Vote Center Participation in California Elections 2020-2024

February 2025

Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
California Secretary of State

What the data tells us.

- Vote by mail has become the most popular voting method for California's voters.

- Vote centers have high traffic on e-1 and Election day.

- Vote center use is seeing a steady increase in VBM vote center drop off, especially on Election day.

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California Secretary of State

Overview

- Vote by mail (VBM) and In-person voting trends
  - Statewide
  - VCA counties
- Vote Center Usage
  - How
  - When
- Conclusions

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Statewide vs VCA counties

Election	Statewide Registration	Statewide Turnout	Statewide Turnout rate	VCA Registration	VCA
2020 Primary	20,660,465	9,687,076	47%	10,388,737	15 VCA counties
2020 General	22,047,448	17,785,151	81%	11,020,222	15 VCA counties
2021 Recall	22,057,154	12,888,061	58%	10,872,242	15 VCA counties
2022 Primary	21,941,212	7,287,512	33%	16,772,155	27 VCA counties
2022 General	21,940,274	11,145,257	51%	16,763,736	27 VCA counties
2024 Primary	22,077,327	7,720,301	35%	17,236,254	29 VCA counties
2024 General	22,595,659	16,136,468	71%	17,615,386	29 VCA counties

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*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State Election Statement of Vote or VCA reports
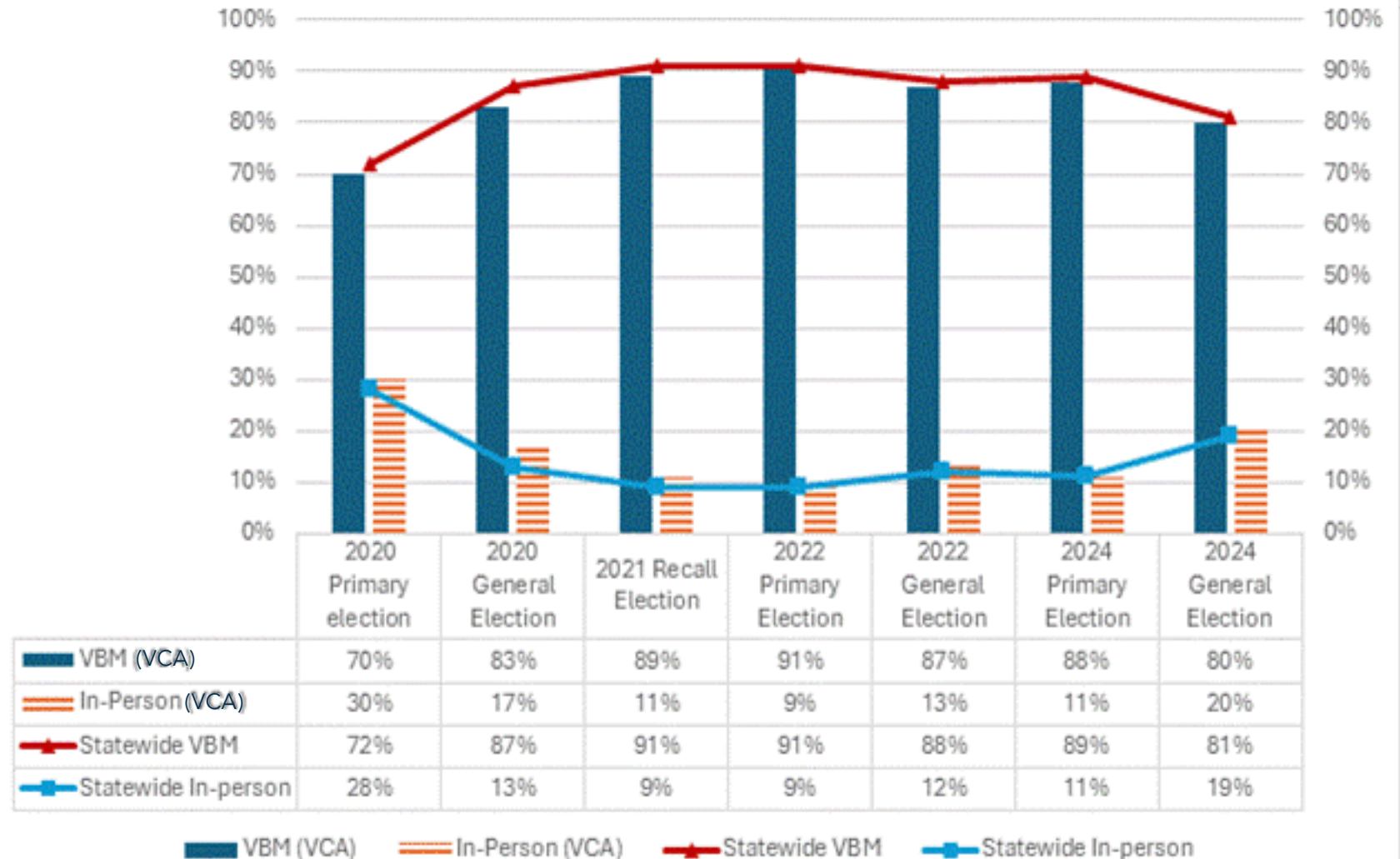
VBM and In-person voting

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Statewide and VCA counties: VBM most popular

Election	Voter Turnout
2020 Primary	47%
2020 General	81%
2021 Recall	58%
2022 Primary	33%
2022 General	51%
2024 Primary	35%
2024 General	71%

VBM vs In-person voting methods in VCA counties and Statewide 2020 Primary through the 2024 General Election

	2020 Primary election	2020 General Election	2021 Recall Election	2022 Primary Election	2022 General Election	2024 Primary Election	2024 General Election
VBM (VCA)	70%	83%	89%	91%	87%	88%	80%
In-Person (VCA)	30%	17%	11%	9%	13%	11%	20%
Statewide VBM	72%	87%	91%	91%	88%	89%	81%
Statewide In-person	28%	13%	9%	9%	12%	11%	19%

Legend: VBM (VCA), In-Person (VCA), Statewide VBM, Statewide In-person

*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State Election Statement of Vote or VCA reports

Vote Center Participation

Election	Vote Center total (e-10 through Election day)	Statewide Voter turnout
2020 Primary	2,008,991	9,687,076
2020 General	2,760,484	17,785,151
2021 Recall	1,073,714	12,888,061
2022 Primary	1,169,543	7,287,512
2022 General	2,281,085	11,145,257
2024 Primary	1,445,246	7,720,301

