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**MENA Region (U.S.) Foreign Policy and Voting Behaviour; an Empirical study of Arab American Communities during the 2024 Presidential Elections**

by

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Voting, Foreign Policy, and Identity; A tale of two cities

“To what extent did engagement of political candidates on MENA foreign policy impact the voting behavior of Arab-American constituents in Michigan during the 2024 elections?”

### Abstract

This study assesses whether candidates’ handling of the 2023-2025 Israel-Gaza war altered the voting behavior of Arab American’s in the state of Michigan during the 2024 presidential elections. Using official precinct data from local municipalities in Metro Detroit, population groups with significant concentrations of ethnic Arab backgrounds are clustered and compare them with a demographically similar control groups in Wisconsin. We employ a Difference-in-Difference model to isolate and examine the effects of this phenomenon. The results reveal the shocking consequences for democratic presidential candidate Vice-President Kamala Harris regarding her engagement and military support for Israel amid the war. We observe that following negative engagements with this salient issue, Harris lost significant electoral support among these voters that were won by her predecessor, President Biden in 2020. A majority of these votes were reallocated to third party and independent candidates such as Jill Stien in a protest vote against the administration. Consequentially however, republican candidate Donald Trump was able to take advantage of this gap in Harris’ campaign. Effectively gaining the support of voters that traditionally would vote democrat. Our findings demonstrate that foreign policy positions while often assumed to be peripheral during elections, decisively swayed key voters away from the democrats, which may have ultimately cost them the 2024 election. We offer in this piece a cautionary tale for future campaign and political advisors who underestimate the weight of these affairs.

Table of Contents

[Abstract 1](#_Toc197596321)

[Introduction 2](#_Toc197596322)

[Background 3](#_Toc197596323)

[The 2024 Elections 3](#_Toc197596324)

[What made this case so special? - Last minute handoff and a Remarkably close race 3](#_Toc197596325)

[High stakes between ‘Two Different Americas’ 3](#_Toc197596326)

[Issue Salience in the 2024 elections 4](#_Toc197596327)

[American foreign policy and the Arab-Israeli conflict 4](#_Toc197596328)

[Michigan’s relationship with Gaza and Bidens 5](#_Toc197596329)

[Community Backlash in Dearborn: A Localized Political Reckoning 5](#_Toc197596330)

[The Social Rejection of the Democrats 6](#_Toc197596331)

[Election turnout and the effects of the protest vote 7](#_Toc197596332)

[Descriptive Statistics – The Third-Party Surge 7](#_Toc197596333)

[Empirical Model 8](#_Toc197596334)

[Results 8](#_Toc197596335)

[Quick Robustness Check 9](#_Toc197596336)

[Conclusion: How a Foreign-Policy Blind Spot Flipped a Swing State 9](#_Toc197596337)

[Kamala’s loss was Trump’s treasure 9](#_Toc197596338)

[References 10](#_Toc197596339)

[Appendixes 17](#_Toc197596340)

[Appendix A 17](#_Toc197596341)

[Appendix B 23](#_Toc197596342)

[Data Analysis – Polling Data 23](#_Toc197596343)

[Regression 1 26](#_Toc197596344)

[Regression 2 27](#_Toc197596345)

[Appendix C 29](#_Toc197596346)

[Control variables used in the regressions 29](#_Toc197596347)

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# Introduction

The 2024 United States Presidential elections was undoubtably one of the most publicized races for public office in decades. With the U.S. being one of the most developed nations in the world as well as its major role in global leadership, its Presidential Elections often capture energized attention from across the globe. This historic race between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump made international headlines, drawing both criticism and optimism from all corners of the world; being ‘one of the closest presidential in almost a century’ (CNN, 2024). This election cycle is of particular interest due to the unprecedented nature of salient events which influenced it.

It has been well established by scholars such as (Jeffery, 2023) that constituents tend to vote in line with values, ideology and more importantly what they are able to identify with. Certain voters struggling to make financial ends meet may opt to support a candidate with a favorable economic outlook; while those concerned with foreign affairs may vote for the candidate with the more favorable policy strategy. In the case of the 2024 elections, a significant number of voters made their decisions based off the latter, specifically on the merit of America’s engagement with the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine. But what lead to this conflict being such a critical component in the presidential race?

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, day to day disparities experienced by the average American have greatly altered the emotional landscape of this race (The Guardian, 2024). The polarized nature of America’s political sphere has been intensified by the strategic maneuvering of critical ballot issues like The Economy and Healthcare, which were being played like chess pieces on a board. Due to this, each candidate’s campaign had to be cautious and strategically engage with topics that were perceived as ‘big ticket’ issues during the election cycle. While topics such as the economy and national security were often thought to be the primary drivers of voting behavior (Pew Research, 2025), this text seeks to challenge that notion. Rather, we assert that unfavorable policy stances on foreign affairs were underestimated by campaign advisors and ultimately lead to negative voting responses. We reference this specifically regarding MENA region engagements, in this case the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the US’s ongoing military support for Israeli forces, despite human rights violations (International Criminal Court, 2024). There is an ongoing debate amongst scholars speculating that this crucial misstep is what ultimately helped win the race for Trump and left Vice President Harris packing her bags (The Guardian, 2024).

Tensions regarding this race were highly charged through various avenues. The war in Gaza specifically was a highly contentious topic among voters in the Blue-Wall states, a collection of uncommitted swing states located in the Midwest. We now narrow our gaze onto the Great Lake State of Michigan. In this piece we take keen interest in this state due to its unique demographic. While also being one of the most populous regions of the state, southeastern Michigan is home to many ethnically Arab citizens and immigrants, holding strong sentimental ties to MENA region politics and a culturally rooted solidarity with the Arab disparities abroad.

