



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

# Election Line Data Collection Program

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- Presidential Commission on Election Administration (PCEA) recommendation:

*To reduce Election Day lines through election resource management solutions*

- Partnered with the MIT/CalTech Voting Technology Project
- The program began with a small pilot in 2014 and expanded across the nation for the 2016 General Election

- The data collection is **simple** and **straightforward**
- Jurisdictions count the number of people in line at the beginning of each hour and record the number of check-in stations
- After Election Day, jurisdictions provide these precinct-by-precinct data sheets, the total number of voters per precinct, and EPB data (if applicable)

# METHODOLOGY

## Collection Form:

By noting the number of voters yet to complete check-in (both those in the process & those waiting) and the number of check-in positions we can calculate the average wait time

Form 1

Line Length Data Collection Sheet  
[Jurisdiction]  
[Date]

Precinct number/name: Franconia

**Instructions.** Please use this sheet to record the number of people standing in line to check in to vote plus the number checking in at the indicated times, along with the number of poll books available to accept voters to check in.

If there is no one standing in line at the indicated time and/or no one checking in, please enter a zero ("0").

If you are unable to record the line length at a particular time, enter an "X" in the corresponding space.

Time	Number in line†	Number of poll books
When polls open*	22	2
7:00 a.m.	10	2
8:00 a.m.	12	
9:00 a.m.	0	
10:00 a.m.	0	
11:00 a.m.	10	
12:00 noon	8	
1:00 p.m.	2	
2:00 p.m.	0	
3:00 p.m.	4	
4:00 p.m.	6	
5:00 p.m.	18	
6:00 p.m.	45	
7:00 p.m.	30	

†Include the number checking in at that time.

At what time did the last voter check in to vote? 7:10

\*If the polls opened at some time other than 6:00 a.m., indicate that time here: N/A

[Instructions for returning the form]

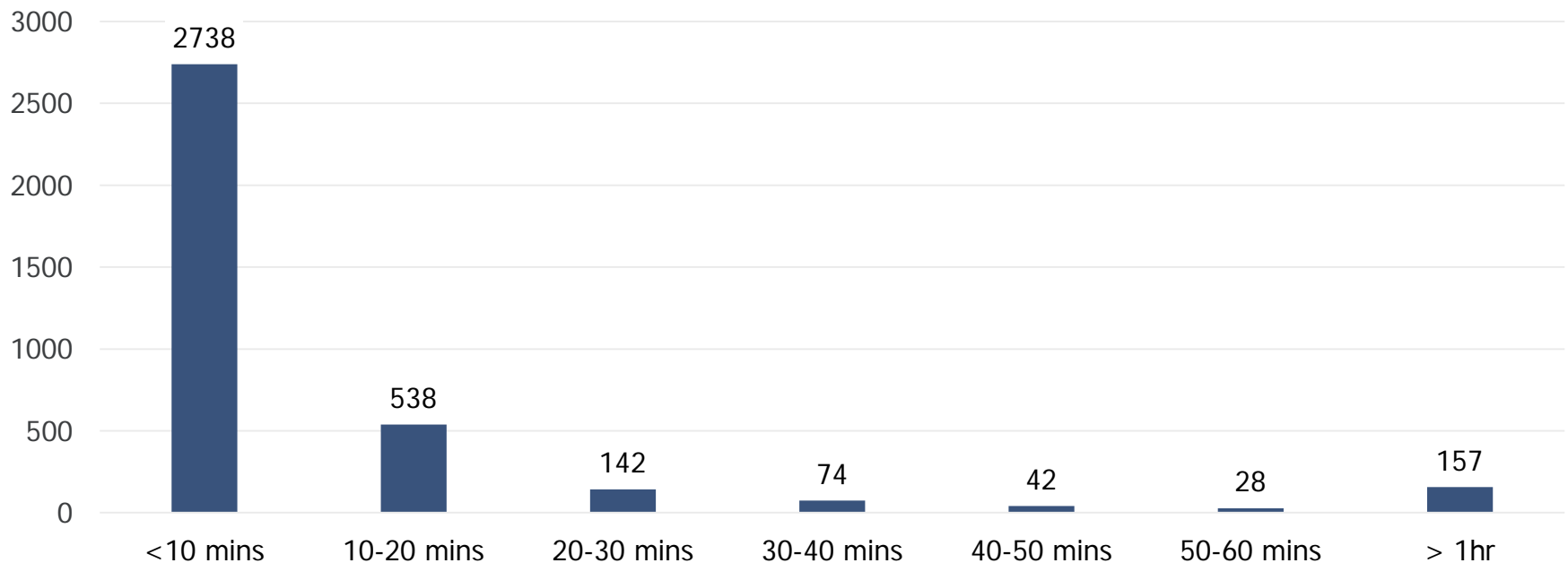
- **88 jurisdictions** in **11 states** provided usable Election Day line length data. Those jurisdictions represent a total of **15,644,645 registered voters**
- Voters in these jurisdictions collectively **cast 11,059,900 votes**, or roughly 8% of all votes cast
- Data were provided from **4,006 precincts**

