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# Iowa Voting Series, Paper 6: An Examination of Iowa Absentee Voting Since 2000

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## Comments

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# **Iowa Voting Series, Paper 6: An Examination of Iowa Absentee Voting Since 2000**

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## **Abstract**

This is the sixth paper in a series examining aspects of voting in Iowa. In this paper I examine Iowa's absentee voting in presidential and midterm elections since 2000. The results show a trend for increased absentee voting in Iowa. The trend exists for both midterm and presidential elections, though the average percentage of absentee voting in midterm elections is well below the average for presidential elections. In looking at various subgroups based on party, gender, and age group we see that Democrats are more likely vote absentee than Republicans and women more so than men. Although there are some variations among the subgroups these general trends are fairly robust. The results for age groups, however, are mixed. The emphasis placed on young voters by Democrats resulted in the 18-24 age group having the second highest percentage of absentee voting in five of the seven elections. Nevertheless, because the turnout percentage of the 18-24 group is generally low, the proportion of this group among all absentee voters is still low. The results also showed the effect of GOTV efforts on the part of the parties and campaigns. The greater emphasis on absentee voting in presidential years is evident in the greater percentage of such votes compared to midterm elections. The emphasis on both young voters (the 18-24 group) and older voters (the 65 & Over group) also appears in the results given that these two groups generally have the highest percentage of absentee voting.

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## **Updates**

Unlike most academic papers I plan to update the data for this paper as elections occur. Data updates might lead to changes in the text as well. Below is a list of the updates as they occur.

- Initial release, May 2014

# Iowa Voting Series, Paper 6: An Examination of Iowa Absentee Voting Since 2000

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In the second paper in this series<sup>1</sup> I examined Iowa's turnout statistics in midterm and presidential elections since 2000, in general and by party.<sup>2</sup> In the third paper in the series I examined the turnout statistics by gender and party. In the fourth paper in the series I examined the turnout statistics by age group and party. In the fifth paper in the series I examined turnout by age group, gender, and party. In this paper I change focus a bit and will examine turnout in terms of absentee voting. As with the prior papers in this series my focus will be on the statistics involved rather than theorizing about the reasons for particular turnout percentages. Nevertheless, the goal of this paper, like the others in the series, is to examine aspects of voting in Iowa with an eye to future elections and to provide some background and context to discussions about Iowa voters.

## Data

As with prior papers, data for this examination were gathered from the Election Results & Statistics page of the Iowa Secretary of State's website.<sup>3</sup> This page provides links to election results for a variety of primary and general election contests in Iowa, including those for presidential and midterm elections. The turnout statistics examined here are obtained from the Statewide Statistical Reports links.<sup>4</sup> The information in these reports is broken out by gender and party as well as by age group. For each subgroup, the number who voted absentee is also indicated.

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<sup>1</sup> "An Examination of Iowa Turnout Statistics," currently available, along with other papers in the series, at <http://www.uiowa.edu/~030116/papersframe.htm>. Although I would like each to stand on its own, the papers tend to build on each other so I will make references to prior papers in the series. In addition, some explanatory material will be repeated from one paper to the next to provide background or context.

<sup>2</sup> When I refer to turnout in "presidential elections" or "midterm elections" it is a shorthand way of referring to turnout in that year in general, not for a particular contest. Certainly some who vote in a particular election do not do so for every contest. As noted below, the data considered here are from statewide turnout statistics not from any particular contest except when a particular race is used as an example.

<sup>3</sup> <http://sos.iowa.gov/elections/results/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> For example, the turnout statistics for the 2000 presidential election can be found at <http://sos.iowa.gov/elections/pdf/2000StateWithLinnDemo.pdf>

As in the prior paper, before proceeding I need to make an additional comment about the data for this paper. The information contained in the Statewide Statistical Reports links is not entirely complete with respect to party identification. The reports contain divisions for Democrat, Republican, and No Party voters, but do not include an “Other” category as they do for the registration statistics. Although this was not a problem for the 2000 through 2006 elections, for 2008 and beyond it means that the grand total of registrants and voters in any particular age group cannot be achieved by simply adding the Democrats, Republicans, and No Party voters in that age group. In the first paper in this series I simply added registrants in the Other category to No Party registrants. I cannot do that for this paper, however, as I have neither an exact count of such Other registrants on election day nor an indication of how many voted. Nevertheless, although this number varies from about one to several hundred registrants or voters depending on the category or election, that number is small, relatively speaking, and I will only focus on the three main political affiliations.

## Iowa Registered Voters

I begin by repeating Figure 1<sup>5</sup> from the second paper. This figure shows the number of registered Iowa voters and the turnout percentage in general elections from 2000 to 2012. This period covers four presidential elections and three midterm elections. The height of the bars represents the total number of registered voters. Except for a slight decline for the 2002 election (due to adjustments following the 2000 census), the number of registered voters in Iowa has slowly increased in the last dozen years.<sup>6</sup> The turnout percentage for the elections has been steady, though there is a clear difference between presidential and midterm years. The turnout in presidential elections has varied only a few percentage points between 71.57% and 75.96%. Although the turnout for midterm elections has also varied within a narrow range (52.71% to 56.35%), that range is substantially lower than for presidential elections. The average turnout in presidential years is 73.36%, but only 54.01% in midterm years. Those who follow politics are well aware of the much lower turnout for midterm elections, but it is worth knowing just how substantial the difference is. This is particularly true in a state that is fairly evenly balanced between the two major parties. More specifically, knowing who turns out, particularly in midterm elections, can aid parties and candidates in their get out the vote (GOTV) efforts.

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<sup>5</sup> It is a bit inconvenient for readers, but to make the figures larger I will put them at the end of the paper rather than within the text.

<sup>6</sup> See the first paper in the series, “An Empirical Examination of Iowa Voter Registration Statistics” for more details. Interestingly, although 2012 was also a post-census adjustment year, the registration losses earlier in the year were made up by the time of the general election in November. As I mentioned in the fourth paper, this is an example of the difference in resources for get out the vote efforts in midterm (2002) versus presidential (2012) election years.

The second paper then examined turnout differences by party and found, in brief, that turnout for Republicans was consistently a few percentage points higher than that of Democrats for both midterm and presidential elections. In addition, turnout for both parties was several points lower in midterm elections. In contrast, turnout for No Party voters (what Iowa calls independents) was much lower than either Democrats or Republicans, particularly in midterm elections.

The third paper examined registration and turnout differences by gender and party and found that women outnumbered men as registered voters in all seven elections examined. By party, there were clearly more women than men registered as Democrat or No Party. The gender difference for Republican registrations was much smaller, though men began to take a lead in the last two elections. As for turnout, women had a higher turnout percentage than men in all four presidential elections regardless of party. For midterm elections the turnout percentages of men and women were much closer and somewhat mixed in that Republican women had a higher turnout percentage than men for all three midterms, men were higher than women No Party voters for all three midterms, and the results for Democrats were mixed.

In the fourth paper I looked at registration and turnout statistics for the five age groups for which turnout statistics are reported (18-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50-64, and 65 & Over) along with party differences. The data confirmed conventional wisdom that older registrants are more likely to vote. In addition, the differences in turnout between presidential and midterm election years was reduced as voters aged. For the most part, party differences shown in prior papers were evident across age groups. More specifically, No Party voters had consistently lower turnout than Democrats or Republicans, and Republican turnout was usually a bit higher than that of Democrats.

In the fifth paper I examined registration and turnout statistics for subgroups based on age group, gender, and party. Some trends from prior papers persisted in the subgroups. Republican men and women tend to have the highest turnout percentages regardless of age group, but are closely followed by men and women Democrats. Men and women No Party voters are clearly below the turnout percentages of voters of either party. A general pattern of women having higher turnout percentages in presidential elections and men in midterm elections is fairly persistent across age groups and parties.

As I mentioned in the third paper, it is worth noting that there are different ways of calculating turnout percentage. Some use as the baseline the voting age population. Others use the number of those who are eligible to vote (i.e., not counting those who have lost their voting rights). For present purposes I use the number registered to vote.

How many Iowans are not registered, regardless of eligibility, is a separate matter.<sup>7</sup> I am also not considering how Iowa compares to other states in terms of turnout.

## **Absentee Voting in Iowa**

Having examined registration and turnout for several subgroups of Iowa voters, in this paper I turn to a particular type of turnout: absentee voting. Traditional absentee voting was infrequently used and more difficult than the versions used today in most states. In the past, a voter needed to have an approved excuse to request an absentee ballot. The expectation, of course, was that voters would vote at their regular polling place on Election Day unless they had a sufficient excuse to cast an absentee ballot. One such excuse was, as the name suggests, that the voter would be absent from his or her regular voting location on Election Day. Legitimate excuses for being away often included reasons such as military service, planned travel, or college students away at school. Requests for absentee ballots often had to be filed 10 days or more prior to Election Day.

Various reforms over the years aimed at increasing voter turnout also affected absentee voting. The reforms generally removed request deadlines and the requirement of a justification for the absentee ballot. In addition, the basic notion of absentee voting has been replaced by what is now often referred to as “early voting.”

Early voting is much like regular voting with two main exceptions. The first is that once a ballot is filled out it is placed in a security envelope which is then stored until Election Day when the envelope is opened and the ballot counted. The second difference is that the early voting does not take place at one’s regular polling place. There are two basic locations for early voting. The first is in-person at the county auditor’s office.<sup>8</sup> Such in-person voting usually begins about six weeks before the election. The second is at a “satellite early voting station.” Such satellite voting stations are smaller versions of regular voting stations, but voters of any precinct can vote at them. As with in-person voting at the county auditor’s office, the ballot is placed in a security envelope and then placed in a ballot box that is stored until Election Day.

Locations for such satellite polling stations are selected either by the county auditor or by citizen petition. The goal, of course, is to encourage voters to cast their ballots by

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<sup>7</sup> Clearly the turnout efforts of campaigns focus on registering people to vote as well as getting them to cast a ballot. Nevertheless, those already registered are likely to be more interested in the political process and therefore more likely to vote, on average, than those who are not yet registered. Identifying and registering those who are eligible is an additional process that requires treatment separate from the focus of this paper.

<sup>8</sup> In Iowa, the county auditor is the local elected official in charge of elections along with his or her other duties. At the state level, it is the Secretary of State who is the elected official in charge of elections. To make things a bit more confusing, Iowa also has an Auditor of State, whose duties are financial.

making it easier for them. The locations selected are often those where there tends to be a lot of people during the day. These can include locations such as grocery stores, hospitals, libraries, college residence halls, and so on.