This text seeks to highlight the electoral implications of ignoring such a significant voting demographic during ongoing policy events. Postulating that candidate engagement with the Israel-Gaza conflict drove impactful shifts to voting behavior among Arab-Identified or Arab Allied voters. We look to depict this through answering and providing insight on the following areas.

First, we identify what extraordinary factors made this election unique compared to recent races and how this created an atypical election environment. Second, through analyzing opinion polls we highlight which ballot issues were most salient during this election cycle and how public opinions have shifted compared to previous races? Third, we look to provide insight on the significance of the State of Michigan as well as its Arab population in relation to this election. Finally, we use an empirical event study to observe how a candidate’s alignment with oppressive MENA region policy caused voting behavior to shift in Michigan. We further reflect on this by discussing the discourse and identifying what can be learned from this and what can be used in future contemporary implementations.

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# Background

## The 2024 Elections

America’s 2024 elections saw several complicating factors which significantly contributed to the competitive dynamic of this race. Tensions among both sides of the domestic electorate became increasingly fragmented after 2016. Following his third consecutive win in the Primary race as the Republican Presidential nominee, Trump had the unique advantage of an energized momentum and unilateral party support to kickstart his candidacy. Something that the Biden Administration lacked in the final 12 months of the race (CNN, 2024). This was further extrapolated by a nationwide negative response to Biden’s policy decisions relating to the Israel-Gaza conflict. However, with great discontent over the cost of living, foreign affairs, and the integrity of the Executive Branch; Americans from all sides of the spectrum felt a level uneasiness about which candidate they would choose to cast their vote for. For many voters, the narrative for which candidate to pick often fell into the ‘lesser of two evils’ debate (Fairvote, 2024). In this section we seek to further understand the critical aspects of this election and how these factors created the perfect environment for it to be swayed by such a niche population.

### What made this case so special? - Last minute handoff and a Remarkably close race

On July 23rd 2024, Joe Biden handed the torch to Kamala Harris in a major turn of events for the Democrats. Raising their overall polling score by 10 points that Biden had lost amid the Israel-Gaza conflict (538 Polling, 2024). The point of contention among left leaning voters, however, was that neither Biden nor Harris opted to engage with the traditional primary process to secure their place as the incumbent candidate. While popular belief at the time speculated that the handoff was a strategic initiative for the democrats to win the race, the lack of process contributed to uncommitted voters feeling uneasy about casting a vote for Harris (Busch, 2024). This uncertainty among voters influenced the extraordinary slim polling margins towards the end of the race, with final official polls reported from the US Census depicting just how close the race was. From the data, we observe a striking near-even split; with 49% of all respondents leaning towards Harris and 49% leaning towards Trump. With a fine margin of error of 1.4%, prospective attitudes on voting had dire implications to the outcome of the race. Further asserting the need for each candidate to approach their campaign with a confident political strategy and a strong identity to found it on.

### High stakes between ‘Two Different Americas’

With this specific election season being riddled with highly salient ballot issues, the American people were explicitly responsive to key areas. Topics such as the state of the economy, American military aid to Israel, and the growing ideological divide among Americans were perceived as ‘high stake’ issues for the country (Pew Research, 2024). Political figures including President Biden even took to national television to reiterate to the American people that they will be the ones that ‘have to decide between moving forwards or moving backwards’ ([Hirsch,](https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/09/09/2024-us-election-harris-trump-democracy/) 2024).

While presidential rhetoric is common, the new reality of MAGA republicans redefined this idea. With unwavering support, Trump’s campaign portrayed an America that heavily contrasted typical western values and ethics. Trump’s May 30th 2024 conviction of 34 felony counts and subsequent events provided as one of the initial destabilizations among voters. His involvement in the January 6th insurrection and legal indictments following the 2020 elections brought his conduct and political integrity into question, challenging America’s growing polarization and historical ([AP News](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://apnews.com/article/trump-trial-deliberations-jury-testimony-verdict-85558c6d08efb434d05b694364470aa0&ved=2ahUKEwjhuayoj4aNAxUpLtAFHaqtHmMQFnoECB4QAQ&usg=AOvVaw3LJCt3Rc8EwIpSCVe923QN), 2024). On the other side of the isle, democrats faced their own backlash from perceived economic mismanagement and Bidens continued military support for Israel. Nationwide opinion shifts occurred during this point in time, with Bidens polling score dropping nearly 13 points between the start of the war and him dropping out of the race (See figure 4).

## Issue Salience in the 2024 elections

When analyzing the effects of foreign policy on voting behavior, it is important to recognize the position it holds in the eyes of voters. What were Americans paying attention to during this election cycle? How has that changed over time, and where? To understand the broad spectrum of events that influenced voters this section sets out to define and quantify the salient nature of pressing ballot issues that drove voting behavior in the 2024 elections.

Data taken from Gallup and Pew Research opinion polls captures the changing dynamics among the American electorate from Trumps 2016 win up to present date (Gallup,2024; Pew, 2024). Prior to the election, Pew Research asked their respondents to identify which issue topics they were basing their vote upon in the respective upcoming election. As observed in Table 1, the economy maintained itself as the most important issue among all voters in each race. Overall, republican leaning voters prioritized the economy over democrats by an average of +17 percentage points across all three races. Among that, Terrorism, Healthcare, Gun Policy, Immigration, and Foreign Policy were also listed as top ballot issues, none however overtaking the economy as the main priority of voters.

Stepping outside of the Economy; Healthcare, SCOTUS Appointments, and Foreign Policy remained the next most salient issues among Americans with interest peaking in 2016 during the Clinton-Trump election. Immigration and gun policy also remain salient issues among the electorate; however, the data suggests they have been slightly de-emphasized in recent years. Over time, foreign policy has become a growing concern among Americans, climbing from 57% in 2020 to 62% in 2024 with 16% more republicans holding it in favor over democrats. This shows growing bipartisan interest, possibly tied to national security narratives and Middle East policy criticisms. According to a 2024 Gallup opinion poll, republicans also prioritized the Israel-Palestine conflict over democrats (Gallup, 2024).