Vote center participation by time period

	2020 Primary	2020 General	2021 Recall	2022 Primary	2022 General	2024 Primary
election day	1,737,049	1,285,160	724,842	1,000,466	1,880,014	1,197,394
e-3 though e-1	201,852	1,056,258	227,286	124,273	294,810	189,947
e-10 through e-4	70,090	419,066	121,586	44,804	106,261	57,905

■ e-10 through e-4   ■ e-3 though e-1   ▢ election day

*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State Election Statement of Vote or VCA reports

Vote Center participation by time period
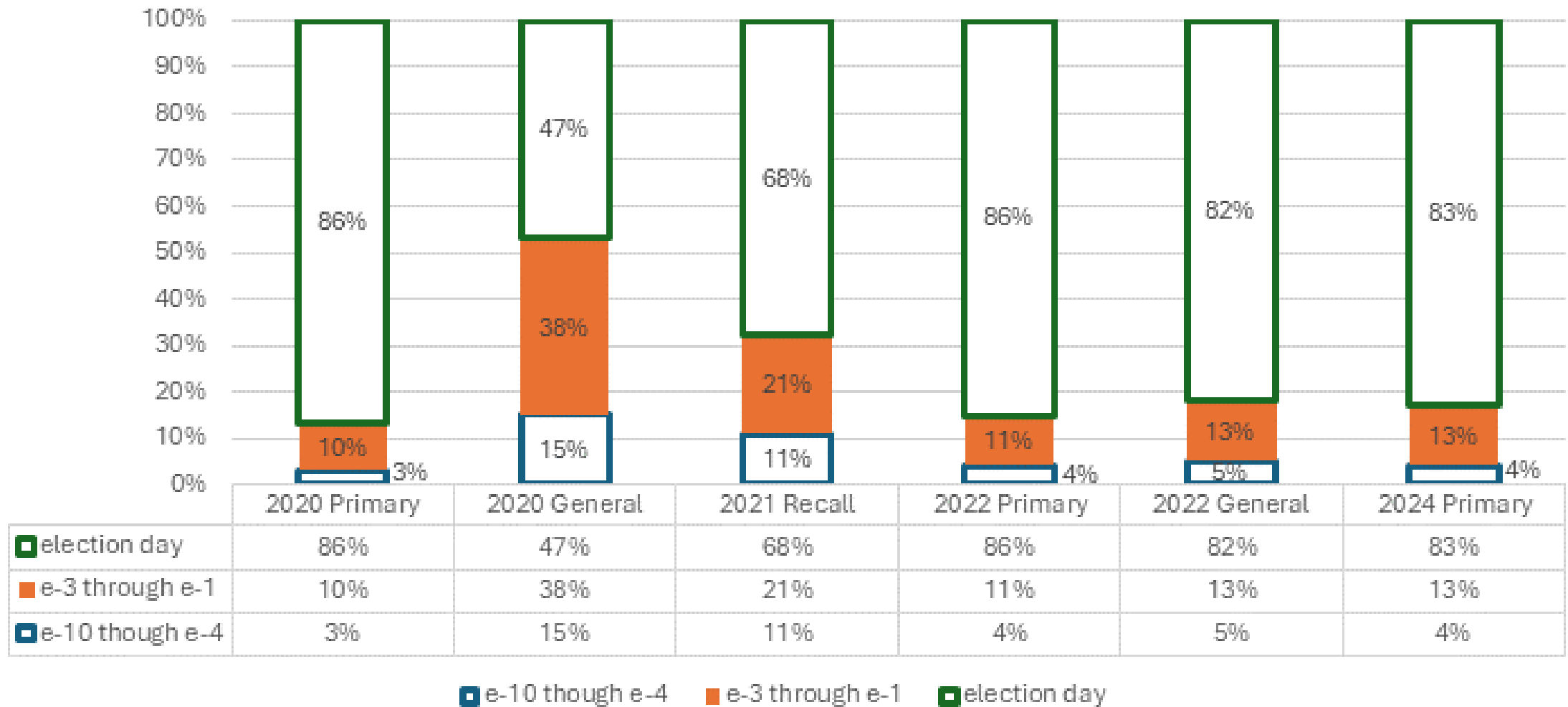
	2020 Primary	2020 General	2021 Recall	2022 Primary	2022 General	2024 Primary
☐ election day	86%	47%	68%	86%	82%	83%
■ e-3 through e-1	10%	38%	21%	11%	13%	13%
☐ e-10 though e-4	3%	15%	11%	4%	5%	4%

☐ e-10 though e-4   ■ e-3 through e-1   ☐ election day

*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State Election Statement of Vote or VCA reports

2020 Primary through 2024 Primary Elections vote center participation
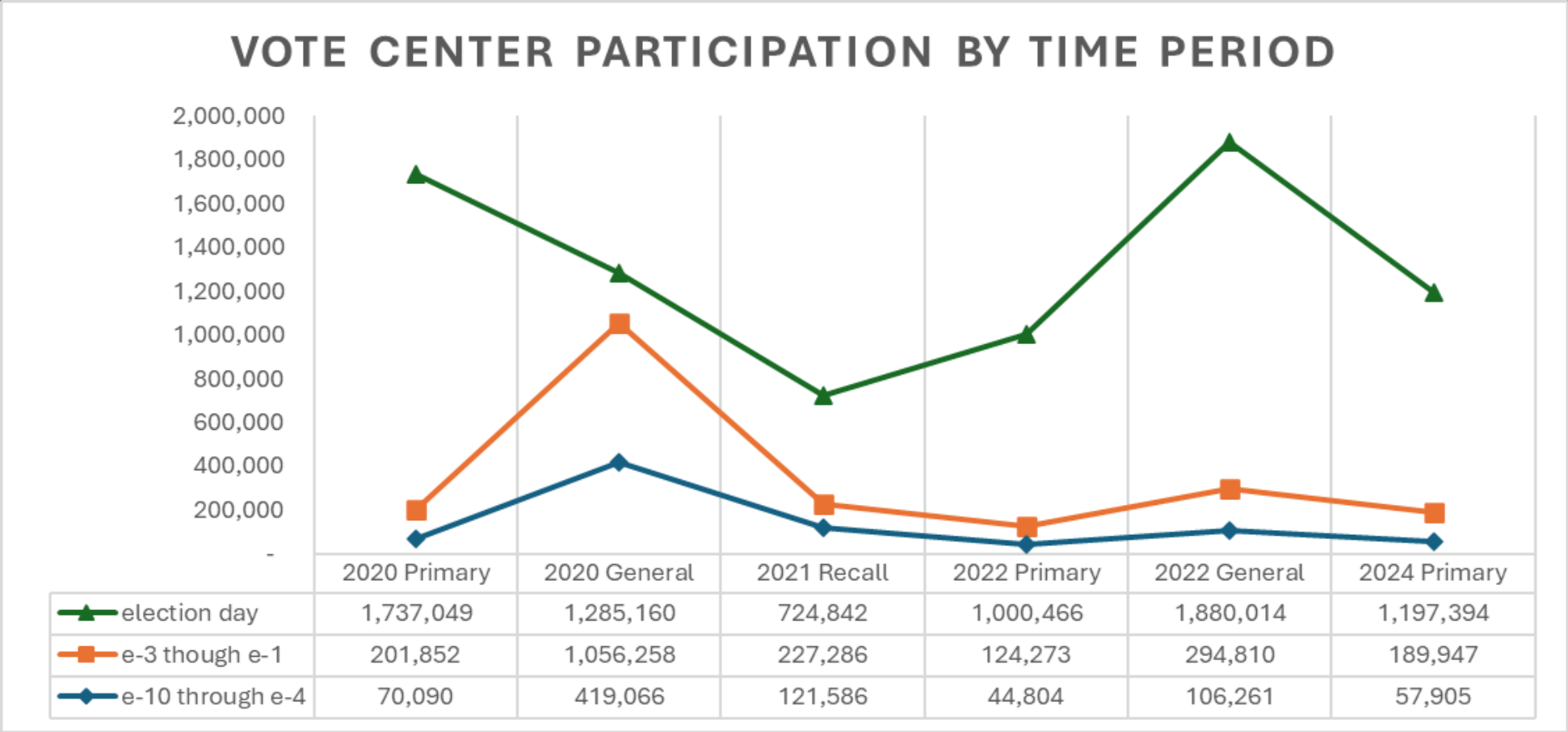
VOTE CENTER PARTICIPATION BY TIME PERIOD