It is also worth mentioning that there is a political element to the selection of locations for satellite polling stations. This may not be surprising given that county auditors are elected on a partisan ballot. On the other hand, many, if not most, county auditors prefer to exercise their duties in a nonpartisan way. Those auditors who take a more partisan approach to their job can select areas for satellite polling stations that have a higher concentration of voters of their party while downplaying those locations with more voters of the opposing party. Requesting a satellite location by petition helps to balance such partisan choices, but county auditors can still make the process difficult if they are so inclined.

Despite the popularity of early voting, more traditional absentee ballots are still available and used by many people. Procedurally, although no reason need be given for requesting an absentee ballot, the voter must still request that one be mailed to him or her by the county auditor. The only time limit now is based on the expectation of how long it will take for a mailed ballot to reach the voter and then be returned to the county auditor. As most who watch election returns know, such ballots can be counted as long as they are postmarked by the day before the election even if received a few days later.<sup>9</sup>

Aside from basic procedural differences between more traditional absentee voting and early voting there is also a fundamental difference in terms of requesting such a ballot. Although parties and campaigns will encourage voters to make use of satellite voting stations, it is the voter who makes the basic decision to do so. As with regular voting, the voter wishing to cast an early vote simply shows up at the designated time and location for the satellite station and requests a ballot. In contrast, parties and campaigns will actively solicit absentee ballot requests from voters. The general goal is to boost turnout for a particular party or campaign. Campaign or party workers are usually trained in the procedures for requesting an absentee ballot and will do so while going door to door or at a location with heavy foot traffic (again, grocery stores, etc.). An additional goal is to reach voters who may be less reliable in terms of their voting history. Parties and campaigns often have access to a voter's voting history. Those who have a history of not always voting will be targeted for absentee ballot requests. Shut-ins and those who might have more difficulty voting (e.g., elderly voters in care facilities) are also targeted.

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<sup>9</sup> In Iowa, absentee ballots mailed to voters can also be returned in person at the county auditor's office on Election Day before the polls close.



Before beginning to examine the data let me comment on the conventional wisdom regarding absentee voting. The first bit of conventional wisdom is that Democrats are better at the absentee and early voting game than Republicans. This means that they do a better job of getting their voters to either request absentee ballots or to vote early at satellite voting stations. In my home county (Johnson) the county auditor regularly releases updates on the number of requests for absentee ballots or early votes cast and political activists of both parties keep a close eye on those figures. The reasonable assumption is that voters will vote for their party's candidates, which means such votes are already "in the bank," so to speak, prior to Election Day. Along these lines, stories following the 2012 presidential election noted that Republican candidate Mitt Romney had more votes for him cast on Election Day, but the lead amassed by Democrats as a result of their early voting efforts on behalf of President Obama was too much to overcome.

A second point of conventional wisdom is that Republicans tend to prefer to vote on Election Day. Although Democrats are better at the early voting game, Republicans have certainly tried to improve in this area. One stumbling block is the view held by many Republicans that they prefer to wait until Election Day to cast their ballot. One might argue that this preference comes from a generally more "traditionalist" view held by many Republicans. Regardless of the reason for the preference, it does seem to put Republicans at a disadvantage as they work to catch up to Democrats in this area.

Turning to the absentee voter data, Figure 2 shows the number and percentage of Iowa voters who cast absentee ballots in election years since 2000.<sup>10</sup> The height of each bar represents the total voters and, as discussed in prior papers, clearly indicates the drop in turnout for midterm elections compared to presidential elections. (Although a separate number for the total voters is not shown at the bottom of the figure, the total of Absentee and Regular voters is equal to the number shown in the Voted row in Figure 1.) The red portion at the top of each bar represents the number who voted absentee, with the percentage voting absentee as indicated. There are two points to make about these percentages. The first is that there is a clear difference in the percentages between midterm and presidential years. Although the absentee voting percentage for 2000 is actually lower than the midterm years of 2002 or 2006, sharp increases for the remaining presidential years put the presidential year average (32.70%) well above that for the three midterm years (25.76%).

The second thing to notice about these percentages is that they are generally increasing and doing so at a faster rate than the increases in turnout. For example, 30,974 more Iowans voted in 2008 than 2004, but the increase in absentee voting was 85,680. The

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<sup>10</sup> The election turnout reports on the Iowa Secretary of State's website do not distinguish between more traditional absentee voting and early voting. The reports simply label all forms of early voting as "absentee." I will adopt that terminology for the figures and text describing the data, but will occasionally need to differentiate between the two methods.

difference between 2012 and 2008 is even greater where the increase in turnout was 43,483 but the increase in absentee voting was 133,379. There is also a substantial increase in the percentage of absentee voting in midterm elections between 2002 and 2010, but 2006 is out of line with the other two elections. In 2006 the percentage of absentee voting actually decreased from 2002 even though the number of voters increased. This is a bit of a puzzle given that 2006 was a very good year for Democrats and they are known to be better at getting their base to vote absentee than Republicans. I will examine this more closely when we look at various subgroups below.

On the whole, there is a clear trend for increasing the percentage of voters who vote absentee. These increases likely result from a combination of changes in the law, increased efforts to get people to vote early, and a greater acceptance of casting early ballots on the part of the public.

I now begin an examination of absentee voting by political party, gender, and age group.

## **Absentee Voting by Party**

As I begin an examination of the absentee voting data for various groups and subgroups, I must note that there are two ways of looking at the data. One way is to examine the percentage of absentee voting within a particular group and a second is to compare the percentage across subgroups for a particular demographic criterion. Thus, for example, Figures 3 and 4 present the data for absentee voting by party in two different ways. Although presenting the data in two ways greatly increases the number of figures I will include in this paper, each method can present something of interest.

In Figure 3 we see the percentage of absentee voters within each party. As noted previously, Democrats have led in efforts to encourage voters to vote early. Republicans and No Party voters lag well behind Democrats in this regard. Nevertheless, Republicans do have a clear, if small, lead on No Party voters.

Regarding No Party voters, one could suggest two possible reasons for their lower percentage of absentee voting. The first follows from the generally lesser interest in voting as evidenced in the lower turnout percentages discussed in prior papers. If No Party voters generally have a reduced interest in voting it is not surprising that they would also have a reduced interest in taking the additional step necessary to cast an early ballot.<sup>11</sup> This is particularly true for the need to fill out a form to request an

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<sup>11</sup> On a related note, and at least in my county (Johnson), No Party voters who requested a traditional absentee ballot (i.e., one that had to be returned by mail to the county auditor) had a much higher percentage of non-returned ballots than either Democrats or Republicans. A rough calculation of the

absentee ballot, but satellite voting stations are intended to make voting easier. This leads to the second reason No Party voters may have a lower percentage of absentee voters: they simply may not have made up their minds prior to Election Day. Although there are various reasons for being a No Party voter, one reason is that they are sufficiently independent that they do not vote based on party but based on the individual candidates. To the extent that is true, No Party voters may very well wish to wait until Election Day before making a final decision.

Overall, we see two trends in Figure 3. The first is a general trend for increased absentee voting for all three parties.<sup>12</sup> We saw in Figure 2 a steady increase in the percentage of absentee voting for each of the four presidential elections. That pattern holds for each of the three parties. The trend for increased absentee voting in midterm elections also generally holds though as noted for Figure 2, 2006 seems to be an exception. For all three parties, the absentee voter percentage in 2010 is well above that of 2002. In contrast, the absentee voter percentage for 2006 is below that of 2002 for all three parties, though for No Party voters the difference is less than a percentage point.

The second thing to notice in this figure is the general drop in absentee voting for midterm elections. The general drop in turnout for midterms would not seem to directly affect the percentage of absentee voting among those who do turnout. Indirectly, however, it does. It is well known that more resources and effort are put into the turnout efforts for presidential elections compared to midterm elections. One aspect of those efforts, of course, is the work done to encourage voters to request absentee ballots or vote early. In addition, the generally lower interest of voters during midterm elections likely causes more voters to wait longer before making up their minds, which might lead many to not cast a ballot at all.

Figure 4 shows the distribution of absentee voters by party. The proportions (shown as percentages) among the three parties fit our basic expectations. Democrats have had better absentee and early voting efforts in Iowa, so it is no surprise that they have largest proportion of absentee voters, though it is interesting that Republicans actually had a slightly higher percentage in 2000. It is also no surprise that No Party voters have the lowest proportion. It is worth noting that for the 2002 and 2006 midterm elections Democrats made up nearly half of all absentee voters. Since the high of 2006, however, the proportion of absentee voters who are Democrats has gradually fallen. In contrast, the lines showing proportions of Republicans and No Party voters are nearly mirror

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non-return rate for No Party voters was 10% in the elections since 2000. Democrats were a few points better (i.e., lower) than No Party voters and Republicans a point or two better than Democrats.

<sup>12</sup> As I mentioned in prior papers, I hesitate to refer to No Party voters as a political party. In earlier papers I referred to Democrats, Republicans, and No Party voters as “groups” to avoid this. Unfortunately, this can become confusing when I am also discussing the age groups. Thus, for present purposes I will refer to No Party voters as a party to distinguish between political registrations as opposed to age groups.

images of each other. To the extent that parties focus their turnout efforts on members of their own party, it makes sense that the proportion of absentee voters for those parties would increase in midterm years and decrease a bit in presidential years when more effort is put into turning out No Party voters as well. One final point to keep in mind for this figure is that during this period the differences between registered Democrats and Republicans were generally small, with the exception of a surge in registered Democrats following the 2008 caucuses. At the same time, those registered as No Party were always more numerous than either those registered as Democrats or Republicans. Thus, neither the larger proportion of Democrats nor the smaller proportion of No Party voters among those who voted absentee can be explained simply based on registration numbers.

## **Absentee Voting by Gender**

Figure 5 shows the percentage of men and women in each of the seven elections who voted absentee. Consistent with the percentages in Figure 2 we see a general increase in the percentage of both men and women who are voting absentee. This trend holds for presidential elections. The trend would seem to hold for midterm years, but 2006 continues to be an outlier. What is particularly interesting about this figure is that the lines for men and women are nearly parallel. Women voted absentee at a rate about 3.0% to 5.5% higher than for men. We might expect this difference is due to the greater emphasis Democrats place on women (particularly single women) as an important part of their base. Later figures will explore this possibility.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of men and women among the absentee voters for each election. What is striking about this figure is how flat the two lines are. With variations of less than 2.0%, on average 13.94% more of those who cast absentee ballots were women. Lest one think this result boring, keep in mind the consistency of this distribution is despite a general increase in absentee voting and substantial turnout differences between midterm and presidential elections. It is also worthwhile to keep in mind that even though the distribution between men and women has been fairly constant, the actual number of voters creating that distribution has increased. Thus, although there were 39,235 more women than men casting absentee ballots in 2000, that number had grown to 91,260 by 2012.