This reordering of priorities suggests that voters are reacting to present realities and shifting away from pandemic-era concerns and more towards global instability, economic revitalization, and public safety. While general Americans have overall taken a higher interest in foreign affairs, we argue that it was the primary issue for many voters in the Midwest.

## American foreign policy and the Arab-Israeli conflict

To understand these shifting dynamics, it is necessary to provide context for the Israeli Palestinian conflict, which played a significant role in shaping voter sentiment, particularly among Arab American communities. The roots of the conflict trace back to the post-World War II era, when the establishment of the Israeli state led to the displacement of a more than 750,000 Palestinians. Over the decades, tensions escalated due to Israeli settlement expansion in contested territories, the occupation of the West Bank, and longstanding political and legal discrimination against Palestinians. These conditions have contributed to repeated cycles of violence, especially in the Gaza Strip, which has been subject to several military operations since 2008(Palquest, 2024).

On October 7, 2024, Hamas launched a surprise attack on southern Israel, killing 1,200 civilians and taking 250 hostages. The attack was condemned domestically and internationally, leading to a swift Israeli response (CSIS, 2023). This response however was not typical in terms of international conflict, what began as military self-defense quickly escalated to becoming an alleged genocide.Israel conducted intensive bombing campaigns in Gaza, targeting civilian infrastructure including residential areas, schools, and hospitals (Think Global Health, 2024). The Israeli government claimed these operations neutralized Hamas, but human rights organizations and international bodies reported high civilian casualties and targeting of protected sites. As of early 2025, the Palestinian Health Ministry has reported over 52,000 deaths, with some estimates reaching over 61,000. Women and children were the majority of reported casualties. In contrast, Israeli deaths from the initial attack and hostilities only numbered around 1,800, sustaining far less loss of life on their side of the battle (Al Jazeera, 2024).

The U.S. played a key role in the conflict through its continued financial, diplomatic, and military support for Israel. The Biden administration authorized arms shipments and aid throughout the campaign, despite increasing calls from human rights advocates and elected officials to suspend such support (Bernie Sanders, 2024). Such advocacy was periodicaly even met with censorship from political platforms, with a notable instance being the U.S. House vote to censure Representative Rashida Talib, a Palestinian American representing the State Michigan. While being the only Palestinian in congress, Talib was one of few elected officials who advocated heavily for the safety of the Palestinian State (US House of Rep. Clerk, 2023). This decision by congress along with the Biden Administration’s continuous enabling of Israel’s crimes sparked fierce domestic backlash; particularly among Arab American communities and younger, progressive voters who viewed the administration’s stance as a failure to uphold international human rights standards.

## Michigan’s relationship with Gaza and Bidens

Public protest followed and demonstrations broke out on college campuses, at city halls, and in major urban centers across the country. Columbia University’s protests received particular attention, as students and faculty demanding institutional divestment were met with disciplinary action (Reuters, 2024). The administration cited concerns about antisemitism, drawing criticism from free speech advocates. At the University of Michigan, similar protests emerged, but unlike Columbia, the university responded by beginning a gradual divestment process following extensive boycotts and protest from students (University of Michigan, 2024). This response reflects the unique political climate of Michigan, which is home to one of the largest Arab American populations in the United States. The events in Gaza and the U.S. government's response became a significant electoral issue, particularly in Michigan. Voters in the state, especially those in Arab and Arab-allied communities like Dearborn Areas expressed strong dissatisfaction with the administration’s foreign policy. Many publicly stated they would withhold their support from President Biden in the upcoming election (Al Jazeera, 2024). In this context, foreign policy, typically a peripheral issue in domestic elections, took on central importance for a critical voting bloc in Michigan.

### Community Backlash in Dearborn: A Localized Political Reckoning

Nowhere in the United States was the backlash to U.S. support for Israel’s actions in Gaza more politically tangible than in Dearborn, Michigan; a city that has long stood as a symbolic heart of Arab America. As the war in Gaza intensified, so did feelings of frustration, disillusionment, and betrayal among Arab American residents. Many of whom expressed that their votes in the 2024 election would be cast not out of loyalty to a party, but in protest of a war they saw as a humanitarian catastrophe enabled by American foreign policy

The Arab American communities in the Metro Detroit areas specifically displayed opposition for the government’s policies. Michigan is home to Americas second largest population of Arab Americans, housing 392,733 residents. While only having the second largest population in the US, the States Arab community makes up 3.87% of its population, giving it the highest Arab population share out of all 50 states (See Figure 3) (American Arab Institute, 2024; World Population Review 2024; U.S. Census). A large portion of this population is localized in the cities of Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, and Hamtramck. This triad of suburbs resides in Wayne County (See Figure 2), including approximately 6,000 Palestinians.

In order to effectively demonstrate the salient nature of this conflict among this vital community, we use geo-localized search data to link the popularity of issue related topics with the real-world political movements that were occurring in the metro Detroit area amid these policy decisions. Through this we seek to highlight the political unrest that resulted among Arab American voters due to these oppressive engagements with the war. Data taken from Google search trying to analytics reveals that in the state of Michigan the Palestinian conflict was most salient amongst its residing Arab communities (Google Analytics, 2024). We visualize this in Figure 1, displaying that the cities of Dearborn, Dearborn Heights and Hamtramck MI held the highest search volume for keywords such as Palestine and Gaza, reflecting the community’s heavy critical interest in the topic while outpacing every other district in the state. It is reasonable to infer that voter sentiments were significantly impacted by this, drawing fierce criticism and protest from community residents. A second analysis shows that the keywords boycott and protest also saw a sharp incline amongst the communities growing alongside Palestine and God's related search queries. This data helps articulate the growing discontent amongst this electorate (Google Analytics, 2024). Correlating with several ongoing protests and anti-Democrat rhetoric that was sparked among Arab and Arab allied voters (Figure 3).