	2020 Primary	2020 General	2021 Recall	2022 Primary	2022 General	2024 Primary
election day	1,737,049	1,285,160	724,842	1,000,466	1,880,014	1,197,394
e-3 though e-1	201,852	1,056,258	227,286	124,273	294,810	189,947
e-10 through e-4	70,090	419,066	121,586	44,804	106,261	57,905

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California Secretary of State

*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State VCA voter participation reports

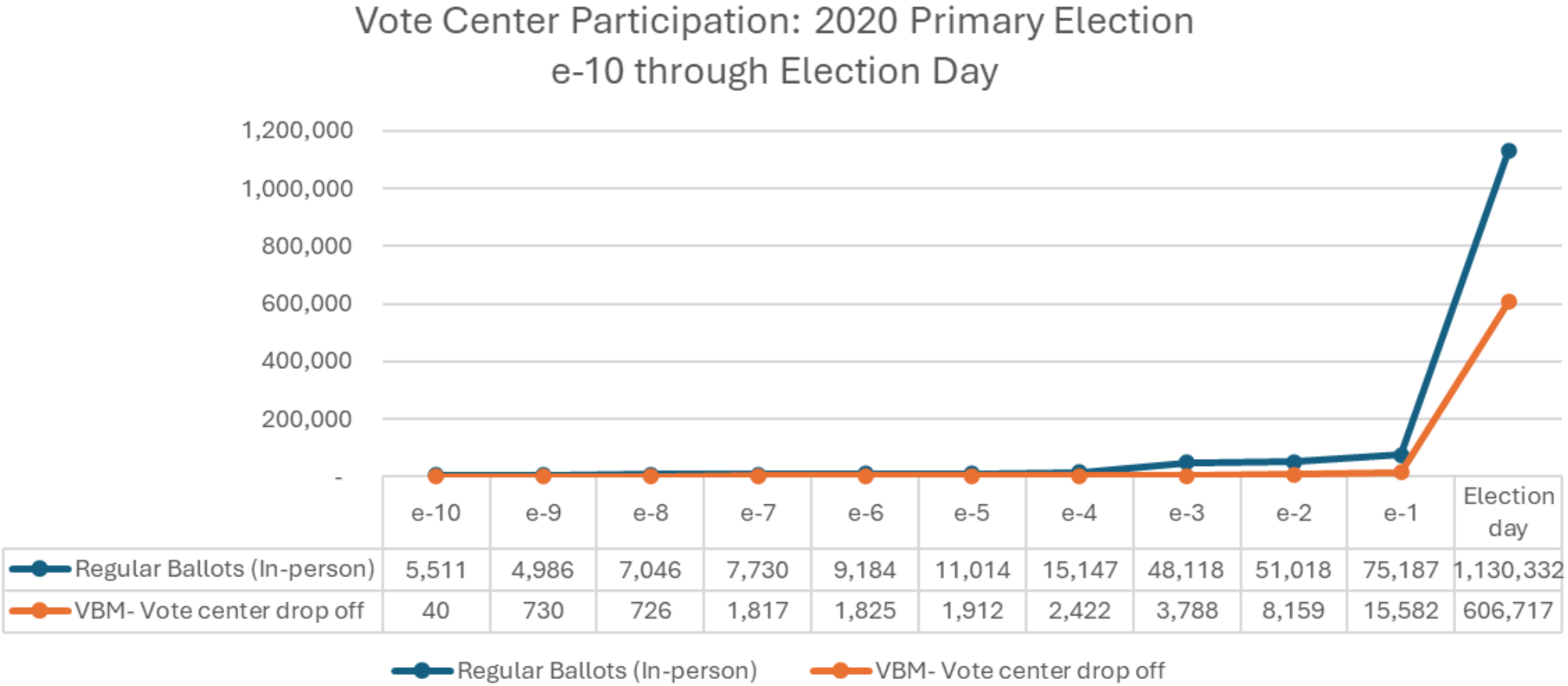# Vote Center Usage: 2020 Primary Election
e-10 through Election Day

Statewide
Voter turnout: 47%
In-person: 28%

15 VCA counties
14% of all votes came from in-person votes at vote centers.

	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
☐ VBM– Vote center drop off	40	730	726	1,817	1,825	1,912	2,422	3,788	8,159	15,582	606,717
■ Regular Ballots	5,511	4,986	7,046	7,730	9,184	11,014	15,147	48,118	51,018	75,187	1,130,332

■ Regular Ballots   ☐ VBM– Vote center drop off

2020 Primary Election: How

*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State Election Statement of vote, VCA voter participation reports, and VCA reports

Election	Vote center in-person total (e-10 through Election day)	Statewide Voter turnout
2020 Primary	1,365,273	9,687,076
2020 General	1,443,206	17,785,151
2021 Recall	666,446	12,888,061
2022 Primary	491,067	7,287,512
2022 General	1,073,804	11,145,257
2024 Primary	685,214	7,720,301