## **Absentee Voting by Gender and Party**

Figure 7 shows the percentages of absentee voters in six subgroups divided by party and gender. There are several quick points that can be made about this figure. First, the trends we saw previously in Figures 3 and 5 are present in this figure: women are more likely to vote absentee than men, Democrats are more likely to vote absentee than Republicans or No Party voters, and there has been a general increase in absentee

voting. Second, there is a persistent “gender gap” in absentee voting. Women had a higher percentage of absentee voting for all three parties in all seven elections. It is not particularly surprising that the gap is largest for Democrats (for all but 2008). That the gap for Republicans is larger than for No Party voters is a bit surprising given efforts on the part of Democrats in particular to reach out to women No Party voters who have expressed support for Democrats based on phone calling and door to door canvassing. Third, although the gap is relatively stable for Democrats, it is increasing for both Republicans and No Party voters. In the 2000 through 2006 elections the gap for Republicans was always under 4.0% and for No Party voters it was always under 3.0%. In the 2008 through 2012 elections the gap for Republicans was always over 4.0% and for No Party voters it was always over 3.0%. In fact, the gap for No Party voters more than doubled from an average of 1.48% in the first four elections to over 3.69% in the next three. Fourth, the difference between the high and low “gender gap” within each of the three parties narrowed over the time period from 3.38% in 2000 to only 0.27% in 2012. It is true, of course, that the reduction was largely due to an increased gap for No Party voters, but the difference between Republicans and Democrats also narrowed over the period.

Figure 8 shows the proportion of absentee voters belonging to each subgroup. The first thing to notice is the dominance of women Democrats who have made up 25% or more of absentee voters in all but the 2000 election (where they still had the highest percentage). Women are also a higher proportion of absentee voters for Republicans and No Party voters, though the gap is smaller. One interesting aspect of this figure is how the lines for all but women Democrats are rather bunched and several cross at various points. No Party voters still generally have the lowest proportions, but women No Party voters had a higher proportion than Republican men for the 2004 and 2008 elections. Similarly, Republican men had a higher proportion than Democrat men for 2000 and 2010. Republican women also had a higher proportion than Democrat men in four of the seven elections and were only very slightly behind in a fifth (2004). On the whole, notice that by 2012 five of the subgroups, all but women Democrats, were rather closely bunched, and four of those were within two percentage points of each other.

One final point to make about Figure 8 concerns the general pattern we see in the lines. Notice that the general pattern, with some minor variations, is for the proportion of Democrats and Republicans, men and women, to be a bit higher in midterm election years and lower in presidential years. Conversely, the clear pattern for No Party voters, both men and women, is for increased proportions in presidential years and decreased proportions in midterm years. Although this might seem counterintuitive at first, it makes sense to see this different pattern for No Party voters. As mentioned previously, campaigns and parties have a stronger get out the vote (GOTV) effort in presidential years. That effort includes identifying supporters among No Party voters and getting them to vote early. On the other hand, during midterms the GOTV effort is more streamlined and tends to focus a bit more on turning out the base. Thus, in terms of

proportions of the absentee voters, No Party voters will be a larger proportion in years when emphasis is also placed on them and a lesser proportion when it is not.

## Absentee Voting by Age Group

Election data provided by the Iowa Secretary of State's office also breaks the results into five age groups: 18-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50-64, and 65 & Over. Figure 9 shows the percentage of each age group that voted absentee. Notice first that the general trend of increased absentee voting over the period that we saw in prior figures is present for each of the five age groups. Also present for each of the groups is the general pattern of increases in absentee voting in presidential years and decreases in midterm years. The exception to this pattern, for all five age groups, is 2002 which saw a modest increase over 2000.

What is different about this figure is the ordering of the groups. Recall from prior papers that in terms of turnout each older age group had a higher turnout percentage until the oldest group, which nevertheless had the highest turnout percentage in midterm elections.<sup>13</sup> Here, however, the youngest age group (18-24) actually has the second highest absentee voting percentage in five of the seven elections, the exceptions being 2008 and 2012). At a certain level, this is understandable given the effort put into getting college students to vote and given the generally low turnout of this age group. What is odd, however, is that this group did not have a higher percentage in 2008 given the emphasis on the youth vote by Democrats and the Obama campaign. The 65 & Over group had the highest percentage of absentee voters in all seven elections. This is not surprising given the emphasis the parties place on making sure that older voters have an opportunity to vote. In addition to helping such voters fill out absentee request forms, the parties and campaigns will provide rides and directions to early voting locations. The 50-64 group had turnout percentages similar to those of the 65 & Over group, but their absentee voting percentages are well behind those of the older group. The final two groups, 25-34 and 35-49, are nearly indistinguishable and are well below the 50-64 group. Interestingly, the 25-34 group has slightly higher percentages than the 35-49 group. This might be a holdover from being more heavily targeted for absentee voting while in the 18-24 group, but the effect seems to fade slightly upon reaching the 35-49 group.

Consistent with prior pairs of figures, Figure 10 shows the proportion of each age group (as a percentage) among all absentee voters. To some extent, the pattern here is reminiscent of the flat lines for gender proportions we saw in Figure 6. That the number of registered voters in each age group is relatively stable over the period contributes to the flatness of the lines, at least for the four younger age groups. (See Figure 2 of the fourth paper in the series.) Turnout, of course, is also a factor and from

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<sup>13</sup> See, in particular, Figure 5 of the fourth paper in the series.

Figure 5 of the series' fourth paper we saw that the 18-24 age group had the lowest turnout percentage. The turnout percentage of each successive group increased until the 65 & Over group, which was very similar to that of the 50-64 group. Thus, at an initial level, it is not surprising that the two youngest groups have the smallest proportion of absentee voters and that the proportion increases for each successive older group.

Looking at the data more closely, one explanation for the smaller proportion of the 18-24 and 25-34 groups is that because they cover a smaller range of years they contain a smaller number of registered voters. Figure 2 in the fourth paper in the series confirms that the 18-24 group has the smallest number of registered voters, averaging 249,235 over the seven elections. The 25-34 group averaged 339,490 registered voters for the seven elections. The remaining three groups all averaged over 400,000 registered voters. Thus, even though the 18-24 group had the second highest percentage of absentee voting, as we saw in Figure 9, the smaller number of voters in the group resulted in a fairly low proportion of all absentee voters. Although there were more voters in the 25-34 group, that group also had a lower percentage of absentee voting, resulting in a proportion very similar to that of the 18-24 group.

The 35-49 group has the next largest proportion of absentee voters. Although the percentage of absentee voting for this group is nearly identical to the percentage for the 25-34 group, the larger number of voters in this group and their higher turnout percentage results in a larger proportion of the absentee total. Similarly, the larger number of voters in the 50-64 group, higher turnout percentage, and higher percentage of absentee voting results in a larger proportion of the absentee total compared to the 35-49 group. Finally, the 65 & Over group actually has a smaller number of registered voters than either of the two next younger groups, but a high turnout percentage and the highest absentee voting percentage results in this group having the highest proportion of absentee voters in all seven elections.

In terms of the general shapes of the lines, notice that the increases and decreases in presidential and midterm years for the three youngest groups are the opposite of those in the two older groups. The proportions of absentee voters for the three youngest groups increase in presidential years and decrease in midterm years, but the opposite is the case for the two oldest groups, most especially for the 65 & Over group which has the greatest amount of variation overall. Again, from Figure 5 of the fourth paper in the series we saw that the two oldest groups had both the highest turnout percentages and also the smallest amount of variation between presidential and midterm elections. Thus, because absentee voting for the two oldest groups is more stable, as the number of absentee voters in the three youngest groups decreases the proportion of absentee voters in the two oldest groups increases.

## Absentee Voting by Age Group and Party

The next step is to separate the absentee voting of the age groups by their party affiliations. Figure 11 is split into five parts, one for each age group. Each of the five parts shows the percentage of voters in each of the three parties who voted absentee. Thus, Figure 11a shows the percentage of absentee voting among Democrats, Republicans, and No Party voters for the 18-24 group, Figure 11b for the 25-34 group, and so on.

A quick look at the parts of Figure 11 shows that the patterns for the five age groups are fairly similar and are consistent with the patterns shown for the overall party breakdown in Figure 3 and the overall age group breakdown in Figure 7. With the exception of only the two youngest groups in the 2000 election Democrats have been well above Republicans and No Party voters in terms of absentee voting percentage. Republicans had consistently higher absentee voting than No Party voters for the 18-24 age group. For the older groups, however, the pattern is slightly mixed. In the 2008 election No Party voters had a higher absentee voting percentage than Republicans for the four older age groups. In addition, for the 2004 election No Party voters had a higher absentee voter percentage than Republicans for the 65 & Over group, and were only 0.05% behind them in the 50-64 group.

For all age groups and parties we continue to see a substantial dip in absentee voting for the 2006 and 2010 midterm elections. As shown in Figure 2, absentee voting in 2002 was actually higher than 2000. In Figure 3 we saw that this increase was primarily the result of increased absentee voting among Democrats given that both Republicans and No Party voters showed a slight dip for 2002. In Figure 11 we now see that the slight dip for Republicans and No Party voters occurred across all age groups. Similarly, the increase for Democrats was also experienced for all five age groups. In addition, for the 18-24 group, the absentee voting percentage was actually higher in 2002 (44.08%) than in 2004 (43.97%) if only slightly.

Figure 12 is also divided into five parts based on age group. Each part shows the proportion of voters of each party affiliation for that age group's absentee voters. As with the overall distribution by party shown in Figure 4, the patterns for each of the five parts are relatively level with variations between midterm and presidential elections. One thing to notice in the patterns is how the three party lines are intermingled for the 18-24 group. With each successive age group the lines begin to separate. The line for Democrats does so more quickly, but by the 50-64 group the three lines are completely separate. Interestingly, for the 65 & Over group the gap between Democrats and Republicans seen for the 50-64 group has narrowed slightly. On the other hand, the proportion of No Party absentee voters in the 65 & Over group dropped below 20% for all seven elections and there is a wide gap between them and Republicans.