And a now infamous rejection of the Democratic Party, more than 100,000 Michigan voters selected to vote ‘uncommitted’ in the democratic primary period this is a direct response to President Biden and Vice President Harris (The NYT, 2024). In Dearborn specifically, the symbolic significance of this protest votes beat Biden outright. Dearborn has for many decades been a hub for Arab American Advocacy and Islamic leadership in the US; consistently displaying vocal opposition to many hostile MENA policy actions throughout current and past administrations (The NYT, 2024). With strong familial and cultural ties to the middle east, residents in this area demonstrated strong discontent for Bidens support for Israel through staging sit-ins, encampments, and active protests in community centers, local universities, and the state capitol (The Guardian, 2024). This demonstration was historic and coordinated electoral expression of dissent that drew national attention and media coverage like that drawn from Wayne State University students during the 1980’s South African Apartheid (Hostetter, 2019).

### The Social Rejection of the Democrats

This political divide however was not spontaneous nor was it unforeseeable. As early as a year prior to Election Day, the Biden administration sent campaign staffers to engage with Arab American leaders in Dearborn. These efforts however were derailed by local officials including Dearborn Mayor Abdullah Hammoud who refused to meet with the delegation on the mayor of the administration’s new announcement of an arms package to Israel (The Guardian, 2024). Community officials quickly expressed their solidarity with Palestine and reminded the administration of their cultural investment in the matter, Mayor Hammoud responding “Don't send people here to ask for votes while you help bomb our families” on X, formerly twitter. These voter sentiments quickly evolved from hopeful engagement to a seething protest, eventually becoming complete widespread political disengagement. Some voters explicitly sought to reject the ‘lesser of two evils’ debate between Harris and Trump, promoting strategic support for third party candidates such as Jill Stein and members of the U.S. Taxpayer party (Detroit Free Press, 2024). Furthering the narrative that this demographic would not be made silent or capitulate to voting for a party that would refuse to represent their interests both domestically and abroad.

A local poll taken in August from CAIR revealed that at the time of the event Harris’s lost ground among Muslim voters in Michigan, polling at just 12% falling behind Donald Trump’s 18% (CAIR, 2024). Meanwhile, there was a significant shift among third party voters, with candidates such as Jill Stein polling at 40%. Third-party backing grew even among traditional democratic loyalists, with leaders like Arab American Bar Association president Soujoud Hamade publicly announcing her backing of third-party candidates than the incumbent democrats. Citing the ongoing war as she emphasized how fundamental and identity-rooted this political shift had become “We cannot stomach the idea of voting for someone who is contributing to the destruction of our homeland,” (BBC News, 2024). This unprecedented reconfiguration signaled a powerful political realignment among this demographic, with the sentiment being that this demonstration was an ‘act of resistance’ rather than a simple protest vote. This movement however may have had wider implications for the Democratic beyond just the state of Michigan. News reports from Al Jazeera report that similar pro-Palestinian solidarity movements in other swing states such as Minnesota and Wisconsin began to reflect similar political strategies to Michigan (Al Jazeera, 2024). These efforts could be insinuated to have been embolden by the success of Dearborn’s Arab Community.

While this effect was clearly fueled by foreign policy disputes, it depicts something more intricate; that being a destabilization between a core voting bloc and the growing distrust between these voters and the Democratic establishment. Years of perceived neglect and betrayal further amplified the effects of the emotional proximity to Arab American voters observing the violence in Gaza, effectively transforming what may have just been a ballot issue into an electoral dealbreaker. But how exactly can we capture the manifestation of this voter shift? In the next section we use retrospective election data and presidential polling data to conduct an event study to articulate the change in voting behavior.

# Election turnout and the effects of the protest vote

### Descriptive Statistics – The Third-Party Surge

Table 1 reports total turnout and vote shares in each of the four localities we study Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Hamtramck (our Arab-American group), and Dane County, WI (control) for the 2020 and 2024 presidential elections. We choose Dane county Wisconsin as our control due to its closeness in proximity and similarities in political culture relative to the state of Michigan. With a primary difference being its smaller Arab demographic, its progressive nature and relatively young population makes it an ideal subject to isolate our experiment results. Turnout is measured as total ballots cast divided by the voting-age population (VAP) in our cleaned data set (US Census, 2024).

In doing so we uncover a significant phenomenon occurring among Detroit’s Arab community, learning that Harris’s stance on pro-Israel policy caused a significant electoral pivot away from the democrats compared to performance from 2020. During the pandemic era election, Democratic candidate Joe Biden won roughly two-thirds of the vote in the Dearborn-area communities (Dearborn). By 2024, that share had significantly been reduced by more than half, with a majority of these lost votes being redirected not towards republican candidate, but towards third party candidates. We identify this to be the impact of the Arab ‘protest vote’ that was promised against the race by local constituents, with Green Party candidate Jill Stein receiving near 30% of the vote in the City of Dearborn (See Table 3).

Across all three cities, third party ballots saw a staggering increase; rising from 1.35% of all votes in 2020 to 16.6% in 2024 with the most noticeable shift being in Dearborn (city), rising from 605 votes in 2020 to a whopping 8,359 votes in 2024. This pivot of over 1300% depicts the decisive and intentional rejection of party loyalty, capturing the raw and charged sentiments of the Arab-American community. This retraction however was not observed in the Dane County control group. The neighboring blue-wall state saw a minute increase in third-party voter share by only 0.01%, futher emphasizing the significance of this identity-backed discourse.

