

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



**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH
EAST PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND**

**EVALUATION
OF
THE 2006 ELECTIONS**

July 23, 2007

SUPPORTED BY THE
LUSO-AMERICAN
FOUNDATION

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KEY STATISTICS

- **Number of Members in Rhode Island: 3,855**
- **Heads of Household registered to vote in Rhode Island: 1,732 (45% of all members)**
- **All Household Members registered to vote in Rhode Island: 2,370**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout* in September 2006 – 31% (statewide turnout 23%)**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout in November 2006 – 70% (statewide turnout 57%)**

SUMMARY OF WORK

St. Francis Xavier has been an active participant in the Portuguese American Citizenship Project since late 2002.

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

* Voter turnout is the number of citizens voting in an election divided by the total number of citizens registered to vote. Voter turnout for each election is based on Rhode Island residents only.

RESULTS

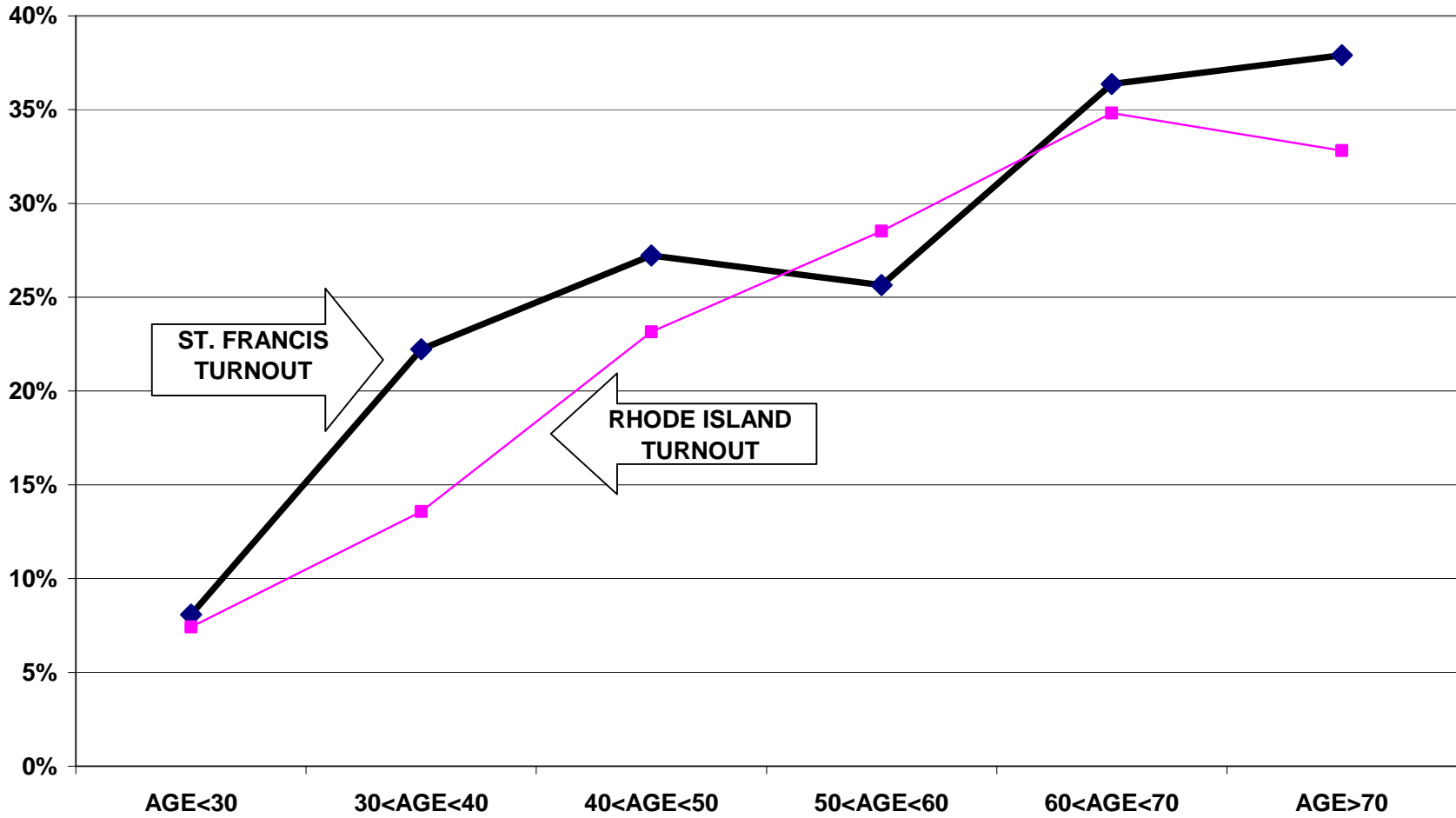
St. Francis Xavier's heads of household voter turnout was higher than the statewide turnout in the September 2006 Primary Election and the November 2006 General Election. Heads of household turnout for the September 2006 Primary Elections was 31%, as compared to the state turnout of 23%. St. Francis Xavier's heads of household turnout for the November 2006 General Election was 70%, as compared to the state turnout of 57%.