Focusing on No Party voters, notice that they go from over 30% of absentee voters in all seven elections for the 18-24 group to less than 20% for the 65 & Over group. The explanation for this decline in the proportion of No Party voters is largely a factor of the decreasing proportion of registered No Party voters in general. From Figures 3a-e of the fourth paper in the series we saw that those registered as No Party voters dominated the 18-24 group. For that group, No Party registered voters averaged 135,131 for the seven elections. That number was more than the combined registration for Democrats and Republicans. In sharp contrast, for the 65 & Over group No Party registered voters only averaged 81,499 and were nearly half of the number registered for either Democrats or Republicans. Thus, it is no surprise that the proportion of No Party absentee voters varied so much across age groups.

## **Absentee Voting by Age Group, Gender, and Party**

Figures 13 and 14 examine absentee voting by all three of the characteristics we have discussed thus far. Once again, each figure is divided into five parts based on the five age groups.

Figure 13 shows the percentage within each subgroup that voted absentee. On the whole, the patterns are similar to what we saw for the prior groups. There is still a general trend toward increased absentee voting and women tend to have higher absentee voting percentages than men. We still see dips in all the percentages for the 2006 and 2010 midterm elections. The 2002 percentages are more mixed, with men and women Democrats and No Party voters showing an increase over 2000 for all age groups while men and women Republicans show a slight dip for all age groups.

One interesting aspect of the patterns concerns the intra-party absentee voting of men and women from one age group to the next. For the 18-24 group the pattern is as we would expect from prior figures in that women clearly have higher absentee voting percentages than the men of their party. This begins to change with the 25-34 group where the intra-party lines are closer and the men had a slightly higher percentage than women for at least one of the elections for all three parties. This pattern continues for the 35-49 group for Republicans and No Party voters, but women Democrats again have a higher percentage of absentee voting than their male counterparts. For the two oldest groups women again have higher absentee voting percentage than men for all three parties, with the separation the largest for the 65 & Over group (and even larger than for the 18-24 group).

It is also for the 65 & Over group where we see the most mixing of the lines. The separation between the lines for Democrats and Republicans are at the narrowest for this group. The only instance of Republicans having a higher absentee voting

percentage than Democrats is for women Republicans over men Democrats in 2000. On the other hand, the percentages for No Party voters are sometimes above those of other groups. In particular, the absentee voting percentage for No Party men is above that of Republican men for three of the four presidential elections (all but 2000). The No Party women have higher absentee voting percentages than Republican men in all but 2000, and actually have the second highest percentage for both 2004 and 2008.

Consistent with prior pairs of figures, the five parts of Figure 14 show the proportion of each sub group (as a percentage) among the total absentee voters for each age group. For the five parts of Figure 14 we see aspects of the prior patterns for both Figures 8 (gender and party) and 12 (age group and party). Figure 14a shows the subgroup proportions for the 18-24 age group. The lines for this figure are quite mixed, as they were for Figure 12a. There are two things to note in the patterns for this figure. The first is how the lines for Republican men and women are nearly identical and mixed in the sense that each has a higher proportion in at least one midterm and two presidential elections, though quite small. The second item to note is how the lines for men and women of the other two parties are less parallel than in other figures. For No Party voters the 2008 election saw a sharp increase in the proportion of women No Party voters but hardly any change for the men. For Democrats, proportions for men and women did not track together for the 2008 and 2012 elections. In both those presidential years the proportion of women Democrats increases while that of the men decreased. In fact, the proportion of Democrat men reached a high for 2006 and has decreased in each successive election.

Figures 14b and 14c show the patterns for the 25-34 and 35-49 age groups, respectively. The patterns for these two figures are quite similar. We still see a fair amount of mixing of the subgroup lines, though the proportion of women Democrats is well above that of the other subgroups except for the 2000 election. For the 35-49 group, Republican men are only 0.08% more than women Democrats. In these two figures we also see the proportions of men and women No party voters steadily decrease. One final item to note for both of these two figures is that Republican men are actually a larger proportion of absentee voters than Republican women in all seven elections, which is the opposite of the other two parties.

In Figure 14d, we see the total separation of the line for women Democrats in the 50-64 group. The lines for both men and women No party voters are also below the lines for all the other subgroups. The lines for men and women Republicans are nearly identical again. The line for men Democrats is well below that of women Democrats, but generally above that of Republicans with the exception of the 2000 election.

Finally (!), in Figure 14e we see for the 65 & Over group clear separation of all the lines except those for Democrat and Republican men. As expected, women Democrats have the highest proportion in this group, followed by women Republicans then the men of

both major parties. No Party voters have the smallest proportions with men several points below women. As noted for Figure 12e, a primary reason for such a small proportion of No Party absentee voters is that there are far fewer registered No Party voters in this age group compared to the younger groups. Conversely, there are more registered women Democrats in this age group than any of the other subgroups, so it is not overly surprising they have the highest proportion of absentee voters here. There are actually more registered men Republicans than Democrats for this age group. The Republicans also have a higher turnout rate overall, but the emphasis placed on absentee voting by the Democrats allows their men to have a higher proportion for this age group.

## Concluding Comments

The results show a trend for increased absentee voting in Iowa. The general trend exists for both midterm and presidential elections, though the average percentage of absentee voting in midterms is well below the average for presidential elections. The election of 2000 had the lowest percentage of absentee voters, which seemed to be a bit of an outlier for presidential years in that the percentage was below that of the midterm year of 2002. For midterm years, 2006 seemed to be an outlier in that the percentage of absentee voting was below the prior midterm year of 2002. On the other hand, it may have been that 2002 was the outlier in that it had a much higher percentage of absentee voting than might have been expected at that time.

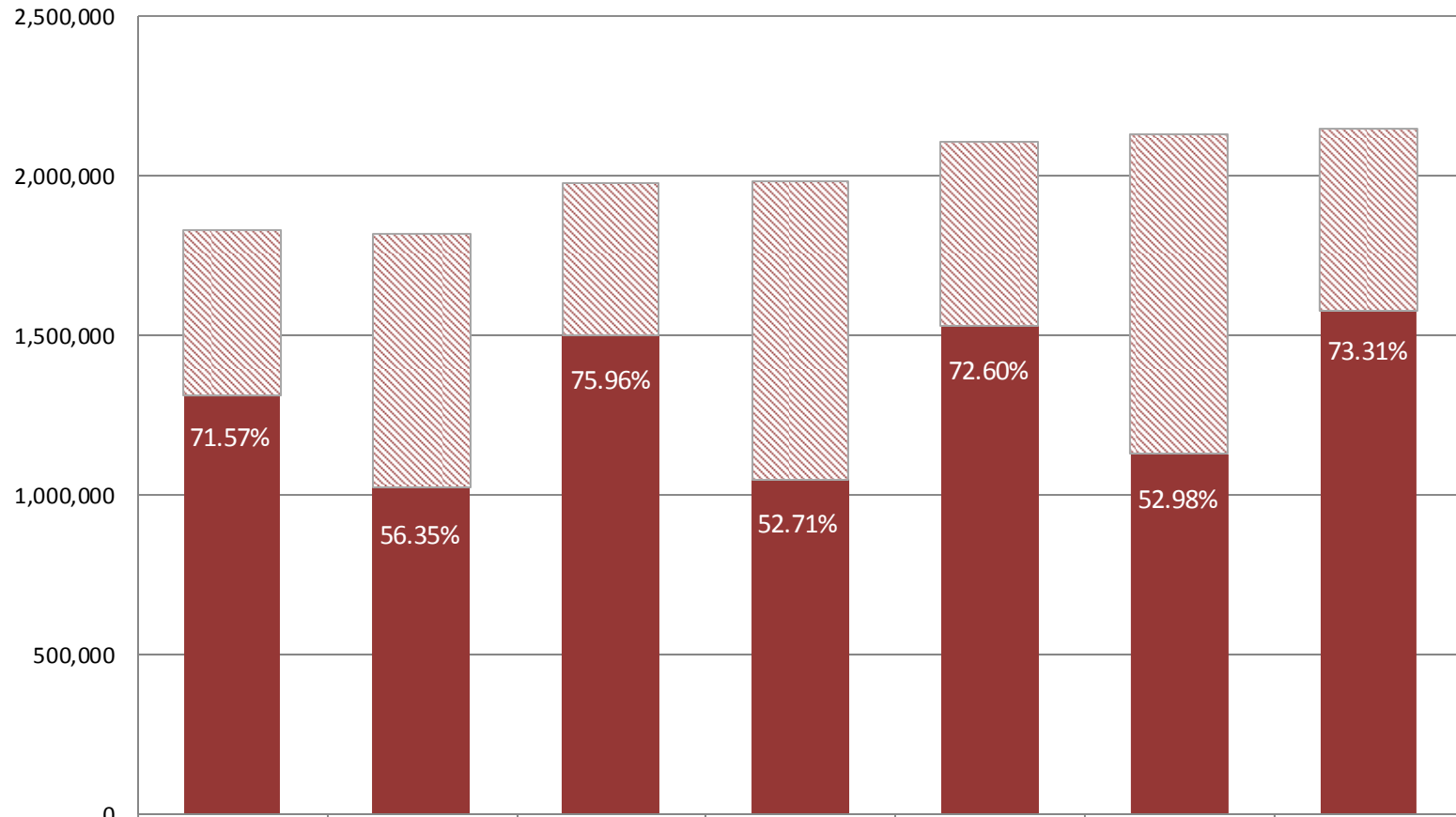
In looking at various subgroups based on party, gender, and age group we see the conventional wisdom that Democrats are better at the early voting game than Republicans holds true. The results also show that women tend to vote absentee more than men. Although there are some variations among the subgroups these general trends are fairly robust. The results for age groups are mixed. The emphasis placed on college students (and more generally the youth vote) by Democrats resulted in the 18-24 age group having the second highest percentage of absentee voting in five of the seven elections. Nevertheless, because the turnout percentage of the 18-24 group is generally low, the proportion of this group among all absentee voters is still low. It might, however, have been even lower were it not for the emphasis on absentee voting.

The results also showed the effect of GOTV efforts on the part of the parties and campaigns. The greater emphasis on absentee voting in presidential years is evident in the greater percentage of such votes compared to midterm elections. The emphasis on both young voters (the 18-24 group) and older voters (the 65 & Over group) also appears in the results given that these two groups generally have the highest percentage of absentee voting.