Aggregate participation among the regions however did not see a gross collapse during the timeline. Total ballots cast in the Arab cities contracted by a minor 6-8%, while Dane County participation saw an aggregate increase among all parties. The striking change however is the re-allocation of votes rather than electoral disengagement. Overall, 2024 delivered an electorate that was still willing to show up to the polls, however they were less willing to support the Democratic ticket, remaining consistent with policy-specific backlashed observed in the months prior to the election. With this protest vote being symbolic of the anguish among Michigan’s Muslim community, their political call to justice ultimately impacted the democrats where it hurt the most and flipping the district to candidate Trump.

### Empirical Model

With our goal being to quantify the effect of candidate engagement with the Arab-Israeli conflict on Arab-American voting behaviors, we further decompose this idea to depict the re-configuration that occurred during this policy event. We achieve this though analyzing the share of ballots cast for the Democratic nominee, the Republican nominee, and third-party and independent candidates. By using a difference-in-difference research design, we contrast our Arab-concentrated municipalities with a demographically matched control group, Dane County, WI. We compare the two areas before and after the respective foreign-policy shocks that occurred in 2023 and 2024.

In this model we are specifically measuring features like voter share reallocation, relative change between demographics and an immediate post-shock effect. We first isolate the fraction of total ballots that moved away from the democratic ticket and into third party options or the Republican ticket. Second, we observe how Arab-concentrated cities evolved over time relative to demographically similar non-Arab control regions as we outlined with Wisconsin. Finally, we insightfully seek to seize the full exposer of this presidential race to the Gaza conflict, with 2020 being our pre-treatment baseline. We however will not be observing factors such as registration effects, unrelated Arab-clusters, or alternative electoral races. Due to the state of Michigan allowing same-day voter registration, we instead focus on ballots cast in order to avoid blurring the distinction between the effects being measured. Through counting total ballots, we further assert that our evidence points more towards vote-switching rather than abstention, citing the finite ballot reduction of ≈ 6 %. Finally we avoid interaction with exogenous races and population clusters outside of the subject groups in order to reduce collinearity. While data taken from House and Senate race patterns have potential to reinforce the narrative, presidential votes alone suffice for an effective DiD with eight observed instances.

Formally, for city i in election year t we estimate that;

### Results

Table 2 reports robust standard error estimates of equation. The interaction term here is relatively large and highly significant: this implies that Arab majority cities experienced on average a 16-percentage-point increase in 3rd party voter share between the years of 2020 and 2024. This deferred significantly from the control area even after conditioning on education, foreign born populations, labor force engagement, and electoral size. Point estimates for democratic and republican shares mirror this pattern as well, clearly depicting the democratic decline in Dearborn-area cities and the heave loss of voters to 3rd party candidates rather than Republicans.

Adjusted R2 exceeds 0.96, and the effect is robust to dropping individual cities and treating % Arab as a continuous rather than binary variable. When observed in tandem, these findings reveal that foreign policy positioning can effectively reshape voting behavior in geographically concentrated identity groups. All of this without depressing overall turnout in the districts, this crucial piece of information underscores such strategic blind spot for campaigners especially in this recent election of which treat foreign policy as bearing no electoral cost.

### Quick Robustness Check

Our last robustness check replaces the HC1 covariance matrix with the more conservative HC2 estimator which tends to draw greater emphasis on higher concentration features. The new model slightly increases standard errors by roughly 20%, however each coefficient maintains near its initial output. The treatment coefficient on Remains near its original magnitude at = 0.158 (See table 4). We make the note that p-values increase individually for foreign born citizens and the presence of a significant Arab-population. Regardless, the P value for the DiD stayed below 0.001, despite the harsher penalty for leverage. All other covariates maintained their sign and significance, with the confidence interval for the Gaza shock being near 95%. The fit of the model also remained unchanged, with the R² being 0.995. Re-running the model after mean-centering the controls or dropping log VAP leaves the interaction coefficient within 0.004+- of the HC2 estimate and does not distort its significance.

# Conclusion: How a Foreign-Policy Blind Spot Flipped a Swing State

The 16-point surge in 3rd party ballots inside Michigan’s American triangle leaves little ambiguity in result interpretation. This symbolic and historic vote stripped the democratic ticket of a significant voter gap spanning larger than Biden’s entire 2020 statewide margin. The remaining goal is to connect these macro level shifts and linked together the macro level outcomes that resulted in a strategic lesson to be learned by future campaigns.

### Kamala’s loss was Trump’s treasure

And the wider series of events, Kamala Harris was allocated the responsibility for the narrative regarding the future of America’s Gaza policy when she accepted her allocation from Biden. Her refusal to deviate in practice or in rhetoric from the administration's pro Israel posture ultimately made each passing ceasefire headline a reminder of the incumbent administrations failed obligations to its Arab citizens. Trump was left the opportunity to strategically take advantage of this gap in Harris’s campaign, ultimately avoiding the need to win the hearts of Arab Americans. By simply Offering a palatable alternative to prospective voters he was able to secure the enough interchanging votes to win this key demographic. His campaign quietly broadcasted Arabic language radio and digital slots across Michigan’s Wayne County. Capitalizing on his business man's skills, he promised Arab-Americans a cease-fire and a tougher stance on Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, all being key demands among protesters and interest groups.

While other key opponents like Jill Stein only accrued a total of 4% of the states votes, Dearborn precincts Total the significant portion of her support in the state. Gaining nearly 17% of the total vote among our target communities, Stein was able to cement a three-way split in which trump could maintain his 2020 voters and still win over the margins. Although she suspended her presidential run in late October of 2024, many absentee ballots had already been cast And solidified the efficacy of the ‘protest votes’ (Yahoo news, 2024). The results of this election were essentially an inverted version of the pause from 2016. Trump was able to secure victories two key districts which he had lost twice before. Ultimately aiding him in pushing the barriers to flip the blue wall.

