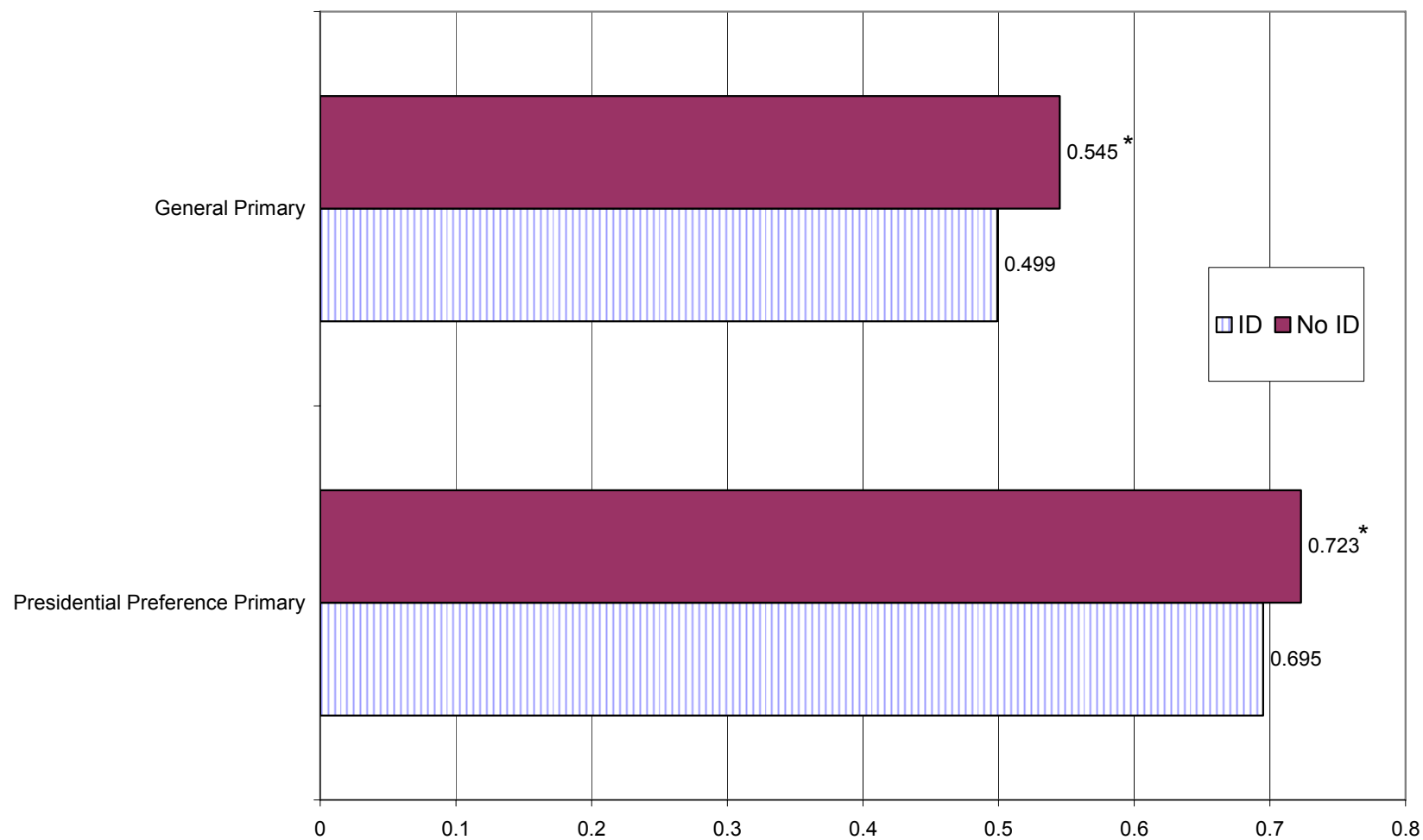
* = Difference in Probability Significant at $p < .05$; ‡ = Comparison Category

Figure 2. Probability of Voting among Georgia Registrants, 2004



* = Difference in Probability Significant at $p < .05$

Figure 3. Probability of Choosing a Democratic Ballot in Georgia Primary Elections, 2004



* = Difference in Probability Significant at $p < .05$