

Supporting Information for:

**Can Raising the Stakes of Election Outcomes Increase Participation?
Results from a Large-Scale Field Experiment in Local Elections**

This Supporting Information contains the following material:

Samples of all Treatment Letters

Table S1. Effect of Mail Treatment about Election Stakes on Turnout, Models Estimated without Strata Fixed Effects

Table S2. Effect of Mail Treatment about Election Stakes on Turnout, Excluding those Missing in Post-Election Voter File

Table S3. Effect of Mail Treatment about Local Budget on Turnout by Town-Level Spending Levels



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Your voice starts with your vote: In Connecticut, local elected officials make many important decisions that affect your life. One of the most important things they do is decide what to spend money on. **In 2012, your city/town's budget was \$XXXX per resident.** By voting, you make sure local elected officials are thinking about you when they decide how to spend your money. Make sure your voice is heard!

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Your voice starts with your vote: In Connecticut, local elected officials make many important decisions that affect your life. One of the most important things they do is decide what to spend money on. **In 2012, the average city/town budget in Connecticut was \$3,354 per resident.** By voting, you make sure local elected officials are thinking about you when they decide how to spend your money. Make sure your voice is heard!

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Your voice starts with your vote: In Connecticut, local elected officials make many important decisions that affect your life. One of the most important things they do is decide what to spend money on. **In 2012, your city/town's budget was \$XXXX per resident, which is ZZ% [higher/lower] than the \$3,354 average in all Connecticut cities/towns.** By voting, you make sure local elected officials are thinking about you when they decide how to spend your money. Make sure your voice is heard!

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Your voice starts with your vote: In Connecticut, local elected officials make many important decisions that affect your life. One of the most important things they do is set the property tax rate, which affects the taxes that people who own real estate pay each year. This tax rate is called the mill rate. Each mill is the number of dollars that a person has to pay for each \$1,000 in assessed value for their property (by state law, property is assessed at 70% of its fair market value). Here is some information about local property taxes:

- **Local taxes fund more than 72% of local spending in Connecticut.**
- **In 2012, your city/town's mill rate was XX.XX.**

By voting, you make sure local elected officials are thinking about you when they are setting your tax rates. Make sure your voice is heard!

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Your voice starts with your vote: In Connecticut, local elected officials make many important decisions that affect your life. One of the most important things they do is set the property tax rate, which affects the taxes that people who own real estate pay each year. This tax rate is called the mill rate. Each mill is the number of dollars that a person has to pay for each \$1,000 in assessed value for their property (by state law, property is assessed at 70% of its fair market value). Here is some information about local property taxes:

- **Local taxes fund more than 72% of local spending in Connecticut.**
- **In 2012, the average city/town's mill rate in Connecticut was 23.90.**
- **In 2012, your city/town's mill rate was XX.XX.**

By voting, you make sure local elected officials are thinking about you when they are setting your tax rates. Make sure your voice is heard!

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Your voice starts with your vote: In Connecticut, local elected officials make many important decisions that affect your life. One of the most important things they do is set the property tax rate, which affects the taxes that people who own real estate pay each year. This tax rate is called the mill rate. Each mill is the number of dollars that a person has to pay for each \$1,000 in assessed value for their property (by state law, property is assessed at 70% of its fair market value). Here is some information about local property taxes:

- **Local taxes fund more than 72% of local spending in Connecticut.**
- **In 2012, the average person in Connecticut had a mill rate of 28.18.**
- **In 2012, your city/town's mill rate was XX.XX.**

By voting, you make sure local elected officials are thinking about you when they are setting your tax rates. Make sure your voice is heard!

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Your voice starts with your vote: In Connecticut, local elected officials make many important decisions that affect your life. One of the most important things they do is set the property tax rate, which affects the taxes that people who own real estate pay each year. This tax rate is called the mill rate. Each mill is the number of dollars that a person has to pay for each \$1,000 in assessed value for their property (by state law, property is assessed at 70% of its fair market value). Here is some information about local property taxes:

- **Local taxes fund more than 72% of local spending in Connecticut.**
- **In 2012, the average city/town's mill rate in Connecticut was 23.90.**

By voting, you make sure local elected officials are thinking about you when they are setting your tax rates. Make sure your voice is heard!

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team



October 2013

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, CT ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME LAST NAME,

This letter is to remind you that a Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM on Election Day. Connecticut records show that as of September 15th, 2013 you were registered to vote.

Voting is a right and responsibility. Whichever candidate or party you prefer, we want to remind you to exercise your right to vote this November. The right to vote is an important American tradition. The whole point of democracy is that citizens are active participants in government and democracy functions best when everyone takes part in the voting process. This November, remember your rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Your voice starts with your vote: In Connecticut, local elected officials make many important decisions that affect your life. One of the most important things they do is set the property tax rate, which affects the taxes that people who own real estate pay each year. This tax rate is called the mill rate. Each mill is the number of dollars that a person has to pay for each \$1,000 in assessed value for their property (by state law, property is assessed at 70% of its fair market value). Here is some information about local property taxes:

- **Local taxes fund more than 72% of local spending in Connecticut.**
- **In 2012, the average person in Connecticut had a mill rate of 28.18.**

By voting, you make sure local elected officials are thinking about you when they are setting your tax rates. Make sure your voice is heard!

If you have any questions about the voting process, please visit the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sots.ct.gov>) or call your local Registrar of Voters.