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 among all registered voters associated with the parish and among registered voters in the community at large.

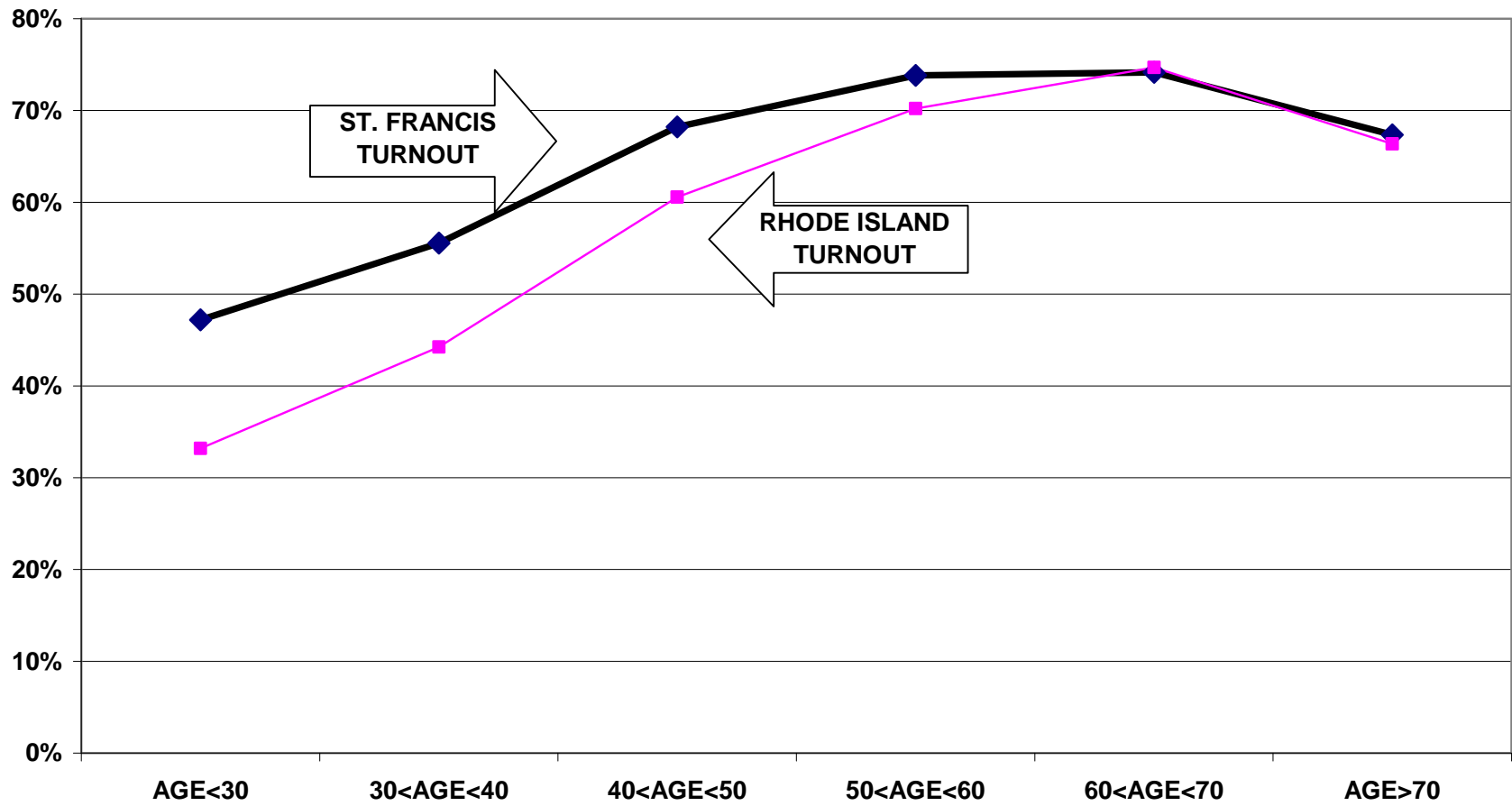
For example, registered voters that are associated with St. Francis Xavier under 30 years old had an 8% turnout rate in the September 2006 elections, while those between 60 and 70 years old had a 36% turnout rate. For the November 2006 elections, the under 30 year-old associated voters had a 47% turnout rate, compared to a 74% turnout rate among parishioners 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. FRANCIS XAVIER ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