## AVERAGE WAIT TIMES - NATIONWIDE



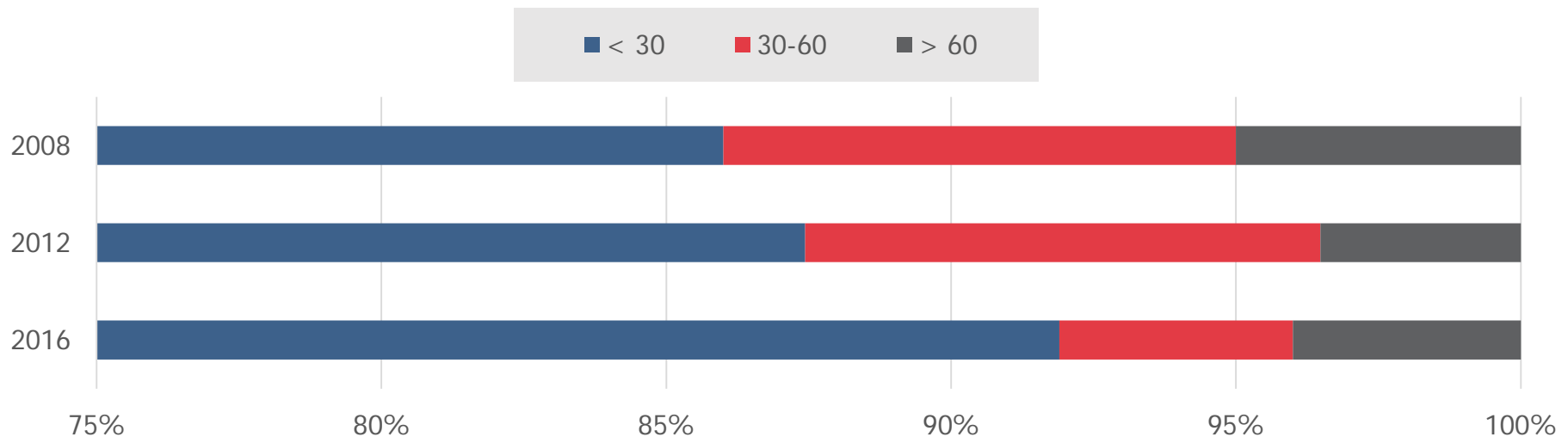
- The average daily wait time was **8.59 minutes**
- Based on surveys, Americans waited 14.6 minutes to vote in 2008 and 12 minutes in 2012

### Precincts with Average Daily Waits - 10 Minute Intervals



- 91.9% of precincts experienced average waits <30 minutes and 73.9% averaged <10 minutes
- 4.1% of precincts had average waits of 30-60 minutes and 4.0% averaged >60 minutes

## Average Wait Times in 30-Minute Increments



Sources: SPAE 2008, SPAE 2012, BPC Data 2016



- Collecting data **benefits election administrators.**
- In order to make evidence-based decisions about resource allocation, you need to know where lines happen.
- The data have been used already to allocate voting machines, EPBs, rovers, and poll workers in order to **prevent long lines.**
- Under-resourced jurisdictions can also use this data to **advocate for additional funding** from their elections boards.

