

**THE PORTUGUESE AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP PROJECT**  
A NON-PARTISAN INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE CITIZENSHIP AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT



**ST. JOHN PARISH  
NEW BEDFORD, MA**

**EVALUATION  
OF  
THE 2006 ELECTIONS**

**August 1, 2007**

SUPPORTED BY THE  
LUSO-AMERICAN  
FOUNDATION

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## KEY STATISTICS

- **Number of Parishioners in New Bedford: 2,310**
- **Heads of Household registered to vote New Bedford: 1,141**
- **All Household Members registered to vote in New Bedford: 1,002**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout\* in September 2006 – 48% (citywide turnout 29%)**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout in November 2006 – 61% (citywide turnout 46%)**

## SUMMARY OF WORK

St. John has been an active participant in the Portuguese American Citizenship Project since 2002.

For the September 2006 Primary Elections and the November 2006 General Elections, postcards in Portuguese and English were sent to all registered parish voters reminding them of the date, polling hours, and location of the assigned polling station for each election.

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\* Voter turnout is the number of citizens voting in an election divided by the total number of citizens registered to vote. Voter turnout statistics are based on New Bedford residents only.

## RESULTS

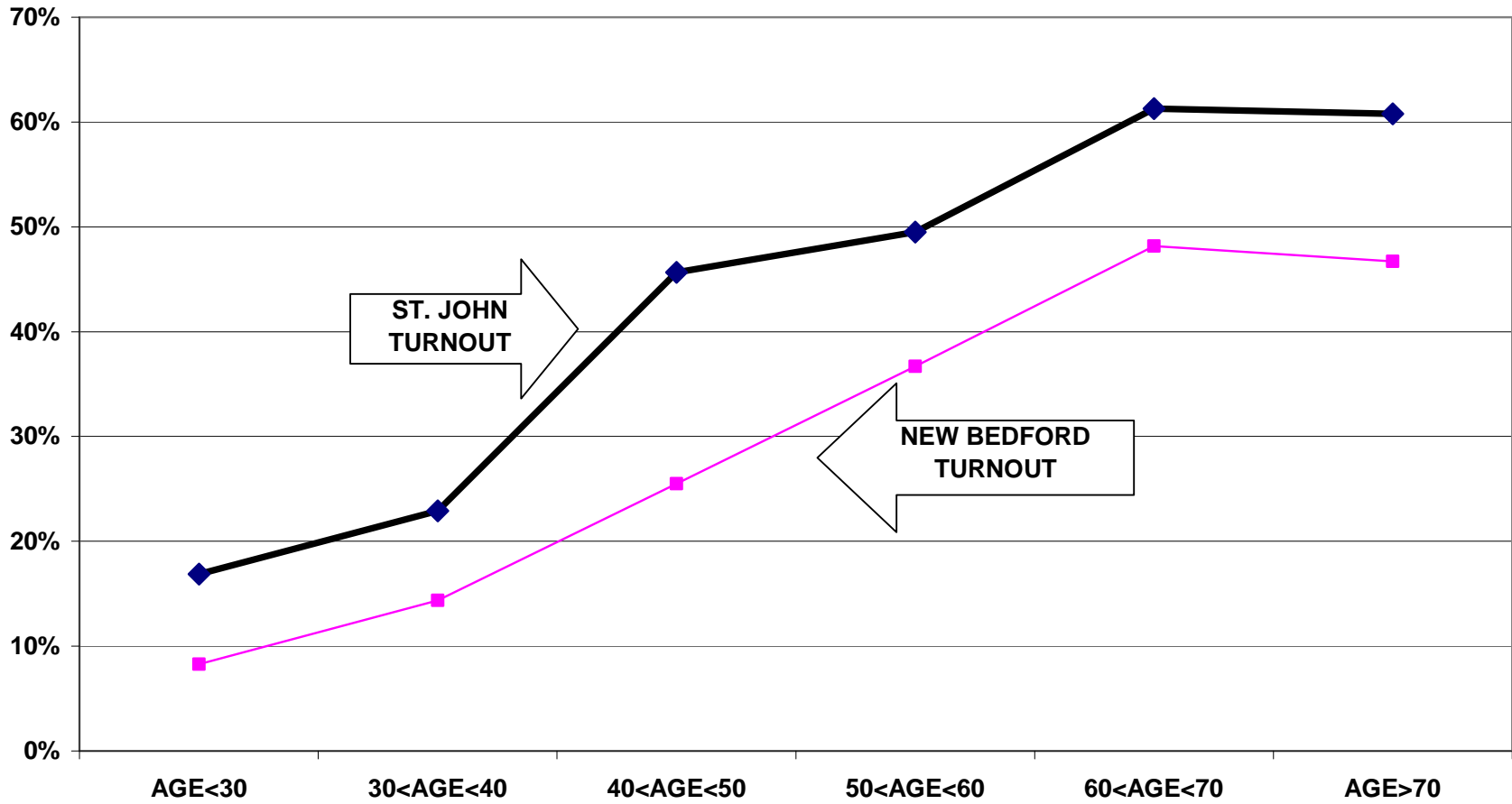
St. John voter turnout for the Fall 2006 elections was consistently higher than citywide turnout. Heads of household turnout for the September 2006 Primary Elections was 48%, as compared to the city turnout of 29%. St. John heads of household turnout for the November 2006 General Elections was 61%, as compared to the city turnout of 46%.