Sincerely,

The Connecticut Votes Team

Table S1. Effect of Mail Treatment about Election Stakes on Turnout, Models Estimated without Strata Fixed Effects

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Voted in 2013 November Municipal Election (1=yes, 0=no)		
GOTV Treatment	0.014 [0.008]*	0.013 [0.008]*	0.012 [0.007]*
Budget Own Spending Treatment	0.022 [0.015]	0.025 [0.014]*	0.026 [0.013]**
Budget Average Spending Treatment	0.032 [0.015]**	0.030 [0.014]**	0.029 [0.013]**
Budget Comparative Spending	0.001 [0.014]	-0.001 [0.014]	0.002 [0.013]
Taxes Own Mill Rate Treatment	-0.012 [0.018]	-0.015 [0.017]	-0.015 [0.016]
Taxes Low State Average Treatment	0.004 [0.019]	0.002 [0.018]	-0.001 [0.017]
Taxes High State Average Treatment	0.036 [0.019]*	0.035 [0.018]*	0.044 [0.016]***
Voter's Taxes Comparatively Higher Treatment	0.043 [0.019]**	0.038 [0.018]**	0.036 [0.017]**
Voter's Taxes Comparatively Lower Treatment	0.015 [0.019]	0.019 [0.018]	0.017 [0.016]
Gender=Female			-0.009 [0.009]
Gender=Unknown			-0.014 [0.021]
Party=Democrat			0.112 [0.010]***
Party=Republican			0.129 [0.013]***
Registration year, missing=1900			-0.008 [0.000]***
Registration year missing			-0.658 [0.052]***
Num. registrants in HH=2			0.080 [0.010]***
Num. registrants in HH=3 or 4			0.013 [0.012]
Num. registrants in HH>=5			0.019 [0.030]
Constant	0.310 [0.000]***	0.397 [0.061]***	17.174 [0.942]***
Observations	948,716	948,716	948,716
R-squared	0.001	0.067	0.156
Total number treated	24581	24581	24581
Control Group Mean of DV	0.314	0.314	0.314
Stratum Fixed Effects	No	No	No
Town Fixed Effects	No	Yes	Yes

Note: Cell entries are OLS coefficient estimates using inverse probability weighting (see text for details) with robust standard errors in brackets. *p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01, two-tailed tests.

Table S2. Effect of Mail Treatment about Election Stakes on Turnout, Excluding those Missing in Post-Election Voter File

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Voted in 2013 November Municipal Election (1=yes, 0=no)		
GOTV Treatment	0.013 [0.007]*	0.013 [0.007]*	0.012 [0.007]*
Budget Own Spending Treatment	0.022 [0.013]*	0.026 [0.013]**	0.027 [0.012]**
Budget Average Spending Treatment	0.032 [0.013]**	0.030 [0.012]**	0.029 [0.012]**
Budget Comparative Spending	0.001 [0.013]	0.000 [0.013]	0.002 [0.013]
Taxes Own Mill Rate Treatment	-0.012 [0.017]	-0.013 [0.016]	-0.014 [0.015]
Taxes Low State Average Treatment	0.004 [0.016]	0.005 [0.015]	0.004 [0.015]
Taxes High State Average Treatment	0.036 [0.016]**	0.036 [0.015]**	0.038 [0.015]**
Voter's Taxes Comparatively Higher Treatment	0.043 [0.017]**	0.040 [0.016]**	0.041 [0.016]**
Voter's Taxes Comparatively Lower Treatment	0.015 [0.017]	0.019 [0.016]	0.018 [0.015]
Gender=Female			-0.007 [0.008]
Gender=Unknown			-0.014 [0.019]
Party=Democrat			0.056 [0.009]**
Party=Republican			0.057 [0.012]**
Registration year, missing=1900			-0.001 [0.001]**
Registration year missing			-0.082 [0.058]
Num. registrants in HH=2			0.056 [0.009]**
Num. registrants in HH=3 or 4			0.024 [0.012]**
Num. registrants in HH>=5			0.035 [0.029]
Constant	0.226 [0.010]**	0.310 [0.057]**	2.982 [1.136]**
Observations	948,185	948,185	948,185
R-squared	0.252	0.297	0.305
Total number treated	24569	24569	24569
Control Group Mean of DV	0.314	0.314	0.314
Stratum Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Town Fixed Effects	No	Yes	Yes

Note: Cell entries are OLS coefficient estimates using inverse probability weighting (see text for details) with robust standard errors in brackets.

*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01, two-tailed tests.

Table S3. Effect of Mail Treatment about Local Budget on Turnout by Town-Level Spending Levels

	(1)
Treatment=GOTV, low town	0.016 [0.011]
Treatment=GOTV, avg town	0.010 [0.012]
Treatment=GOTV, high town	0.013 [0.013]
Treatment=Own Town Budget per capita, low town	0.043 [0.019]
Treatment=Own Town Budget per capita, avg town	0.021 [0.021]
Treatment=Own Town Budget per capita, high town	0.004 [0.025]
Treatment=Average Budget per capita, low town	0.027 [0.018]
Treatment=Average Budget per capita, avg town	0.021 [0.021]
Treatment=Average Budget per capita, high town	0.052 [0.024]
Treatment=Own Town Budget per capita vs. State, low town	0.012 [0.020]
Treatment=Own Town Budget per capita vs. State, avg town	-0.007 [0.021]
Treatment=Own Town Budget per capita vs. State, high town	-0.012 [0.024]
Constant	0.307 [0.066]
Observations	940,890
R-squared	0.289
Total Number Treated	16,755
Mean of DV	0.314
Town Fixed Effects?	Yes

Note: OLS regression estimates with robust Huber/White standard errors in brackets. Dependent variable is whether the individual voted in the 2013 November municipal election (1=yes, 0=no). Strata fixed effects not reported to save space. Data weighted to account for different rates of treatment assignment across treatment and strata.