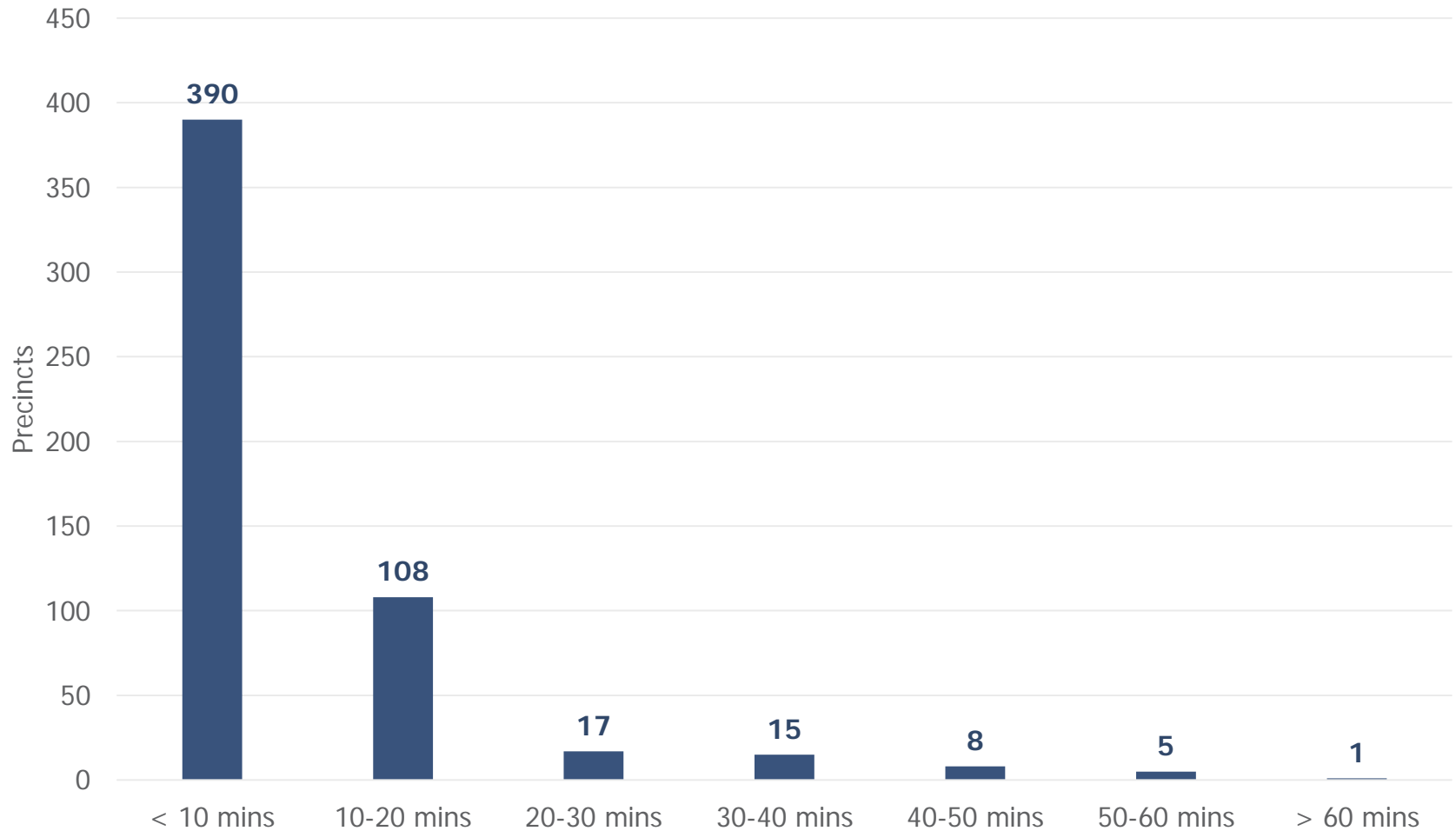
- BPC collected data from 17 Virginia jurisdictions in November 2016, representing **2,092,159 registered voters**, or **37.8 percent of all registered voters** in Virginia
- Data were provided from **544 precincts**

- **The average wait time** across all participating Virginia jurisdictions was **8.9 minutes**
- The average represents a **significant decrease from 2008 and 2012**
- On average, Virginians waited 28 minutes to vote in 2008 and 24 minutes to vote in 2012

# AVERAGE WAIT TIMES – VIRGINIA



## Precincts with Average Daily Waits – 10 Minute Increments



## AVERAGE WAIT TIMES – VIRGINIA

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- 94.7% of precincts experienced average waits <30 minutes and 71.1% averaged <10 minutes
- 5.1% of precincts had average waits of 30-60 minutes and 0.2% averaged >60 minutes



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