Voter turnout is not uniform across age groups. Voters under 30 years of age and even those between 30 and 40 years old had lower turnout rates than the older voters. This is true for the registered voters in the parish and true for the registered voters in the community at large.

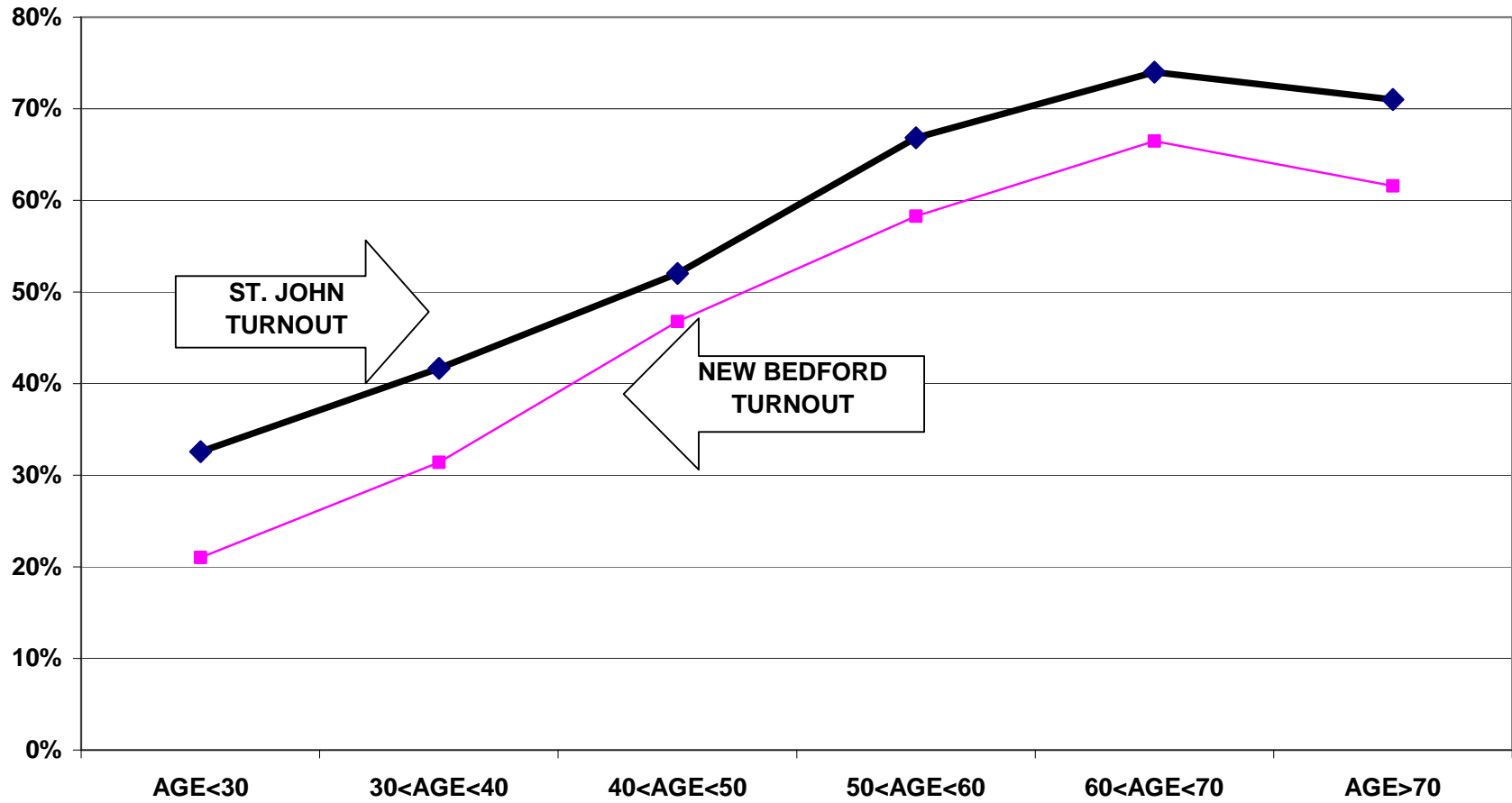
For example, voters under 30 years old had a 17% turnout rate in the September 2006 elections, while voters between 60 and 70 years old had a 61% turnout rate. For the November 2006 elections, the under 30 year old parishioners had a 33% turnout rate compared to a 74% turnout rate for voters between 60 and 70 years old.