The success of Democrats in getting their base to cast either a traditional absentee ballot or engage in other forms of early voting is seen as a way for them to secure an effective

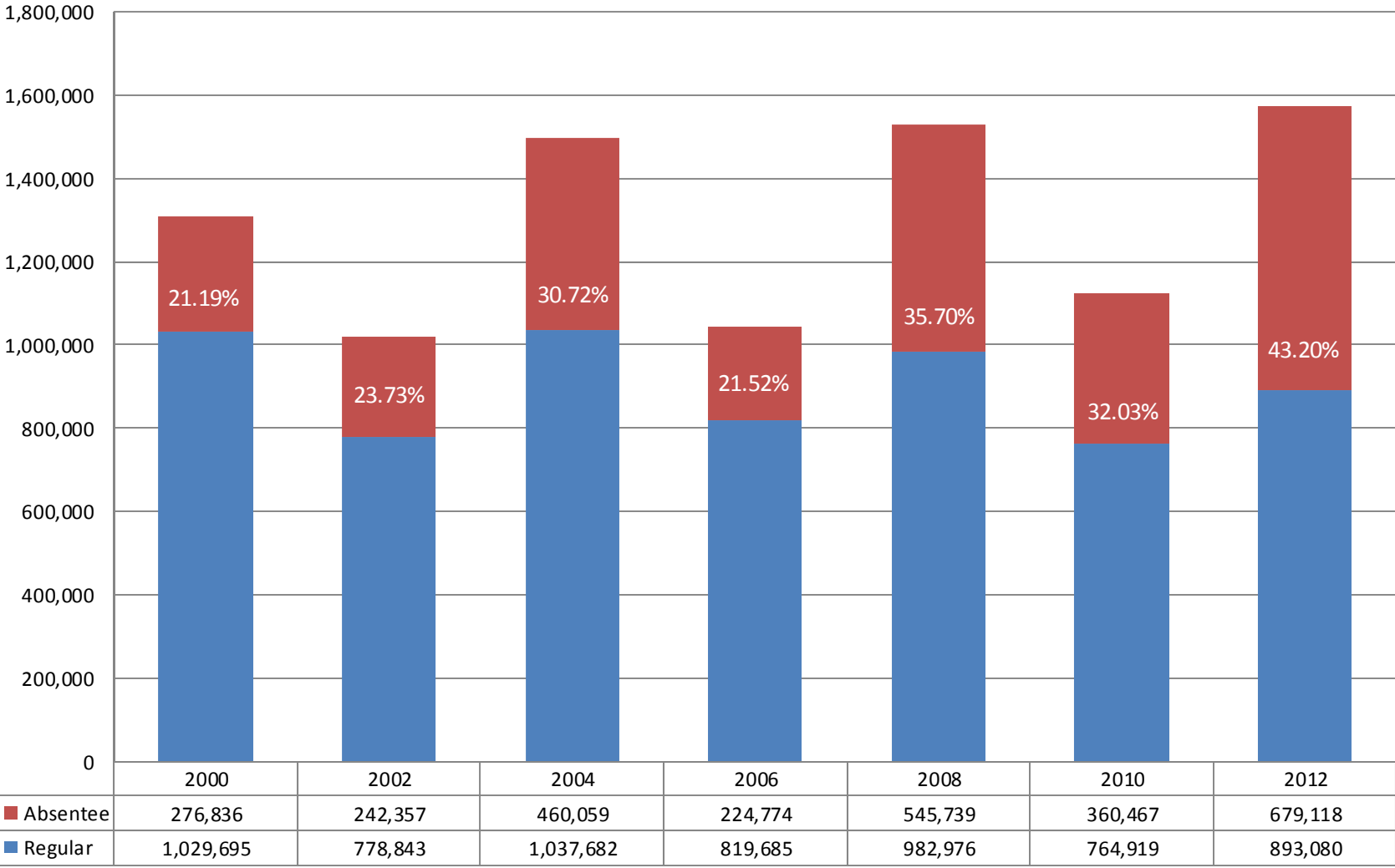
lead prior to Election Day. Republicans are well aware of this and have been working to increase the absentee voting of their registered voters. At the very least, more votes cast before the election allows the parties and campaigns to focus their Election Day GOTV efforts on a smaller group of possible voters. Thus, we should expect continued emphasis on and increases in absentee voting.

**Figure 1: Iowa Registered Voters, Number Voting, and Turnout Percentage 2000 Through 2012 Elections**

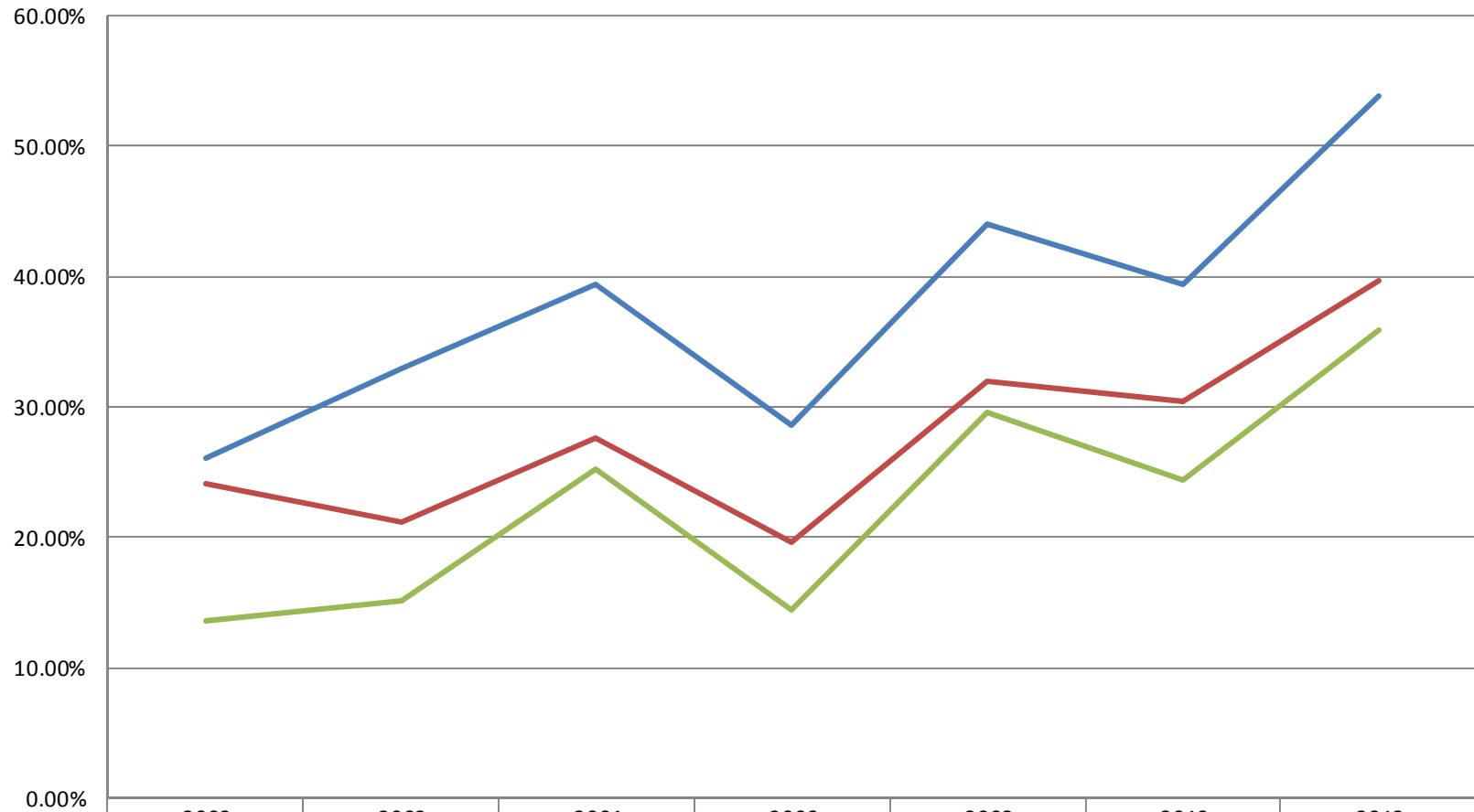


	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Did Not Vote	518,928	791,071	473,994	937,005	576,819	998,730	572,414
Voted	1,306,531	1,021,200	1,497,741	1,044,459	1,528,715	1,125,386	1,572,198