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# Appendixes

## Appendix A

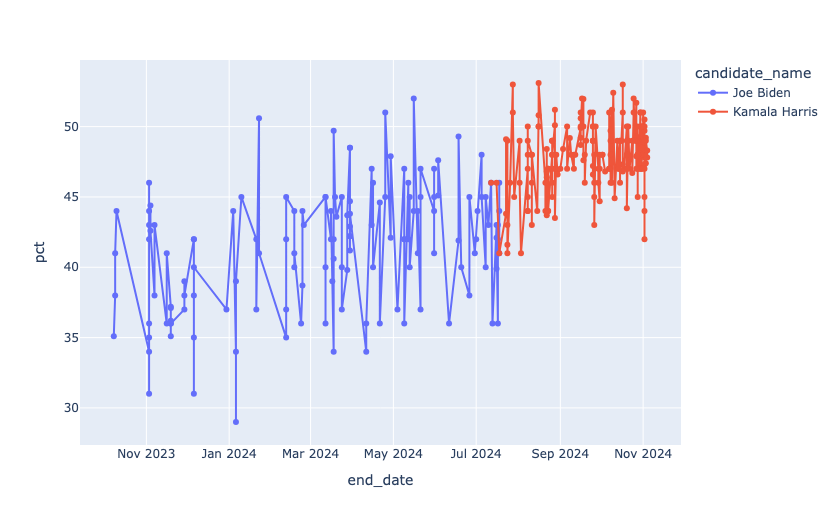
A graph of different colored bars

AI-generated content may be incorrect.A graph of different colored bars

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

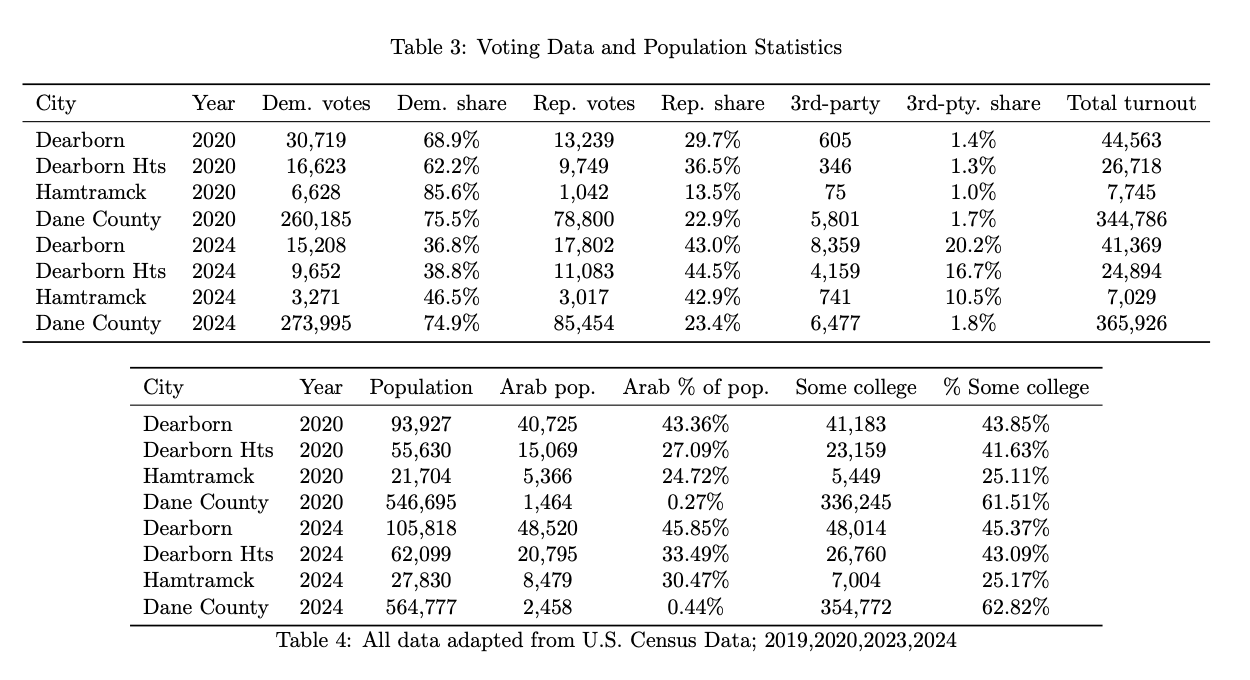
A graph with blue and black lines

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A table with numbers and a number on it

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A table with numbers and text

AI-generated content may be incorrect.A table with numbers and text

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

## 

## Appendix B

### Data Analysis – Polling Data

*#Get all libraries*

import pandas as pd

import numpy as np

import matplotlib.pyplot as plt

import plotly.express as px

pd.set\_option("display.max\_rows", 25)

from datetime import datetime

import re

#Get all libraries

import pandas as pd

import numpy as np

import matplotlib.pyplot as plt

import plotly.express as px

pd.set\_option("display.max\_rows", 25)

from datetime import datetime

import re

*#Quick look at the data*

df.head()

*# Remove unnescessary variables*

clean\_df = df.drop(columns=['seat\_number', 'cycle', 'election\_date','hypothetical', 'answer', 'pollster\_id','stage', 'population', 'population\_full', 'source', 'partisan', 'pollster\_rating\_id', 'nationwide\_batch', 'ranked\_choice\_reallocated', 'race\_id', 'internal', 'url', 'office\_type'] )