The following graphs for the September and November 2006 elections illustrate the relationship between turnout rates and age. These graphs refer to all family members associated with the parish, not just heads of household.

### TURNOUT BY AGE SEPTEMBER 2006 ST. JOHN ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



### TURNOUT BY AGE NOVEMBER 2006 ST. JOHN ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The parish should examine measures to increase voter turnout in the under 30 year old and 30 to 40 year old categories. While low voter turnout rates for those under 40 years old is not a problem unique to St. John, it is important to discuss ways the parish can address this issue so as to increase their efforts towards faithful citizenship.
- In order to encourage increased voter registrations and revive group commitment to strong voter turnout, St John's should consider reviving its Faithful Citizenship ministry by sending letters to every parish family reminding them of the parish's commitment to civic involvement and encouraging voter registration for members who are citizens but have not yet registered.

# APPENDIX

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- Registered Voters vs. Actual Voters September 2006 Bar Graph 13
- Registered Voters vs. Actual Voters November 2006 Bar Graph 14

**HISTORICAL DATA: ST. JOHN PARISH  
REGISTRATION - VOTING**

**MEMBERS RESIDING IN NEW BEDFORD 2,310**

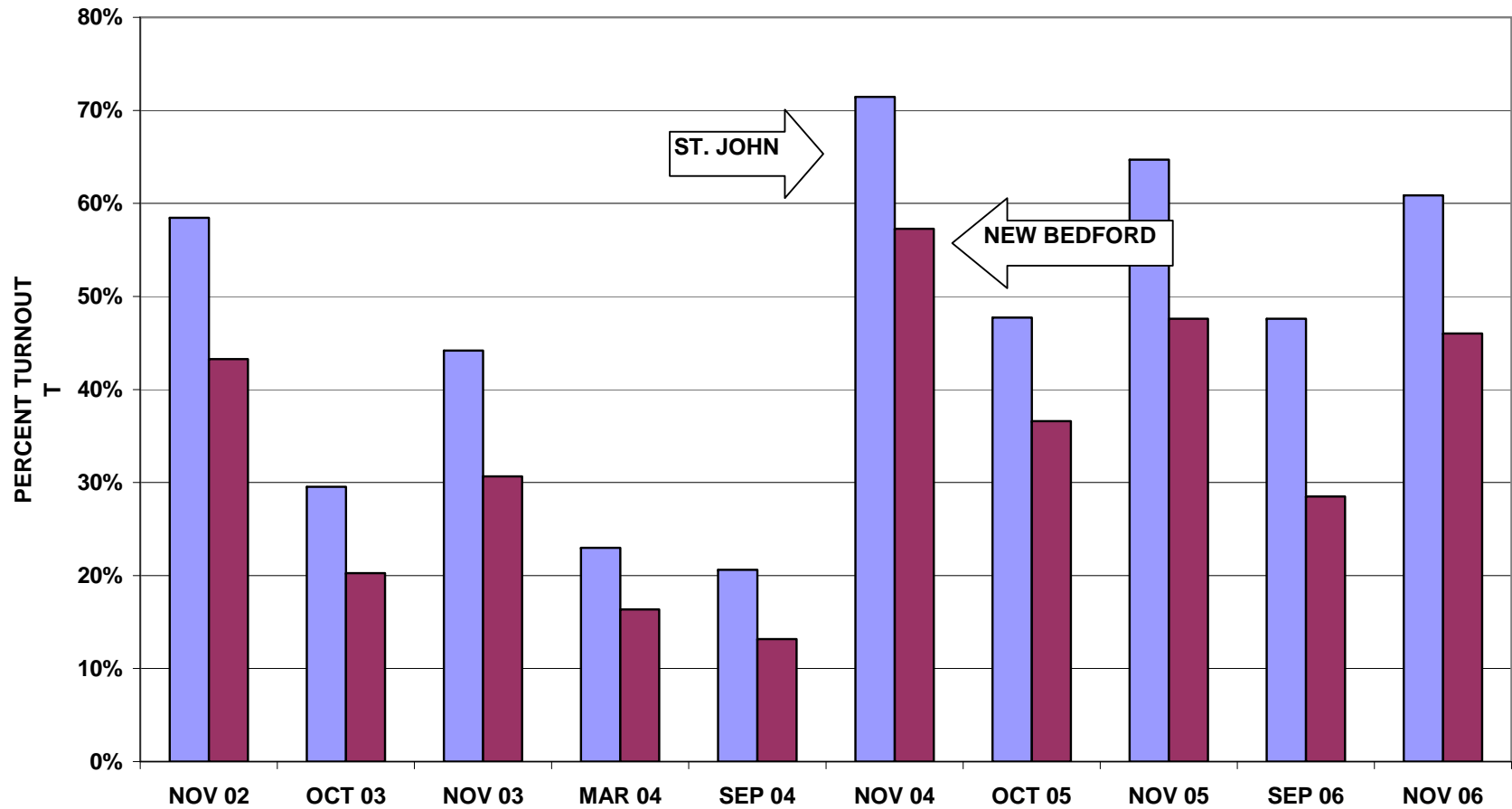
**MEMBERS REGISTERED TO VOTE IN NEW BEDFORD 1,002 HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD**