**Figure 2: Iowa Regular and Absentee Voting in Election Years Since 2000**

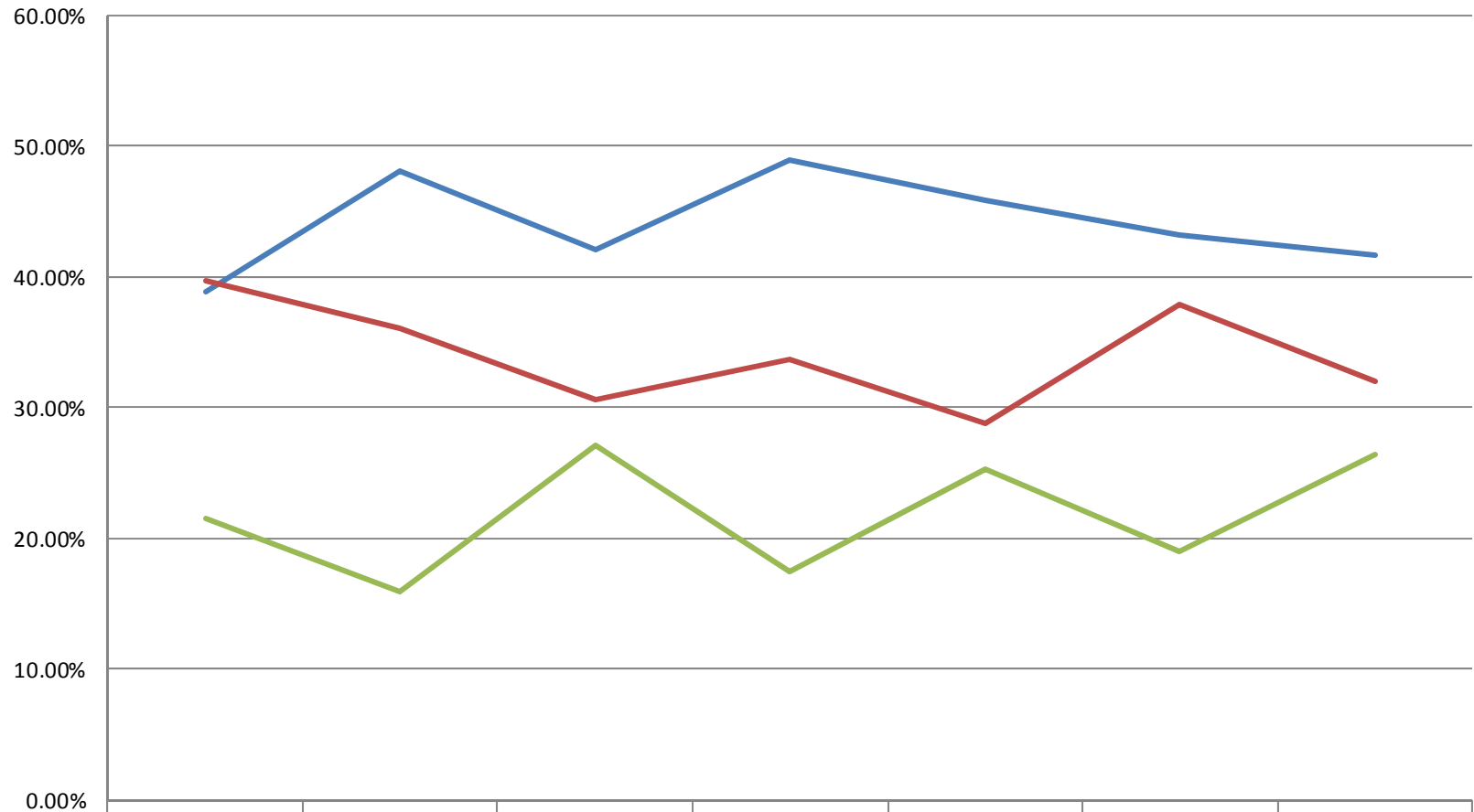


**Figure 3: Percentage of Iowa Voters Voting Absentee Within Each Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	26.10%	32.95%	39.38%	28.54%	44.00%	39.32%	53.78%
Republican	24.05%	21.16%	27.67%	19.57%	31.95%	30.45%	39.64%
No Party	13.59%	15.11%	25.25%	14.38%	29.57%	24.33%	35.95%

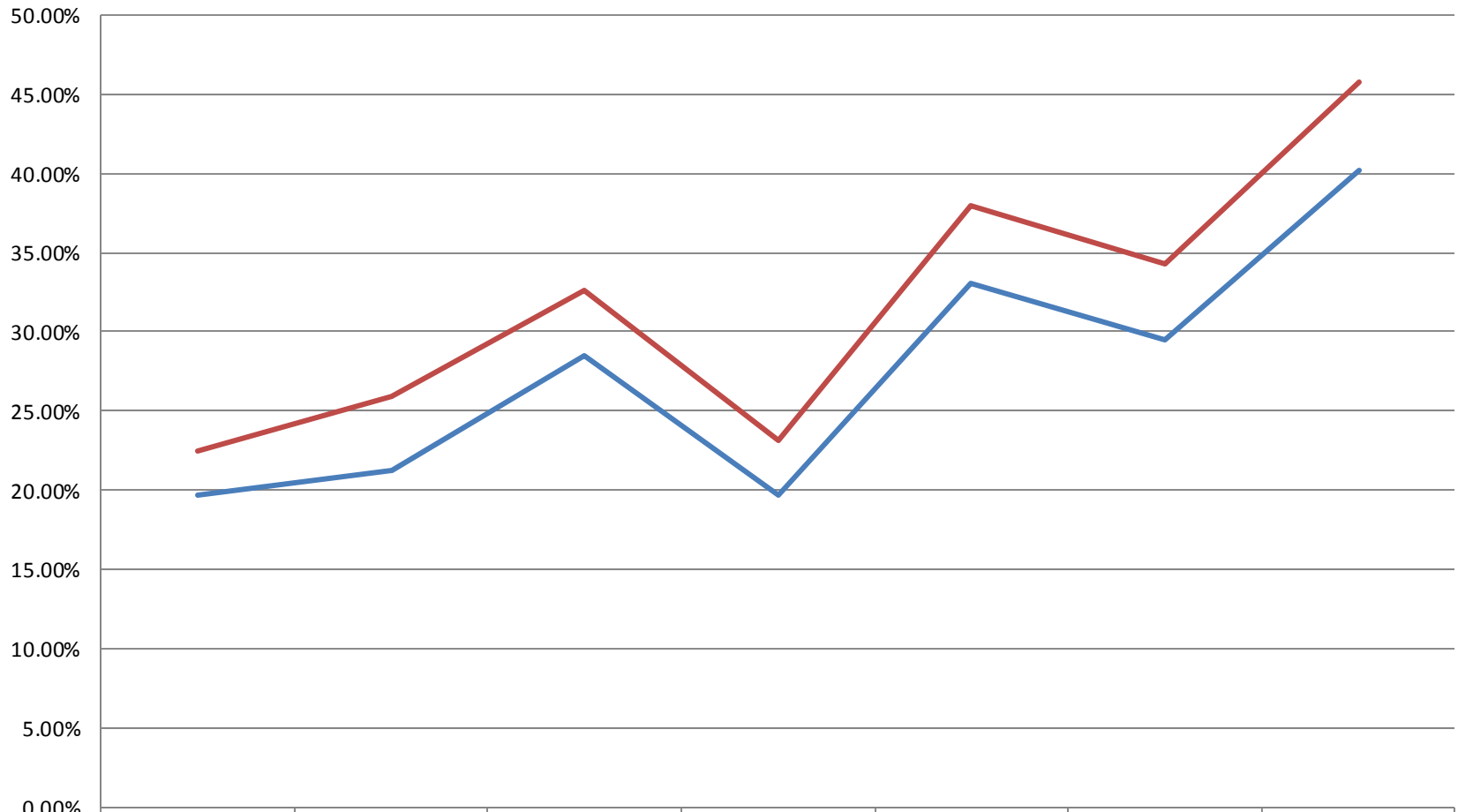
**Figure 4: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	38.83%	48.08%	42.12%	48.88%	45.86%	43.15%	41.68%
Republican	39.67%	36.04%	30.69%	33.65%	28.78%	37.83%	31.96%
No Party	21.49%	15.88%	27.19%	17.47%	25.36%	19.02%	26.37%