TURNOUT BY AGE NOVEMBER 2006 ST. FRANCIS XAVIER ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



RECOMMENDATIONS

- St. Francis Xavier should examine ways to increase overall voter turnout rate. While the parish has generally had higher voter turnout than the state overall, the difference between St. Francis Xavier's turnout and the Rhode Island turnout had decreased. Voters in the older categories consistently outvote the younger voter categories. This issue should be addressed so as to increase voting turnout for the younger age groups.
- The parish leadership should also examine what measures it adopted in September 2002 to promote voter turnout – the parish more than twice the state turnout or 46 percent versus 19 percent. Admittedly, the candidacy of a Portuguese American for governor gave members incentive to vote, but the leadership of the parish, like many others in the state, took extraordinary steps to get their members to the polls. Elements of this effort should be examined as to their relevance to current campaigns.
- In order to encourage increased voter registrations and revive group commitment to strong voter turnout, the parish should consider reviving its work in the Faithful Citizenship ministry. This can include but not limited to 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.

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**HISTORICAL DATA: ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH
REGISTRATION - VOTING**

MEMBERS	3,855	
MEMBERS REGISTERED TO VOTE IN STATE OF RHODE ISLAND	1,732	HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD
	2,370	ALL FAMILY MEMBERS

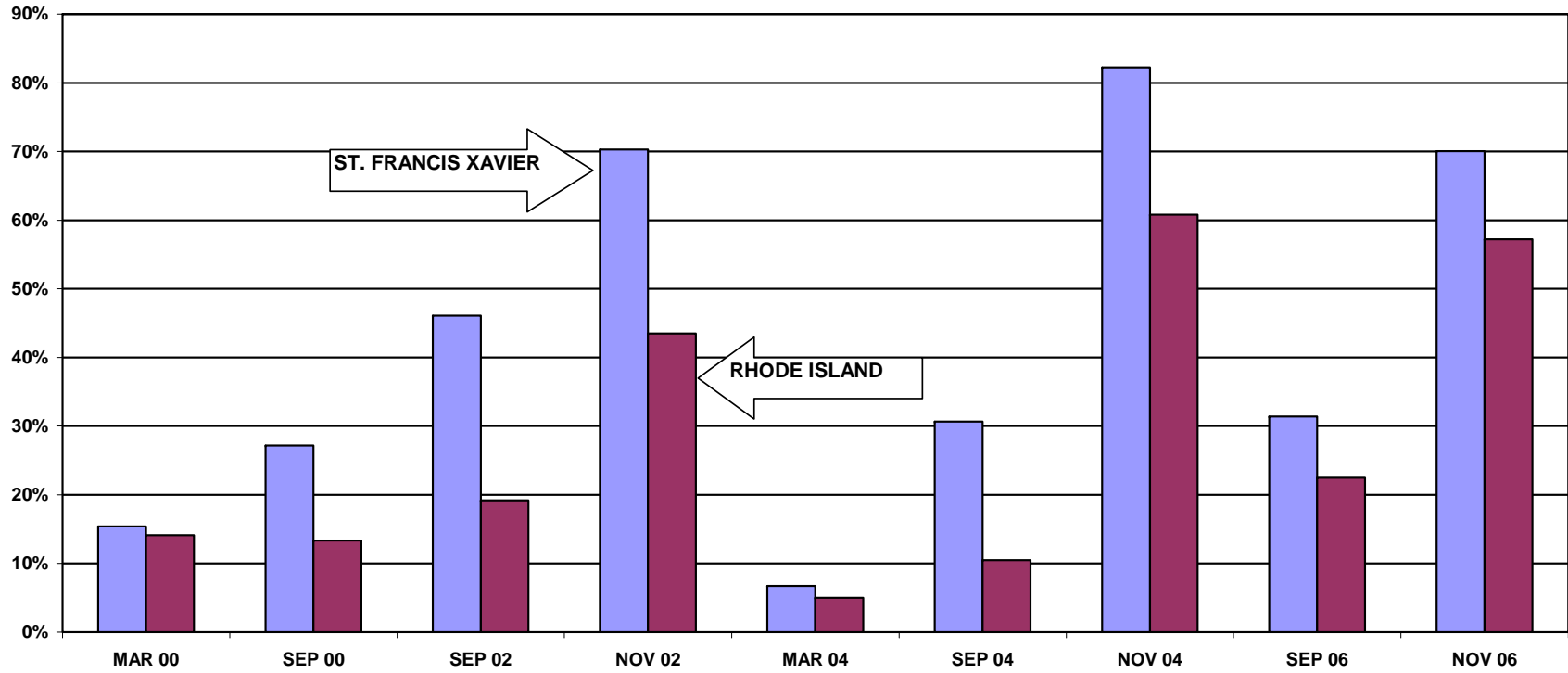
VOTING PERFORMANCE OF RHODE ISLAND RESIDENTS

	HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD	AS PERCENT OF ALL REGISTERED MEMBERS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE	STATE WIDE VOTING HISTORY AS PERCENT OF ALL REGISTERED VOTERS)
VOTERS SEP 2002	652	46.1%	19.2%
VOTERS NOV 2002	1005	70.3%	43.5%
VOTERS MAR 2004	98	6.7%	5.0%
VOTERS SEP 2004	458	30.7%	10.5%
VOTERS NOV 2004	1248	82.3%	60.8%
VOTERS SEP 2006	544	31.4%	22.5%
VOTERS NOV 2006	1213	70.0%	57.2%

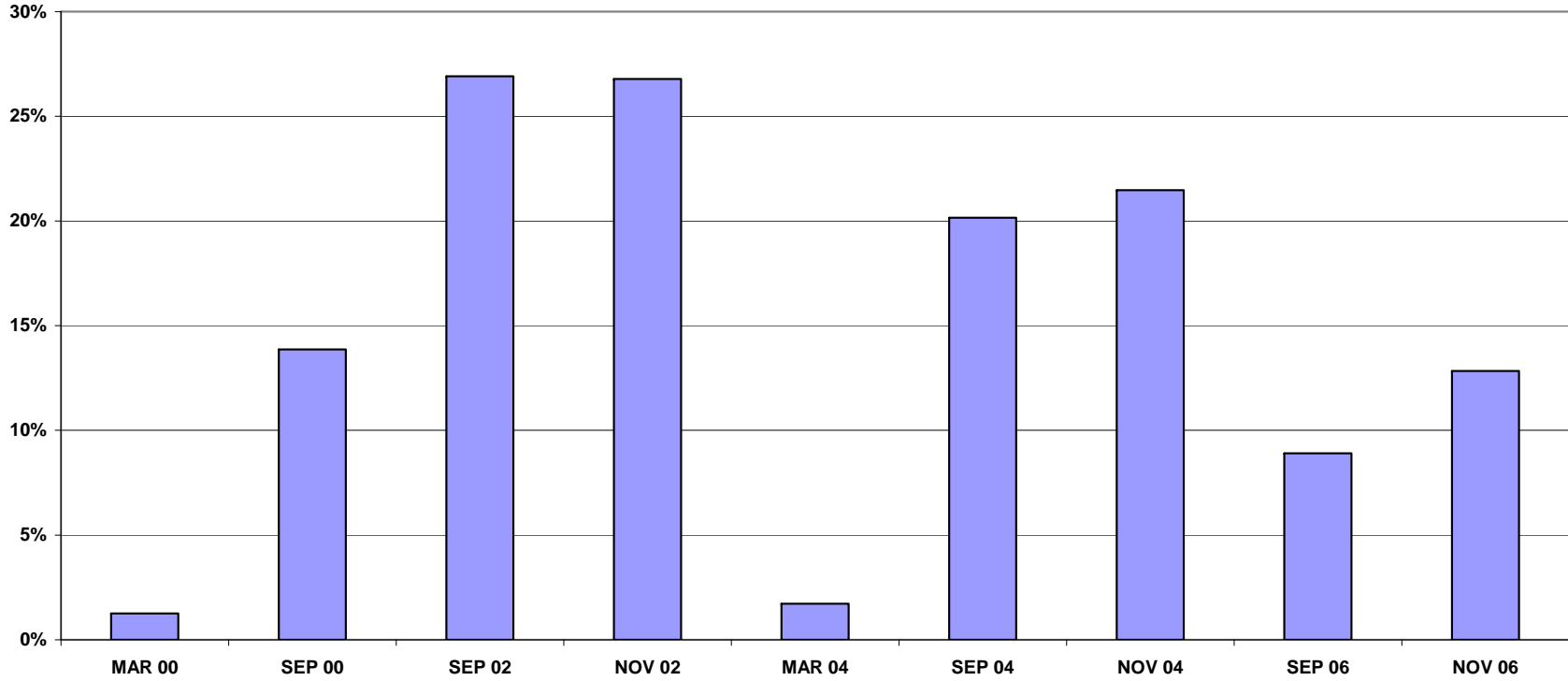
COMPARABLE STATISTICS		
	46.1%	19.2%
	70.3%	43.5%
	6.7%	5.0%
	30.7%	10.5%
	82.3%	60.8%
	31.4%	22.5%
	70.0%	57.2%

Note: Voting statistics for all elections are based only on voters registered as of May 2007. These statistics cannot be compared to official voter turnout reports which are based on an earlier registered voter population.