Vote Center Participation: 2020 Primary Election
e-10 through Election Day

	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
Regular Ballots (In-person)	5,511	4,986	7,046	7,730	9,184	11,014	15,147	48,118	51,018	75,187	1,130,332
VBM- Vote center drop off	40	730	726	1,817	1,825	1,912	2,422	3,788	8,159	15,582	606,717

2020 Primary Election: When

2020 General Election: How

Vote Center Participation: 2020 General Election
e-10 through Election Day

Statewide
Voter turnout: 81%
In-person: 13%

15 VCA counties
8% of all votes came from in-person votes at centers.

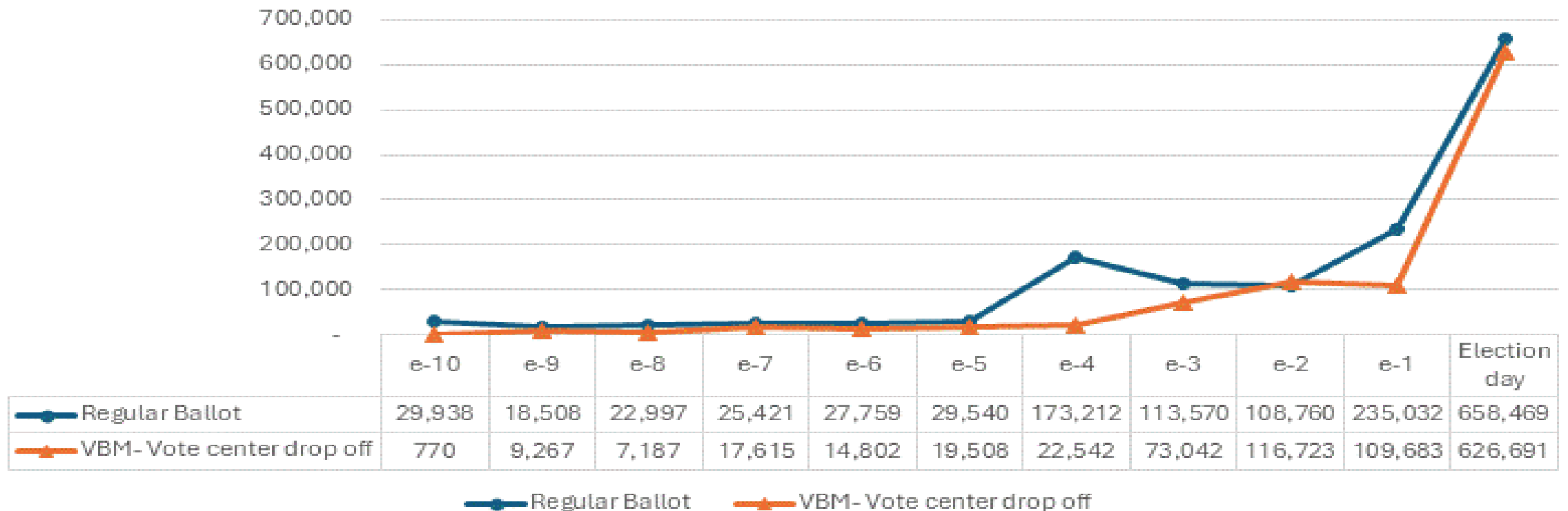|	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
VBM– Vote center drop off	770	9,267	7,187	17,615	14,802	19,508	22,542	73,042	116,723	109,683	626,691
Regular Ballot	29,938	18,508	22,997	25,421	27,759	29,540	173,212	113,570	108,760	235,032	658,469

Legend: ■ Regular Ballot □ VBM– Vote center drop off

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California Secretary of State

*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State Election Statement of vote, VCA voter participation and VCA reports

2020 General Election: When

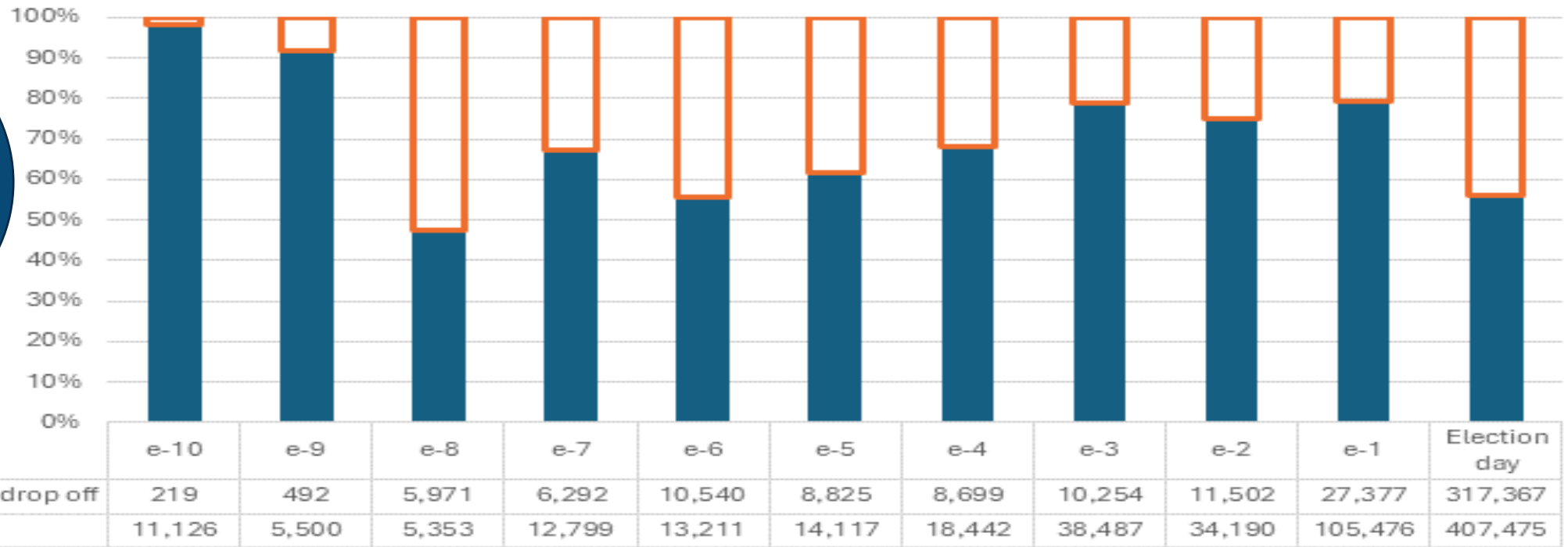Vote Center Participation: 2020 General Election
e-10 through Election Day