*# convert start\_date and end\_date to datetime*

clean\_df['start\_date']= pd.to\_datetime(clean\_df['start\_date'])

clean\_df['end\_date']= pd.to\_datetime(clean\_df['end\_date'])

*#Pop it open for a look*

clean\_df.head(15)

*#Check for missing values*

clean\_df['pollster'].unique()

*# clean\_df['candidate\_name'].unique()*

*#make a df od the candidates we want to look at*

no\_randos = clean\_df.loc[clean\_df['candidate\_name'].str.contains("kamala|stein|trump", flags=re.I, regex=True) ]

no\_randos = no\_randos.sort\_values('end\_date',ascending=True)

no\_randos.head(15)

*#How does it look?*

no\_randos.shape

no\_randos.to\_csv('no\_randos.csv', index=False)

*#Split everyone into their own dataframes*

Kamala = pd.DataFrame(data=clean\_df.loc[clean\_df['candidate\_name'].str.contains("Kamala", flags=re.I, regex=True)])

Trump = pd.DataFrame(data=clean\_df.loc[clean\_df['candidate\_name'].str.contains("Trump", flags=re.I, regex=True)])

Stein = pd.DataFrame(data=clean\_df.loc[clean\_df['candidate\_name'].str.contains("Stein", flags=re.I, regex=True)])

Biden = pd.DataFrame(data=clean\_df.loc[clean\_df['candidate\_name'].str.contains("Biden", flags=re.I, regex=True)])

*#Check the Mamala dataframe*

Kamala.head(5)

*#Data check*

Kamala.info()

*#Speed up the process by making a function to do the same thing for each candidate*

**class** Candidate():

**def** \_\_init\_\_(self, candidate\_name:str, df:pd.DataFrame):

self.name = candidate\_name

self.df:pd.DataFrame = df

for x in range(len(self.df)):

if x > 1:

self.df['score change'] = (float(self.df.iloc[x,14]) - float(self.df.iloc[x-1,14]))

else: pass

self.date\_end, self.score, self.sample, self.pollscore, self.numeric\_grade, self.poll\_id = [], [], [], [], [], []

for index, poll in df.iterrows():

try:

if poll['end\_date'] > datetime(2024, 7, 4, 0, 0):

self.date\_end.append(poll['end\_date'])

else:

continue *# Skip polls from before July 4, 2024 (Trump's first inauguration)*

self.score.append(poll['pct'])

self.sample.append(poll.get('sample\_size', 0))

self.pollscore.append(poll.get('pollscore', 0)) *# Avoids KeyError*

self.numeric\_grade.append(poll.get('numeric\_grade'))

self.poll\_id.append(poll['poll\_id'])

except Exception as e:

print(**f**"Skipping row {index} due to error: {e}")

print(**f**'{candidate\_name} has been successfully initialized')

*#Filter the dataframes to only include polls after July 4, 2024*

Kamala\_df = Candidate('Kamala',Kamala)

Kamala\_df.df = Kamala\_df.df[Kamala\_df.df['end\_date'] > datetime(2024, 7, 4, 0, 0)]

Trump\_df = Candidate('Trunp', Trump)

Stein\_df = Candidate('Stein', Stein)

Biden\_df = Candidate('Biden', Biden)

mixed\_df = pd.concat([Biden\_df.df,Kamala\_df.df,Trump\_df.df])

mixed\_df = mixed\_df[mixed\_df['end\_date'] > datetime(2024, 1, 4, 0, 0)]

biden\_kamala = pd.concat([Biden\_df.df, Kamala\_df.df])

biden\_kamala = biden\_kamala[biden\_kamala['end\_date'] > datetime(2023, 10, 4, 0, 0)]

everyone = pd.concat([Biden\_df.df, Kamala\_df.df, Trump\_df.df, Stein\_df.df])

everyone = everyone[everyone['end\_date'] > datetime(2023, 10, 4, 0, 0)]

everyone.to\_csv('everyone\_mi.csv', index=False)

*#Check the Kamala dataframe*

Kamala\_df.df

*#Check the Kamala dataframe*

print(len(Kamala\_df.score))

print(len(Kamala\_df.date\_end))

mixed\_df.head()

*#Plot the data to view the trends*

plt.style.use('ggplot')

fig, ax = plt.subplots(figsize=(20, 10))

ax.plot(Kamala\_df.date\_end, Kamala\_df.score, c='blue')

ax.scatter(Kamala\_df.date\_end, Kamala\_df.score, c='blue', s=10, data=('pollster', 'pct', 'candidate\_name', 'end\_date'))

*# ax.plot(Trump\_df.date\_end, Trump\_df.score, c='red')*

*# ax.scatter(Trump\_df.date\_end, Trump\_df.score, c='red', s=10)*

ax.plot(Biden\_df.date\_end, Biden\_df.score, c='orange')

ax.scatter(Biden\_df.date\_end, Biden\_df.score, c='orange', s=10)

*# ax.plot(Stein\_df.date\_end, Stein\_df.score, c='green')*

*# ax.scatter(Stein\_df.date\_end, Stein\_df.score, c='green', s=10)*

ax.set\_xlabel('Date')

ax.set\_ylabel('Percentage of Votes')

ax.set\_title('Kamala Harris Vote Trend')

plt.show()

fig = px.line(mixed\_df, x="end\_date", y="pct", color="candidate\_name", markers=True,

title="Kamala Harris Vote Trend",

labels={"date\_end": "Date", "score": "Percentage of Votes"}, hover\_data=('score change', 'poll\_id', 'sample\_size', 'pollscore', 'numeric\_grade'))

fig.show('notebook')

fig = px.line(biden\_kamala, x="end\_date", y="pct", color="candidate\_name", markers=True)

fig.show('notebook')