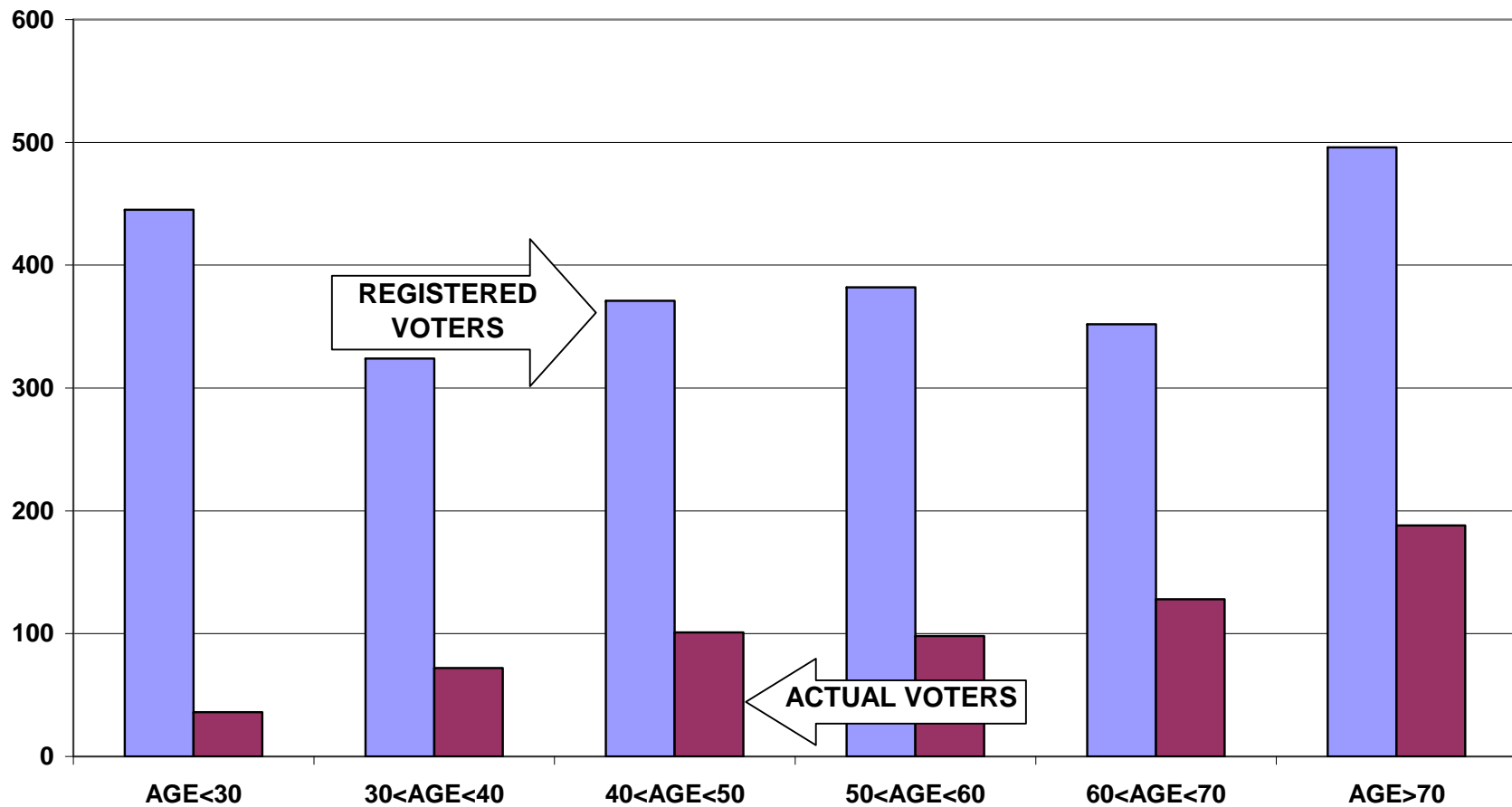
REGISTERED VOTER TURNOUT COMPARISON BETWEEN RHODE ISLAND AND ST. FRANCIS XAVIER HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD



**DIFFERENCE IN VOTER TURNOUT BETWEEN
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER VOTERS AND RHODE ISLAND VOTERS
HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD**



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



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