**1,141 ALL FAMILY MEMBERS**

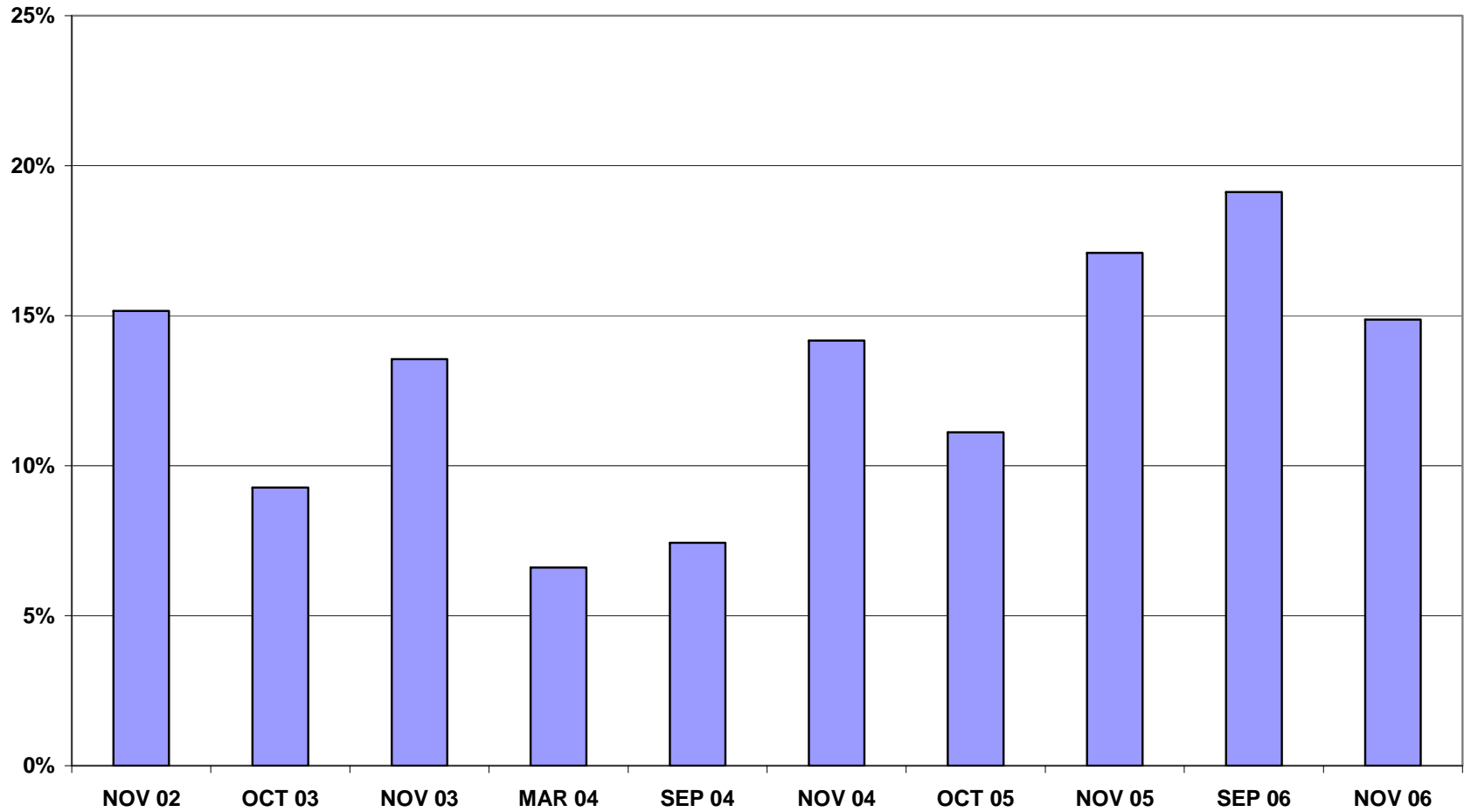
**VOTING PERFORMANCE OF NEW BEDFORD RESIDENTS**

	<b>HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD</b>	<b>AS PERCENT OF ALL REGISTERED MEMBERS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE</b>	<b>CITYWIDE VOTING HISTORY AS PERCENT OF ALL REGISTERED VOTERS</b>
		<b>COMPARABLE STATISTICS</b>	
<b>VOTERS NOV 2002</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>58.4%</b>	<b>43.3%</b>
<b>VOTERS OCT 2003</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>29.5%</b>	<b>20.2%</b>
<b>VOTERS NOV 2003</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>44.1%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>
<b>VOTERS MAR 2004</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	<b>16.4%</b>
<b>VOTERS SEP 2004</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>
<b>VOTERS NOV 2004</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>71.4%</b>	<b>57.3%</b>
<b>VOTERS OCT 2005</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>47.7%</b>	<b>36.7%</b>
<b>VOTERS NOV 2005</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>64.7%</b>	<b>47.6%</b>
<b>VOTERS SEP 2006</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>47.6%</b>	<b>28.5%</b>
<b>VOTERS NOV 2006</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>46.0%</b>