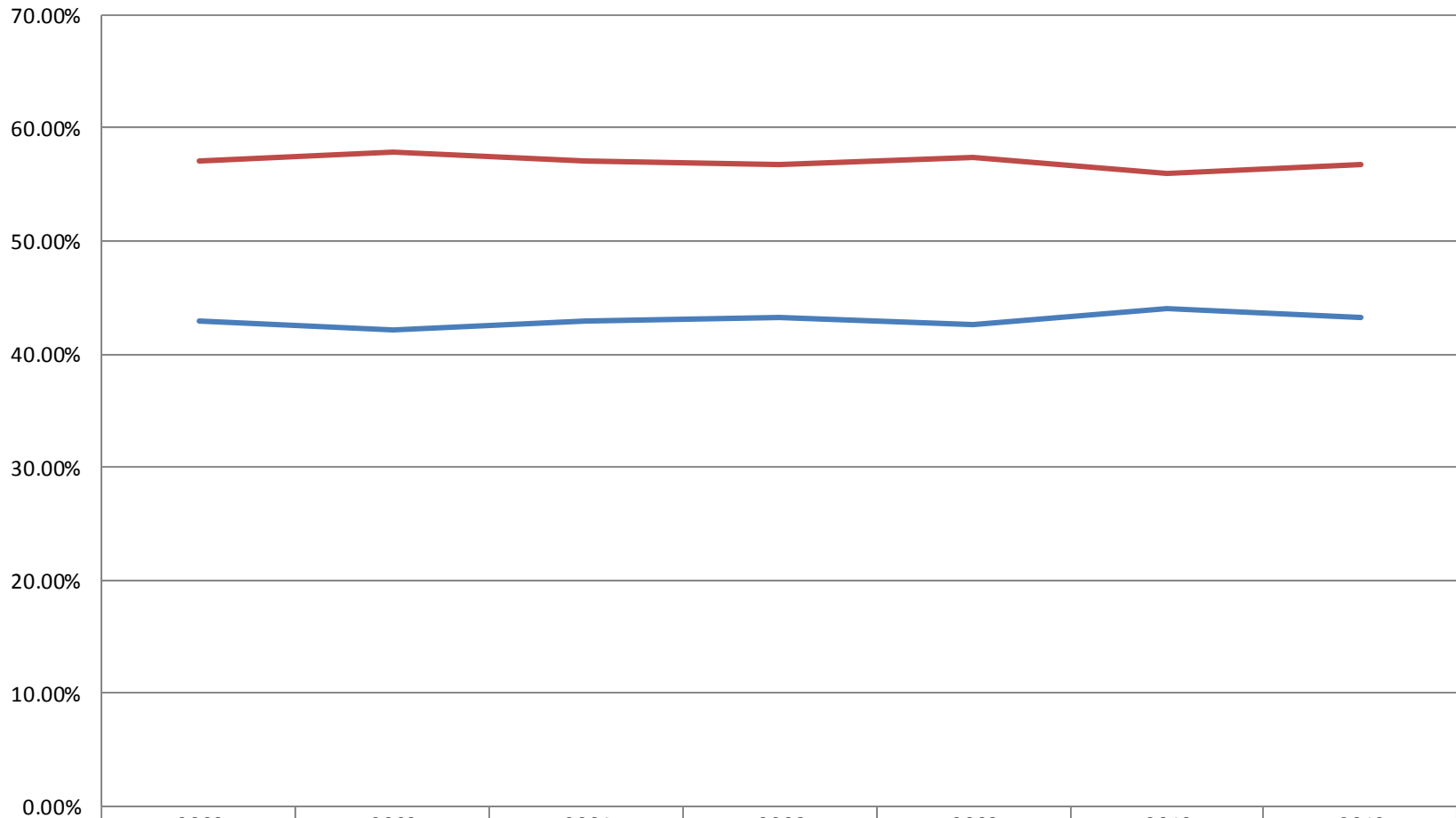


**Figure 5: Percentage of Iowa Voters Voting Absentee for Each Gender in Election Years Since 2000**



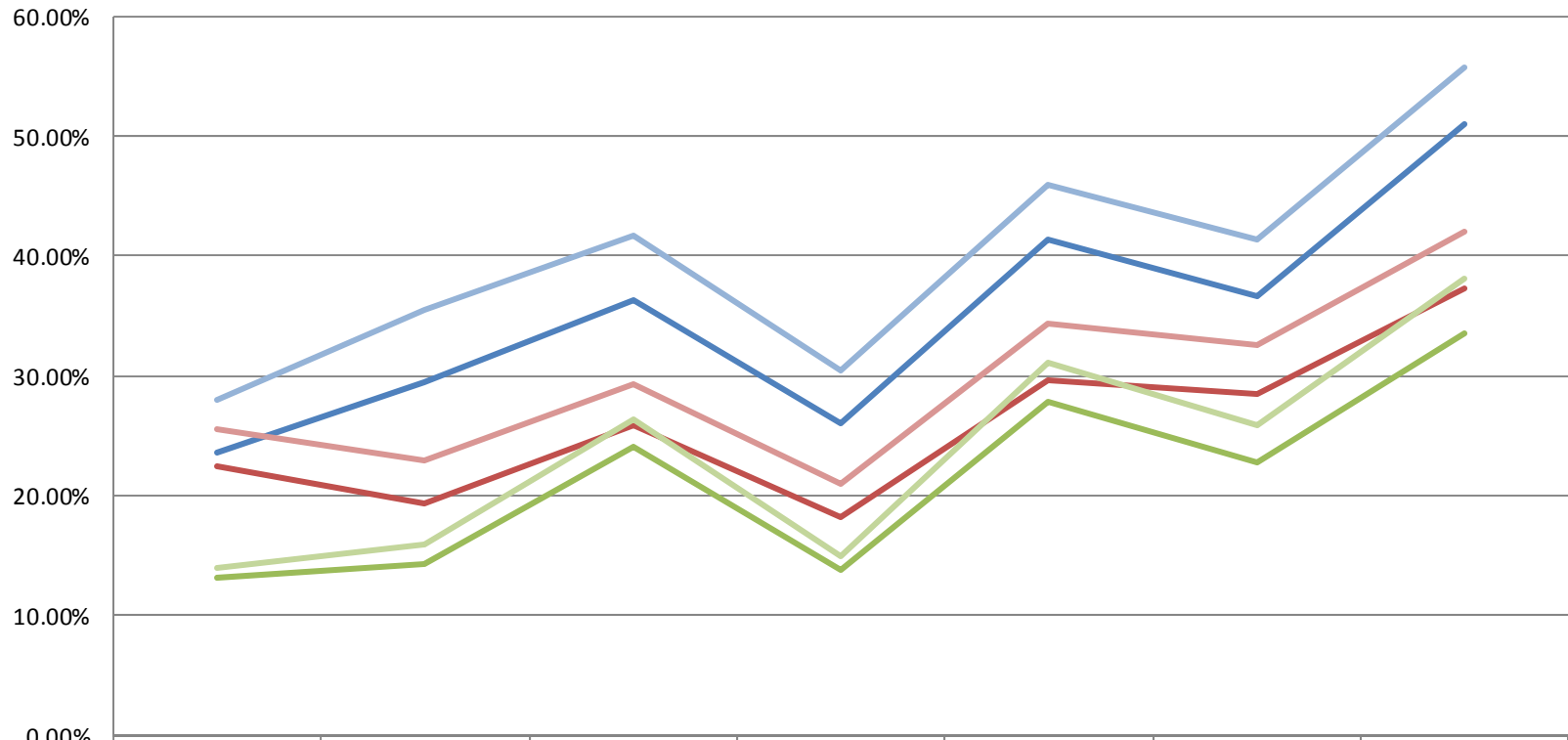
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Men	19.64%	21.30%	28.48%	19.72%	33.03%	29.53%	40.19%
Women	22.52%	25.89%	32.64%	23.13%	37.99%	34.32%	45.81%

**Figure 6: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters by Gender in Election Years Since 2000**



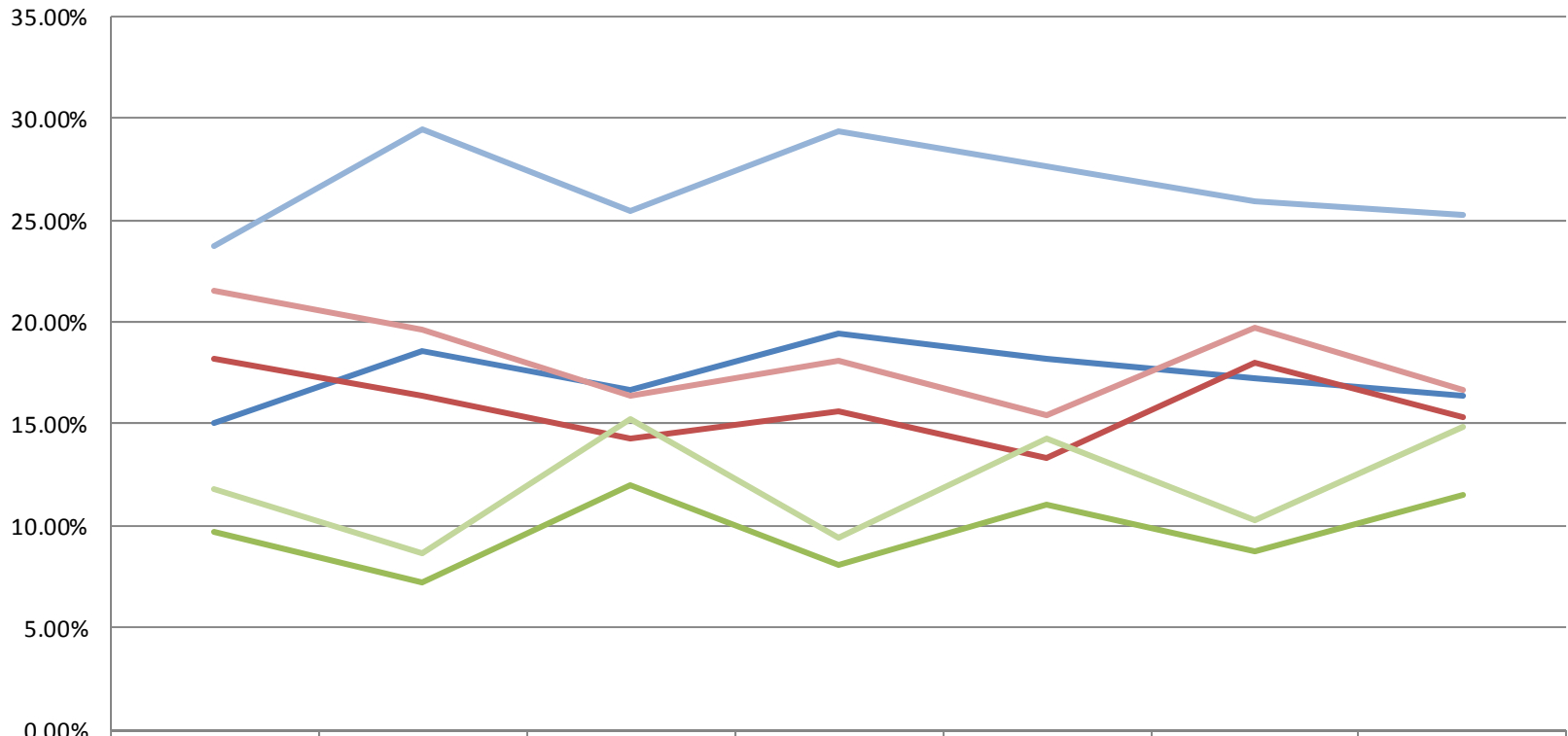
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Men	42.91%	42.19%	42.91%	43.17%	42.67%	44.06%	43.28%
Women	57.09%	57.81%	57.09%	56.83%	57.33%	55.94%	56.72%

**Figure 7: Percentage of Iowa Voters Voting Absentee by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



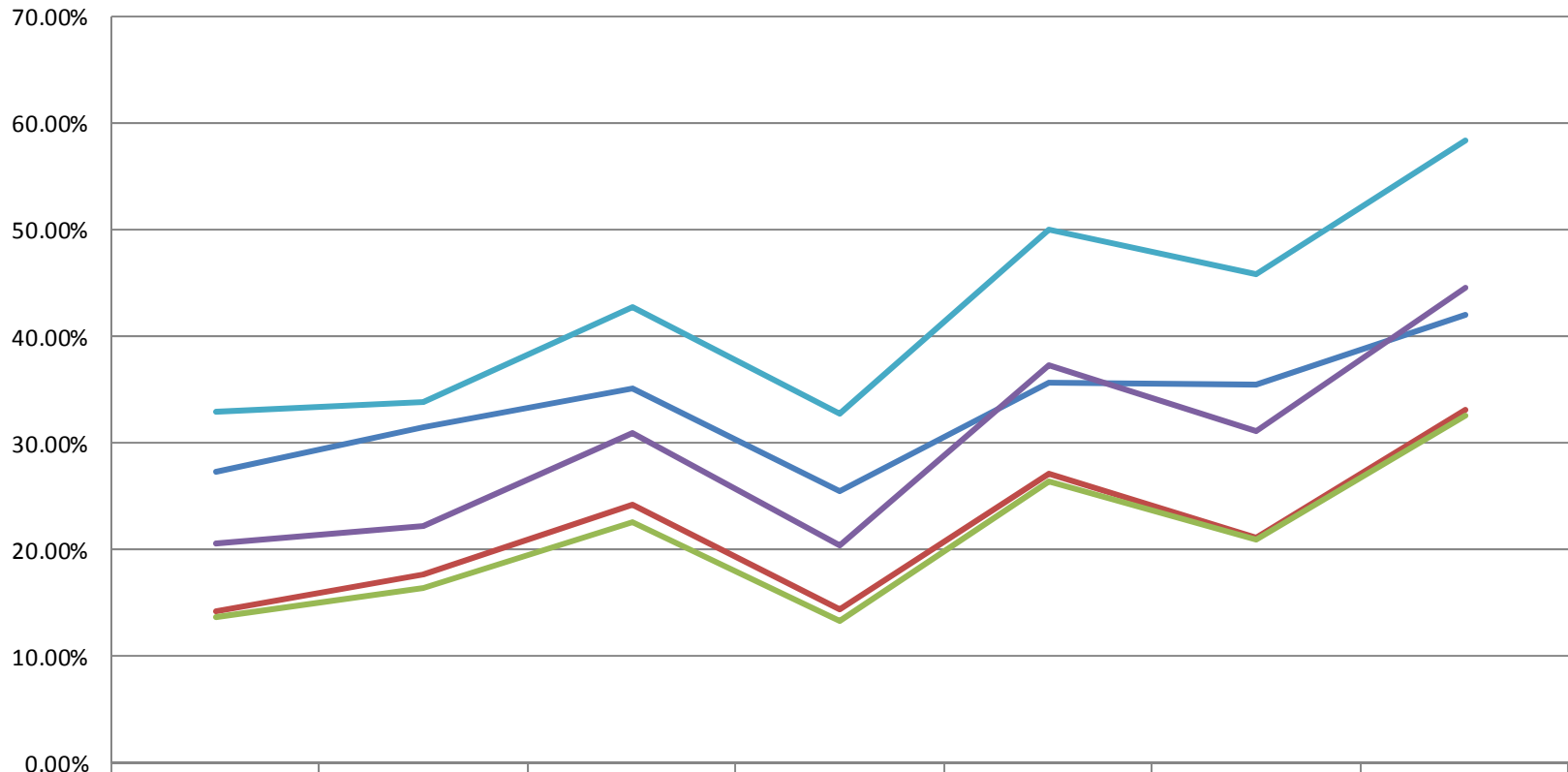
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	23.65%	29.54%	36.33%	26.10%	41.31%	36.58%	50.95%
D-Women	27.93%	35.54%	41.66%	30.42%	45.98%	41.38%	55.79%
R-Men	22.47%	19.37%	25.97%	18.19%	29.59%	28.43%	37.34%
R-Women	25.57%	22.91%	29.35%	20.95%	34.33%	32.51%	42.03%
NP-Men	13.10%	14.26%	24.02%	13.82%	27.79%	22.71%	33.52%
NP-Women	14.01%	15.90%	26.30%	14.91%	31.12%	25.90%	38.08%