### Regression 1

*#Importing all the necessary libraries*

import pandas as pd

import numpy as np

import csv

pd.set\_option('display.max\_columns', None)

from sklearn.linear\_model import LinearRegression

from sklearn.compose import ColumnTransformer

import statsmodels.api as sm

import statsmodels.formula.api as smf

*# Load data*

df = pd.read\_csv('EEE\_Regression\_Data.csv')

*# Try to clean data of unnecessary characters*

pct\_cols = [ '% ≥ Some-college', '% Foreign-born-citizens']

for c in pct\_cols:

df[c] = df[c].replace('%', '').astype(float)/100

num\_cols = ['Dem votes','Rep votes','3rd-party','Total turnout',

'Population', 'VAP (log )']

df[num\_cols] = df[num\_cols].replace({',': '', ' ': ''}, regex=True).astype(float)

*#Create new variables for the regression*

df['dem\_share'] = df['Dem votes'] / (df['Total turnout'])

df['rep\_share'] = df['Rep votes'] / (df['Total turnout'])

df['third\_party\_share'] = df['3rd-party'] / (df['Total turnout'])

df['Arab\_dummy'] = (df['% Arab of pop'] >= 0.10).astype(int)

df['Post'] = (df['Year'] == 2024).astype(int)

df['DiD'] = df['Arab\_dummy'] \* df['Post']

df['log\_VAP'] = np.log(df['VAP (log )'])

*#Leooking at the data*

df

*#Drop ghost columns*

df = df.drop(columns=['Unnamed: 13', 'Unnamed: 14'])

*#Remove excel whitespace*

df= df[0:8]

*#make sure the columns are in the right format*

df

*# Create the regression model and fit it*

feature\_cols = ['Post','Arab\_dummy','DiD','% ≥ Some-college', '% Foreign-born-citizens','log\_VAP']

X = df[feature\_cols].values

y = df['third\_party\_share'].values

*#Wait, fit it down here instead*

model = LinearRegression(fit\_intercept=True)

model.fit(X, y)

*#Yay we have a model, what are the results?*

print("R²:", model.score(X, y))

for name, coef in zip(feature\_cols, model.coef\_):

print(**f**"{name**:20s**} {coef**:+.4f**}")

*#Now make this into a format that is actually readable*

X\_sm = sm.add\_constant(X)

sm\_model = sm.OLS(y, X\_sm).fit(cov\_type='HC1')

print(sm\_model.summary())

### Regression 2

*#Importing all the necessary libraries*

import pandas as pd

import numpy as np

import csv

pd.set\_option('display.max\_columns', None)

from sklearn.linear\_model import LinearRegression

from sklearn.compose import ColumnTransformer

import statsmodels.api as sm

import statsmodels.formula.api as smf

*# Load data*

df = pd.read\_csv('EEE\_Regression\_Data.csv')

*# Try to clean data of unnecessary characters*

pct\_cols = [ '% ≥ Some-college', '% Foreign-born-citizens']

for c in pct\_cols:

df[c] = df[c].replace('%', '').astype(float)/100

num\_cols = ['Dem votes','Rep votes','3rd-party','Total turnout',

'Population', 'VAP (log )']

df[num\_cols] = df[num\_cols].replace({',': '', ' ': ''}, regex=True).astype(float)

*#Create new variables for the regression*

df['dem\_share'] = df['Dem votes'] / (df['Total turnout'])

df['rep\_share'] = df['Rep votes'] / (df['Total turnout'])

df['third\_party\_share'] = df['3rd-party'] / (df['Total turnout'])

df['Arab\_dummy'] = (df['% Arab of pop'] >= 0.10).astype(int)

df['Post'] = (df['Year'] == 2024).astype(int)

df['DiD'] = df['Arab\_dummy'] \* df['Post']

df['log\_VAP'] = np.log(df['VAP (log )'])

*#Leooking at the data*

df

*#Drop ghost columns*

df = df.drop(columns=['Unnamed: 13', 'Unnamed: 14'])

*#Remove excel whitespace*

df= df[0:8]

*#make sure the columns are in the right format*

df

*# Create the regression model and fit it*

feature\_cols = ['Post','Arab\_dummy','DiD','% ≥ Some-college', '% Foreign-born-citizens','log\_VAP']

X = df[feature\_cols].values

y = df['third\_party\_share'].values

*#Wait, fit it down here instead*

model = LinearRegression(fit\_intercept=True)

model.fit(X, y)

*#Yay we have a model, what are the results?*

print("R²:", model.score(X, y))

for name, coef in zip(feature\_cols, model.coef\_):

print(**f**"{name**:20s**} {coef**:+.4f**}")

*#Now make this into a format that is actually readable*

X\_sm = sm.add\_constant(X)

sm\_model = sm.OLS(y, X\_sm).fit(cov\_type='HC1')

print(sm\_model.summary())

## Appendix C

### Control variables used in the regressions

* **Some-college or higher** – share of residents aged 18 + whose top credential is at least “some college” (ACS table S1501).
* **Foreign-born citizens** – naturalised U.S. citizens born outside the country, as a share of total population (ACS table S0501).
* **Not in labour force (16 +)** – persons 16 + who are neither working nor seeking work, divided by the civilian population 16 + (ACS table DP03).
* **log (Voting-age population)** – natural log of total residents aged 18 + (ACS table S0101; logged to reduce scale effects).
* **% Age 18–29** – population aged 18-29 as a share of total residents (ACS table S0101).
* **% Arab-American** – ancestry self-report “Arab/Lebanese/Palestinian etc.” divided by total population (Arab American Institute extract from ACS microdata).
* **Treatment indicators** – Post = 1 for 2024; Arab dummy = 1 for Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Hamtramck; DiD = Post × Arab (constructed from official vote files).