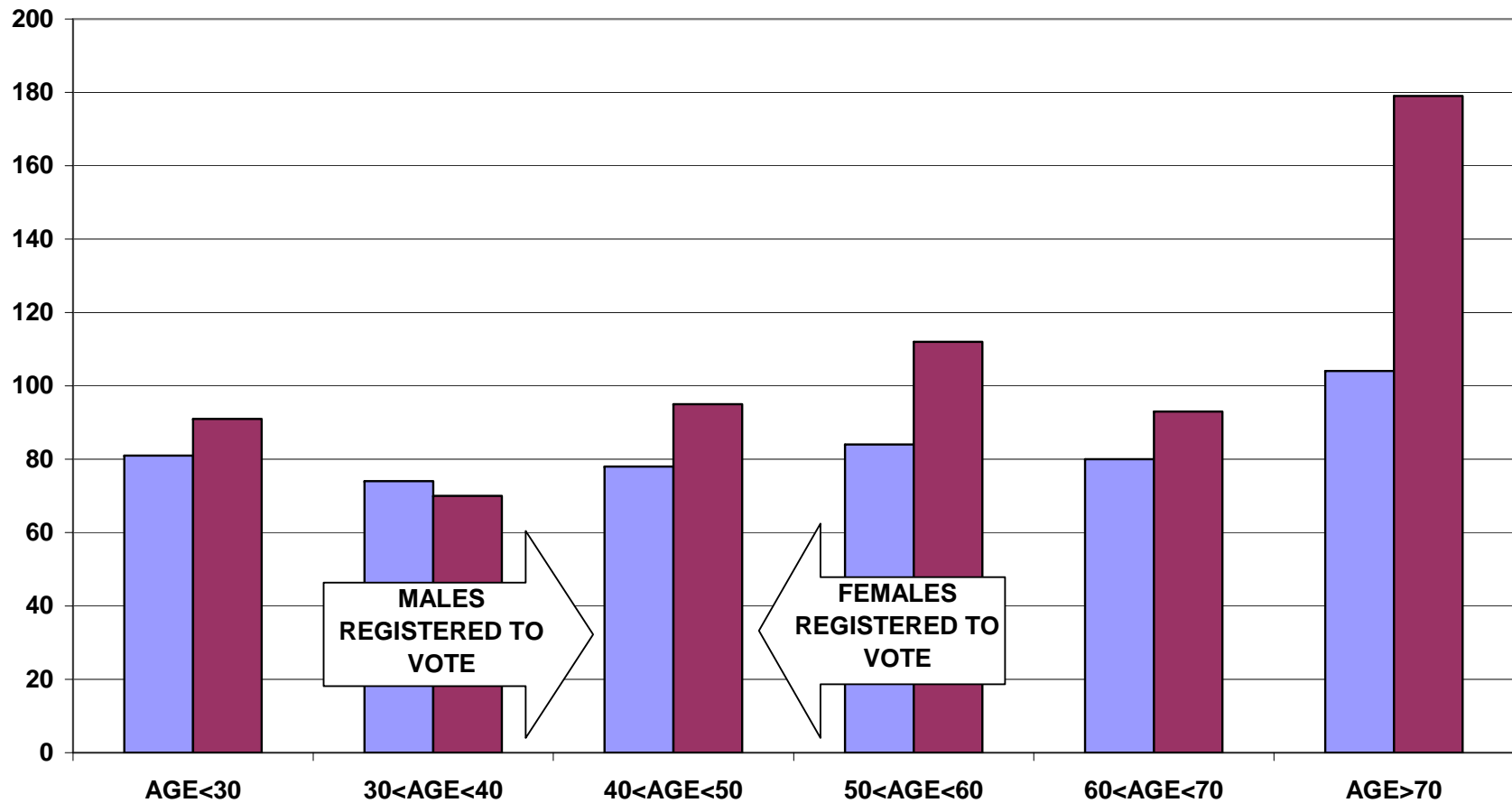
### REGISTERED VOTER TURNOUT COMPARISON BETWEEN NEW BEDFORD AND ST. JOHN HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD



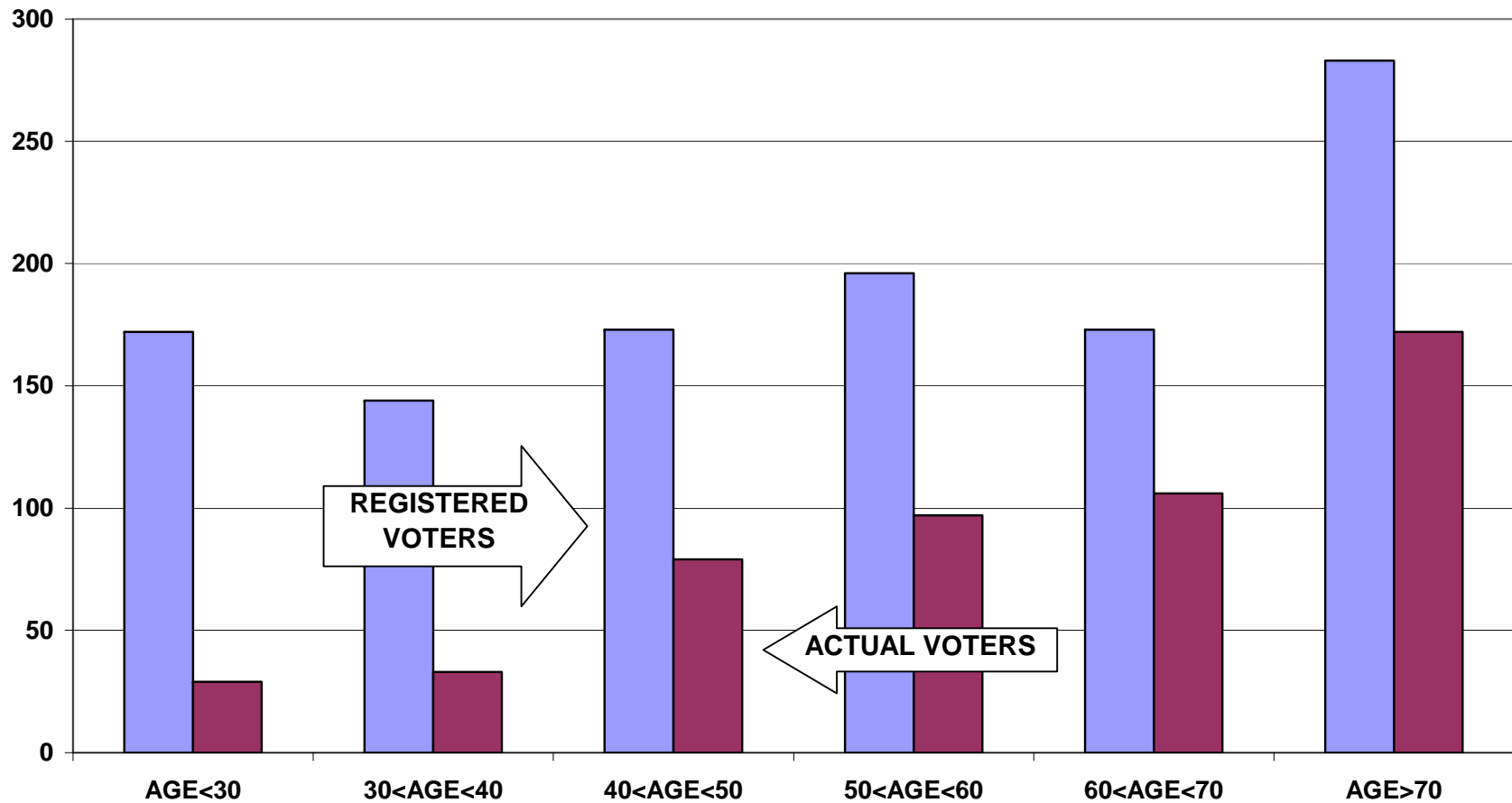
### DIFFERENCE IN VOTER TURNOUT BETWEEN ST. JOHN VOTERS AND NEW BEDFORD VOTERS HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD



**VOTER REGISTRATION BY AGE AND GENDER  
ST. JOHN  
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**



**REGISTERED VOTERS VERSUS ACTUAL VOTERS SEPTEMBER 2006  
ST. JOHN  
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**



**REGISTERED VOTERS VERSUS ACTUAL VOTERS NOVEMBER 2006  
ST. JOHN  
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