	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
Regular Ballot	29,938	18,508	22,997	25,421	27,759	29,540	173,212	113,570	108,760	235,032	658,469
VBM– Vote center drop off	770	9,267	7,187	17,615	14,802	19,508	22,542	73,042	116,723	109,683	626,691

Regular Ballot — VBM– Vote center drop off

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2021 Recall Election: How

Election	Vote center in-person total (e-10 through Election day)	Statewide Voter turnout
2020 Primary	1,365,273	9,687,076
2020 General	1,443,206	17,785,151
2021 Recall	666,446	12,888,061
2022 Primary	491,067	7,287,512
2022 General	1,073,804	11,145,257
2024 Primary	685,214	7,720,301

Statewide
Voter turnout: 58%
In-person: 9%

15 VCA counties
5% of all votes came from in-person votes at centers.

Vote Center Usage: 2021 Gubernatorial Recall Election e-10 through Election day

|	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
VBM– Vote center drop off	219	492	5,971	6,292	10,540	8,825	8,699	10,254	11,502	27,377	317,367
Regular Ballot	11,126	5,500	5,353	12,799	13,211	14,117	18,442	38,487	34,190	105,476	407,475

■ Regular Ballot   □ VBM– Vote center drop off

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*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State Election Statement of vote, VCA voter participation and VCA reports

2021 Recall Election: When

Vote Center Participation: 2021 Gubernatorial Recall Election
e-10 through Election day

	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
Regular Ballot	11,126	5,500	5,353	12,799	13,211	14,117	18,442	38,487	34,190	105,476	407,475
VBM- Vote center drop off	219	492	5,971	6,292	10,540	8,825	8,699	10,254	11,502	27,377	317,367

Regular Ballot   VBM- Vote center drop off

Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
California Secretary of State

*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State VCA voter participation report
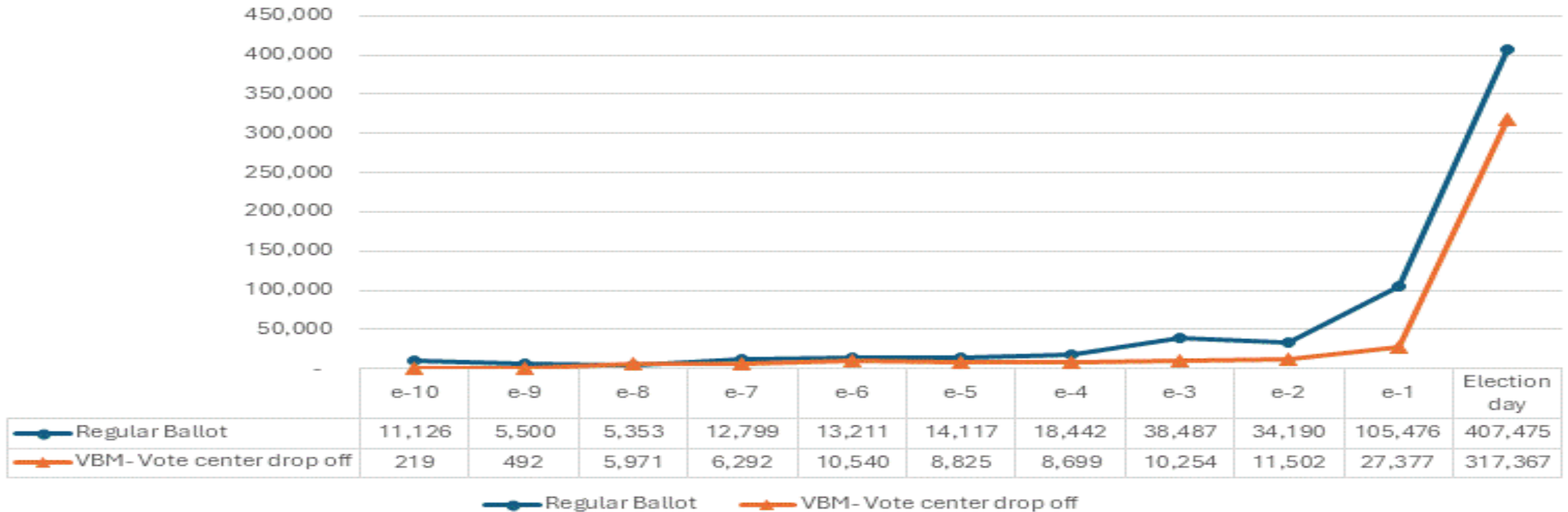
2020 - 2021 elections (15 VCA counties)

- High levels of voter activity often take place during the 4-day vote center period, especially e-1 and Election day, but there are some instances where e-4 also sees high activity.

- Regular ballot (in-person) voting is generally more popular in vote centers than VBM vote center drop off.

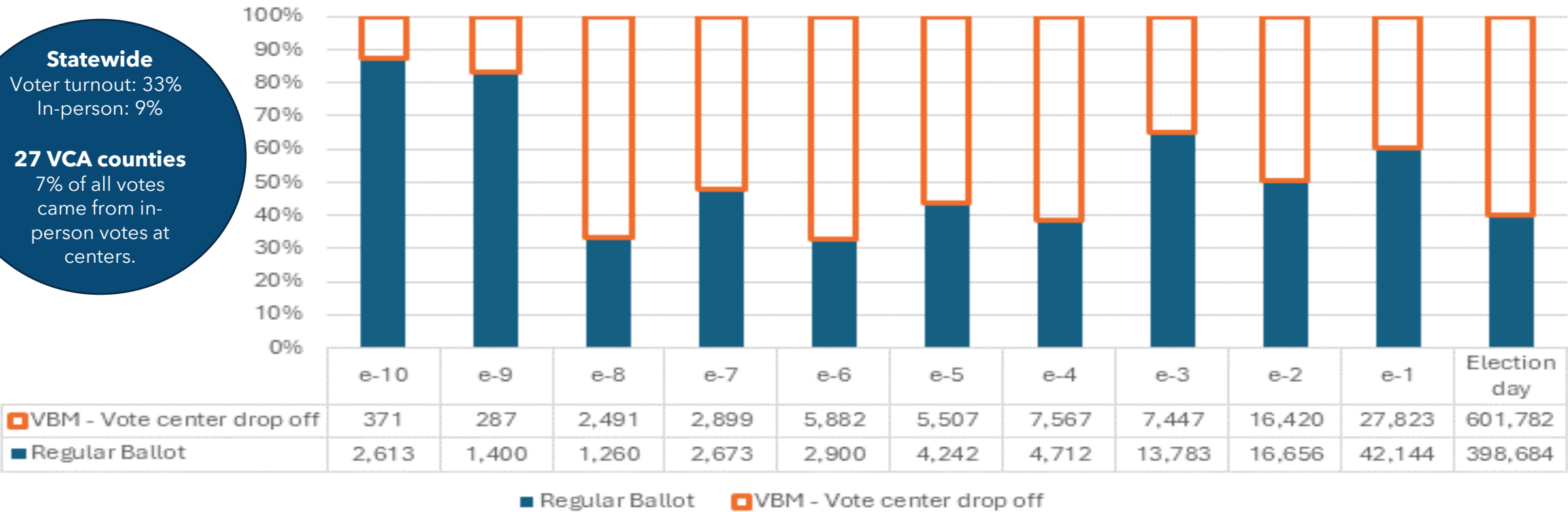- Those who vote on e-10 tend to prefer voting in-person.

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Vote Center Usage: 2022 Primary Election e-10 through Election day
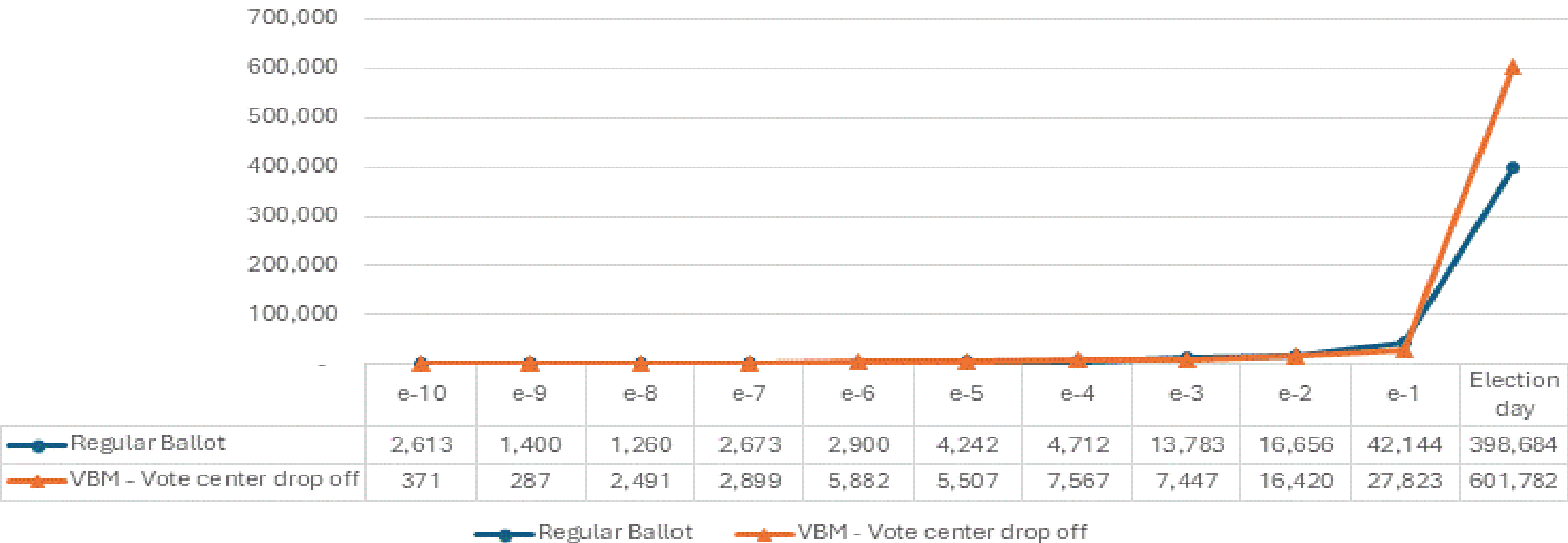
Statewide
Voter turnout: 33%
In-person: 9%

27 VCA counties
7% of all votes came from in-person votes at centers.

	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
☐ VBM – Vote center drop off	371	287	2,491	2,899	5,882	5,507	7,567	7,447	16,420	27,823	601,782
■ Regular Ballot	2,613	1,400	1,260	2,673	2,900	4,242	4,712	13,783	16,656	42,144	398,684

■ Regular Ballot   ☐ VBM – Vote center drop off

2022 Primary Election: How

Election	Vote center in-person total (e-10 through Election day)	Statewide Voter turnout
2020 Primary	1,365,273	9,687,076
2020 General	1,443,206	17,785,151
2021 Recall	666,446	12,888,061
2022 Primary	491,067	7,287,512
2022 General	1,073,804	11,145,257
2024 Primary	685,214	7,720,301

Vote Center Participation: 2022 Primary Election
e-10 through Election day

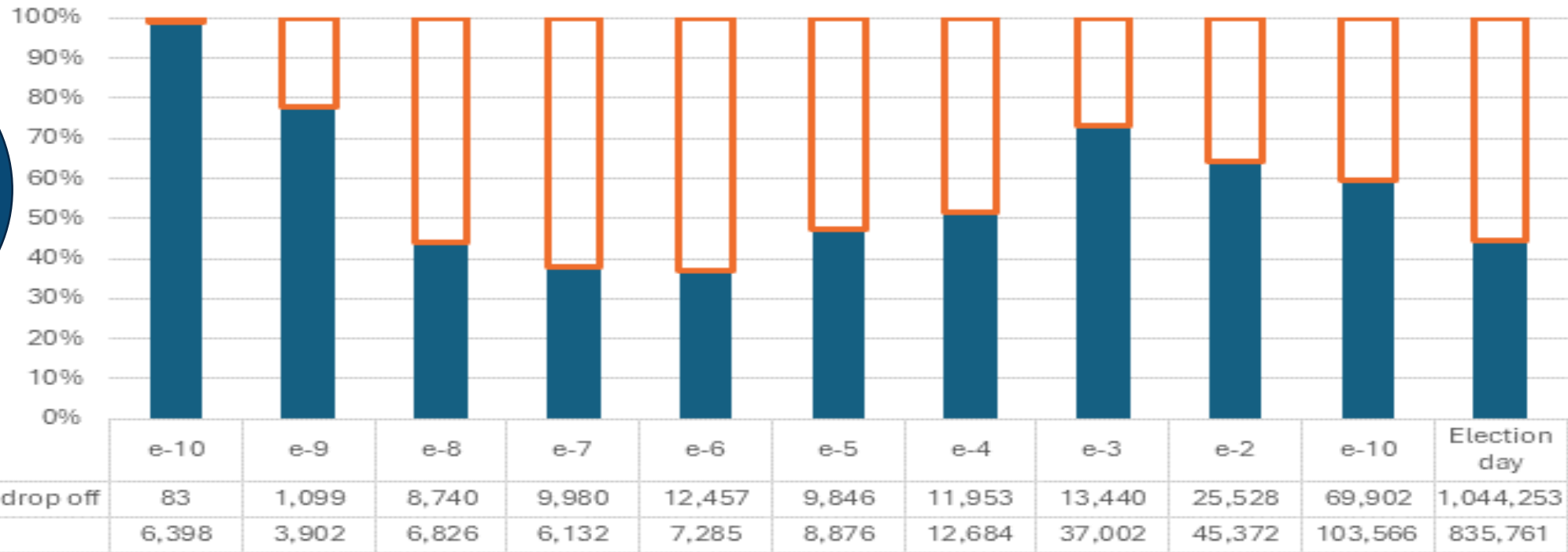|	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
Regular Ballot	2,613	1,400	1,260	2,673	2,900	4,242	4,712	13,783	16,656	42,144	398,684
VBM – Vote center drop off	371	287	2,491	2,899	5,882	5,507	7,567	7,447	16,420	27,823	601,782

2022 Primary Election: When

2022 General Election: How

Election	Vote center in-person total (e-10 through Election day)	Statewide Voter turnout
2020 Primary	1,365,273	9,687,076
2020 General	1,443,206	17,785,151
2021 Recall	666,446	12,888,061
2022 Primary	491,067	7,287,512
2022 General	1,073,804	11,145,257
2024 Primary	685,214	7,720,301

Statewide
Voter turnout: 51%
In-person: 12%

27 VCA counties
10% of all votes came from in-person votes at centers.

Vote Center Usage: 2022 General Election e-10 through Election day

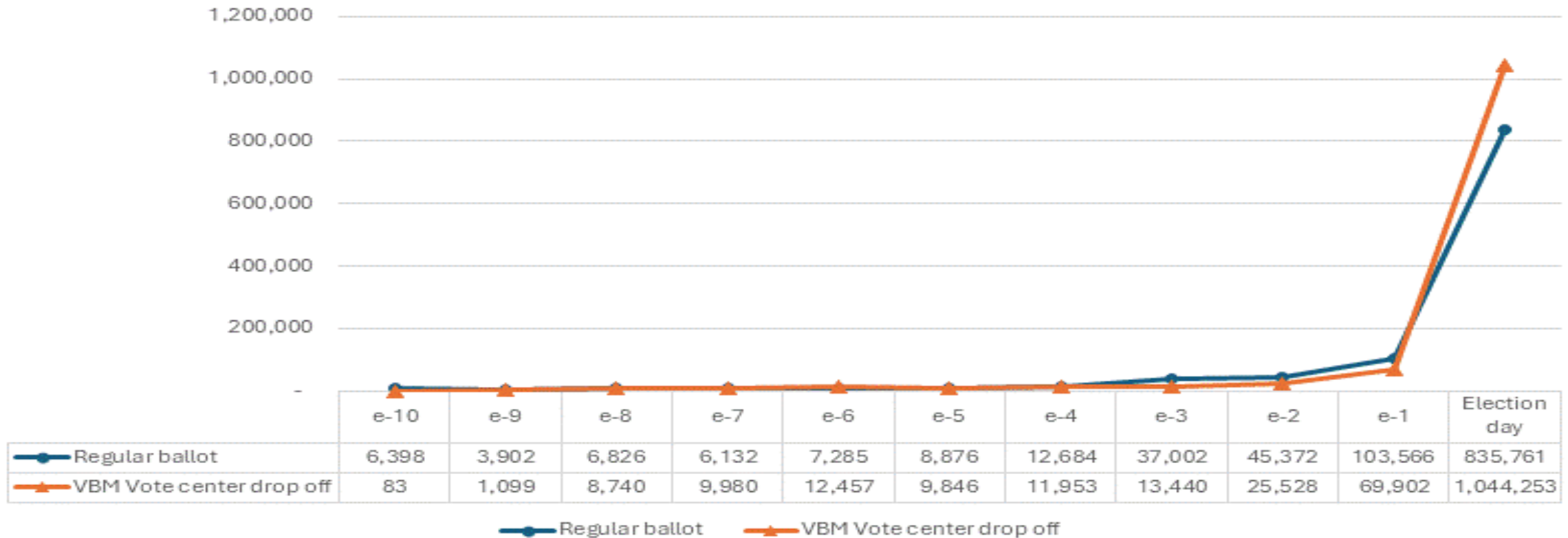|	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-10	Election day
VBM Vote center drop off	83	1,099	8,740	9,980	12,457	9,846	11,953	13,440	25,528	69,902	1,044,253
Regular ballot	6,398	3,902	6,826	6,132	7,285	8,876	12,684	37,002	45,372	103,566	835,761

■ Regular ballot   ▢ VBM Vote center drop off

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*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State Election Statement of vote, VCA voter participation and VCA reports

2022 General Election: When

Vote Center Participation: 2022 General Election
e-10 through Election day

	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
Regular ballot	6,398	3,902	6,826	6,132	7,285	8,876	12,684	37,002	45,372	103,566	835,761
VBM Vote center drop off	83	1,099	8,740	9,980	12,457	9,846	11,953	13,440	25,528	69,902	1,044,253

Regular ballot —— VBM Vote center drop off ——

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California Secretary of State

*VoteCal data from CA Secretary of State VCA voter participation report

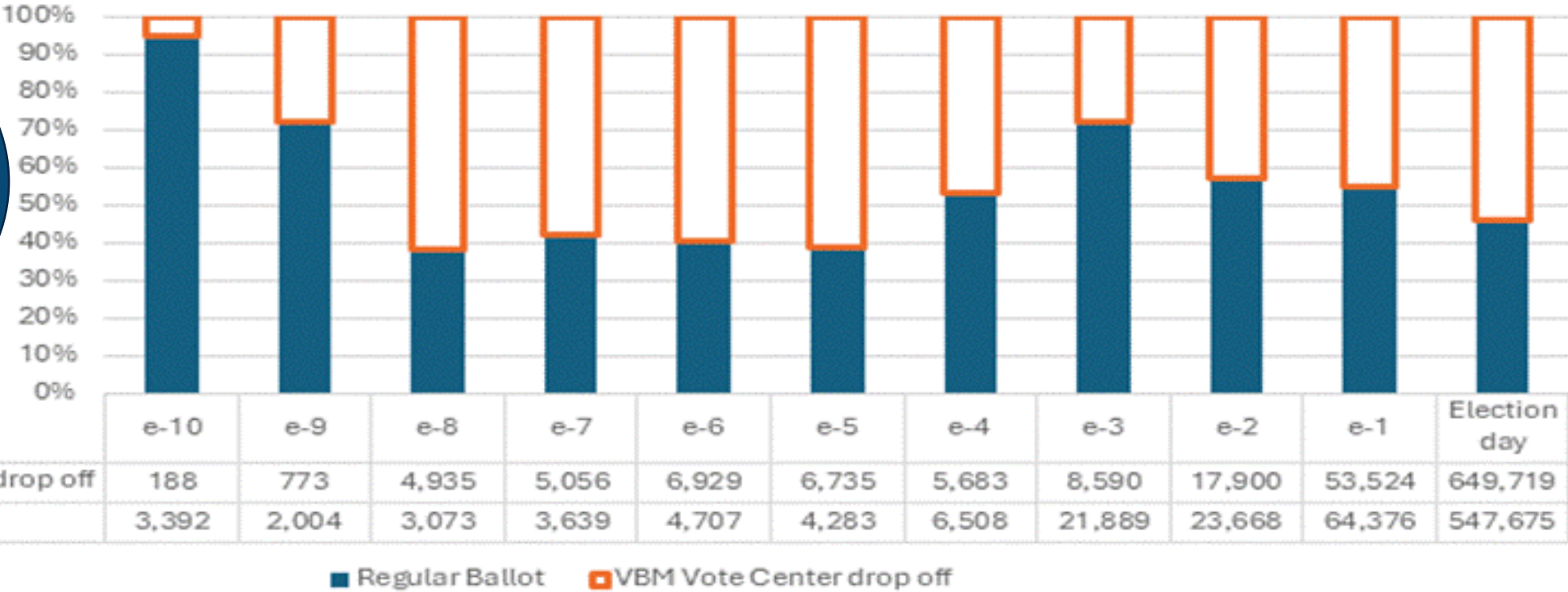# 2024 Primary Election: How

Election	Vote center in-person total (e-10 through Election day)	Statewide Voter turnout
2020 Primary	1,365,273	9,687,076
2020 General	1,443,206	17,785,151
2021 Recall	666,446	12,888,061
2022 Primary	491,067	7,287,512
2022 General	1,073,804	11,145,257
2024 Primary	685,214	7,720,301

Statewide
Voter turnout: 35%
In-person: 12%

29 VCA counties
9% of all votes came from in-person votes at centers

Vote Center Usage: 2024 Primary Election e-10 through Election day

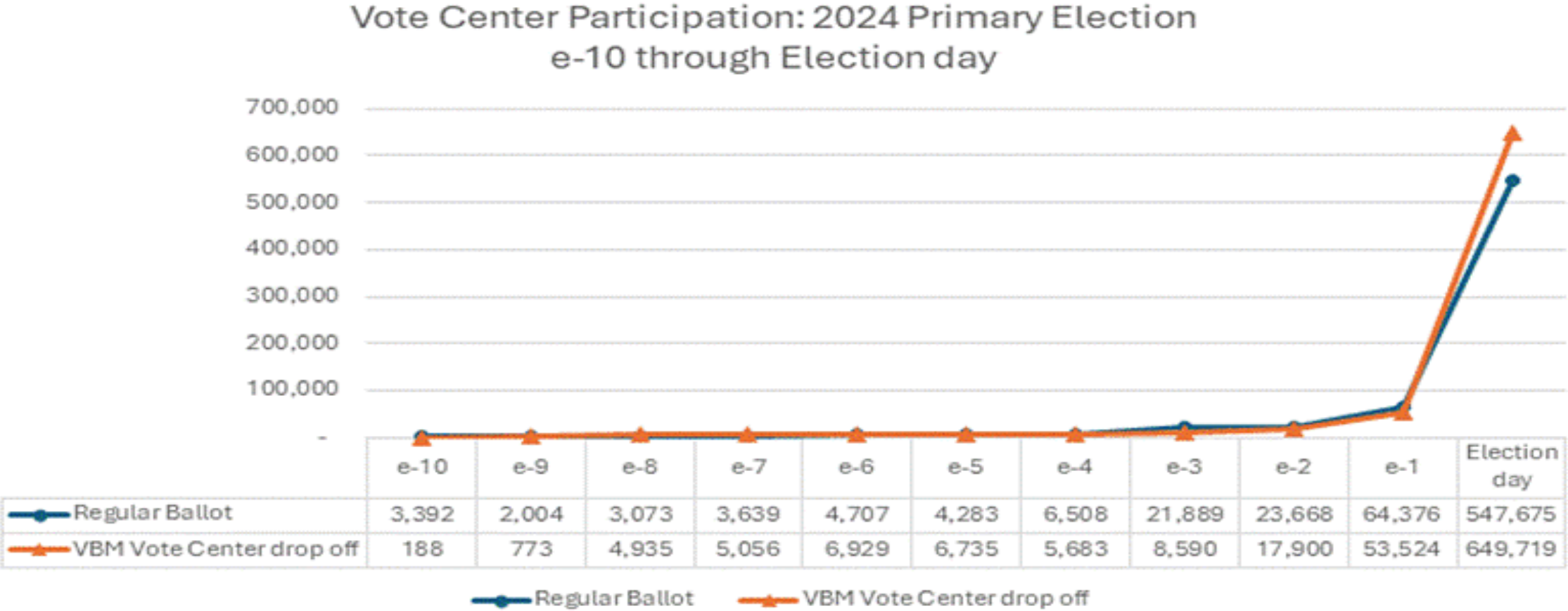|	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
VBM Vote Center drop off	188	773	4,935	5,056	6,929	6,735	5,683	8,590	17,900	53,524	649,719
Regular Ballot	3,392	2,004	3,073	3,639	4,707	4,283	6,508	21,889	23,668	64,376	547,675

■ Regular Ballot　□ VBM Vote Center drop off

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2024 Primary Election: When

Vote Center Participation: 2024 Primary Election e-10 through Election day

	e-10	e-9	e-8	e-7	e-6	e-5	e-4	e-3	e-2	e-1	Election day
Regular Ballot	3,392	2,004	3,073	3,639	4,707	4,283	6,508	21,889	23,668	64,376	547,675
VBM Vote Center drop off	188	773	4,935	5,056	6,929	6,735	5,683	8,590	17,900	53,524	649,719

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2022 – 2024 Elections

2022 elections – 27 VCA counties

2024 elections – 29 VCA counties

- Beginning with the 2022 Primary election, VBM vote center drop off on election day overtake regular ballots.

- The popularity of vote center drop off increased from e-8 and e-5.

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California Secretary of State

Conclusions

- Vote by mail has become the most popular voting method for California's voters.

- Vote centers have high traffic on Election day.

- Vote center use is seeing a steady increase in VBM vote center drop off, especially on Election day.

Questions

Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
California Secretary of State