**Figure 8: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



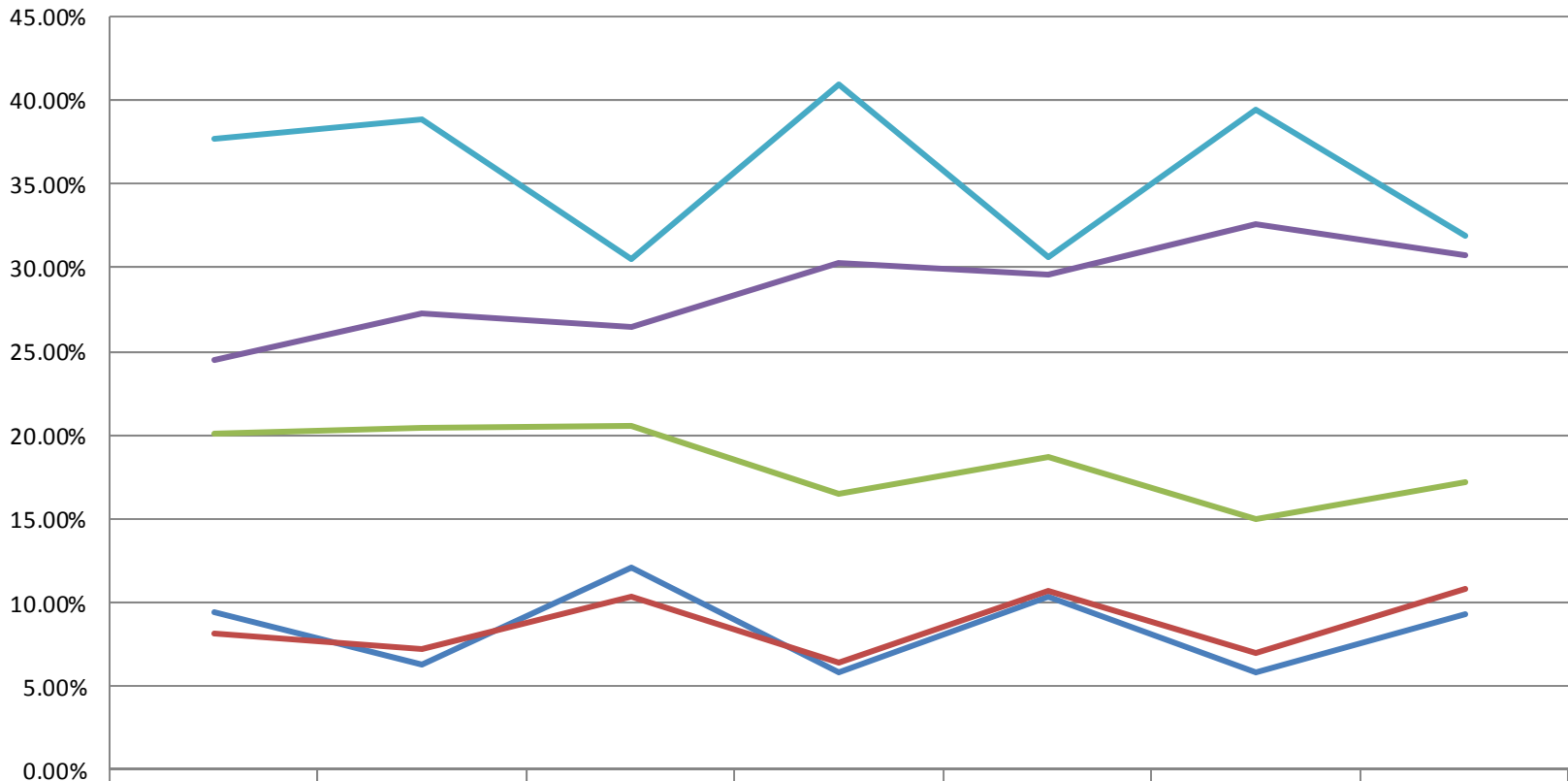
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	15.07%	18.60%	16.66%	19.48%	18.22%	17.29%	16.42%
D-Women	23.76%	29.47%	25.46%	29.40%	27.64%	25.91%	25.25%
R-Men	18.16%	16.39%	14.28%	15.59%	13.35%	18.03%	15.33%
R-Women	21.51%	19.65%	16.41%	18.05%	15.43%	19.73%	16.62%
NP- Men	9.68%	7.20%	11.96%	8.10%	11.08%	8.77%	11.50%
NP- Women	11.81%	8.69%	15.23%	9.38%	14.28%	10.27%	14.87%

**Figure 9: Percentage of Iowa Voters Voting Absentee for Each Age Group in Election Years Since 2000**



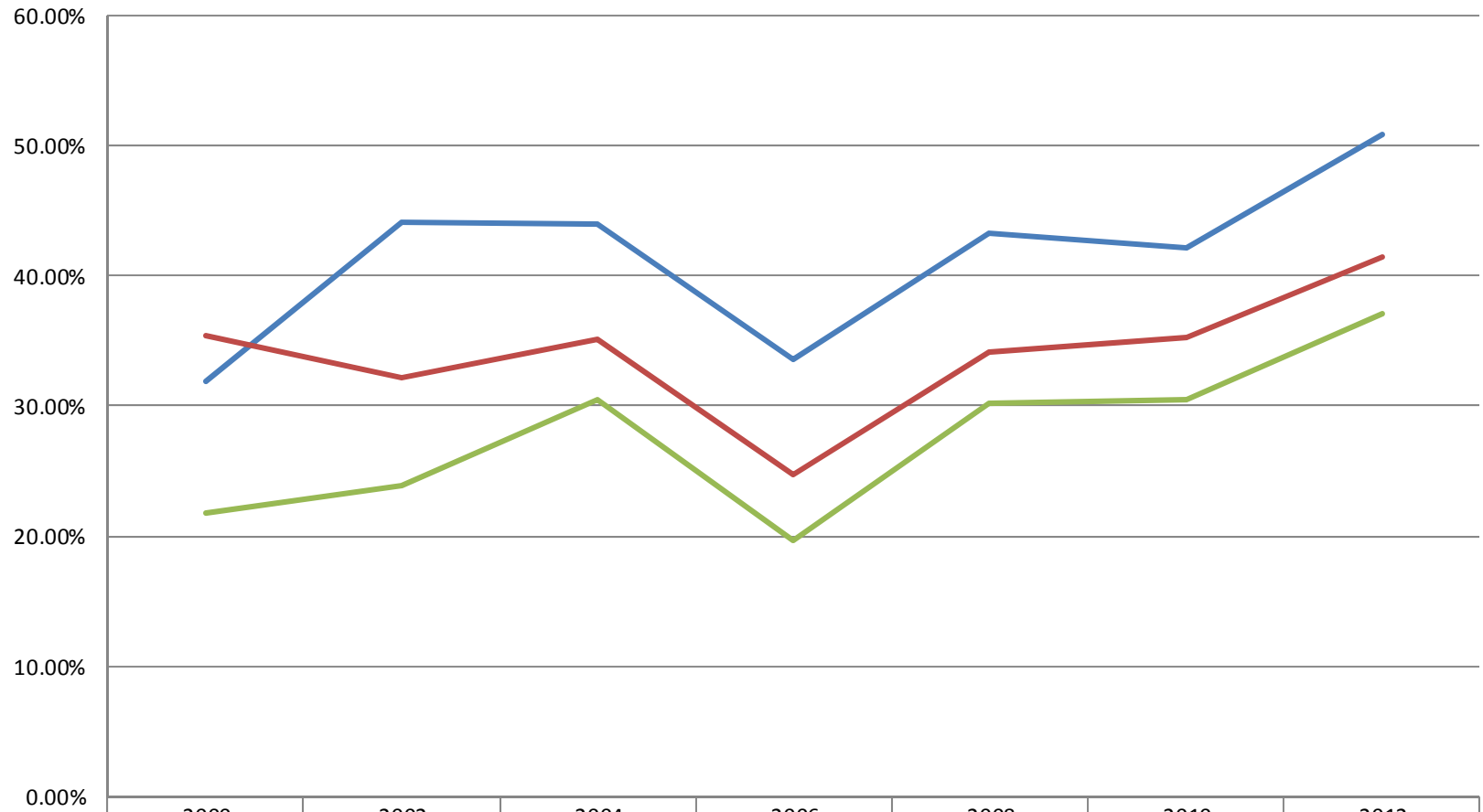
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
18-24	27.26%	31.58%	35.11%	25.47%	35.66%	35.52%	42.09%
25-34	14.25%	17.72%	24.16%	14.40%	27.21%	21.16%	33.12%
35-49	13.77%	16.48%	22.55%	13.42%	26.35%	21.04%	32.54%
50-64	20.54%	22.25%	30.94%	20.34%	37.28%	31.10%	44.53%
65 & Over	32.97%	33.90%	42.67%	32.69%	49.98%	45.79%	58.31%

**Figure 10: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters by Age Group in Election Years Since 2000**



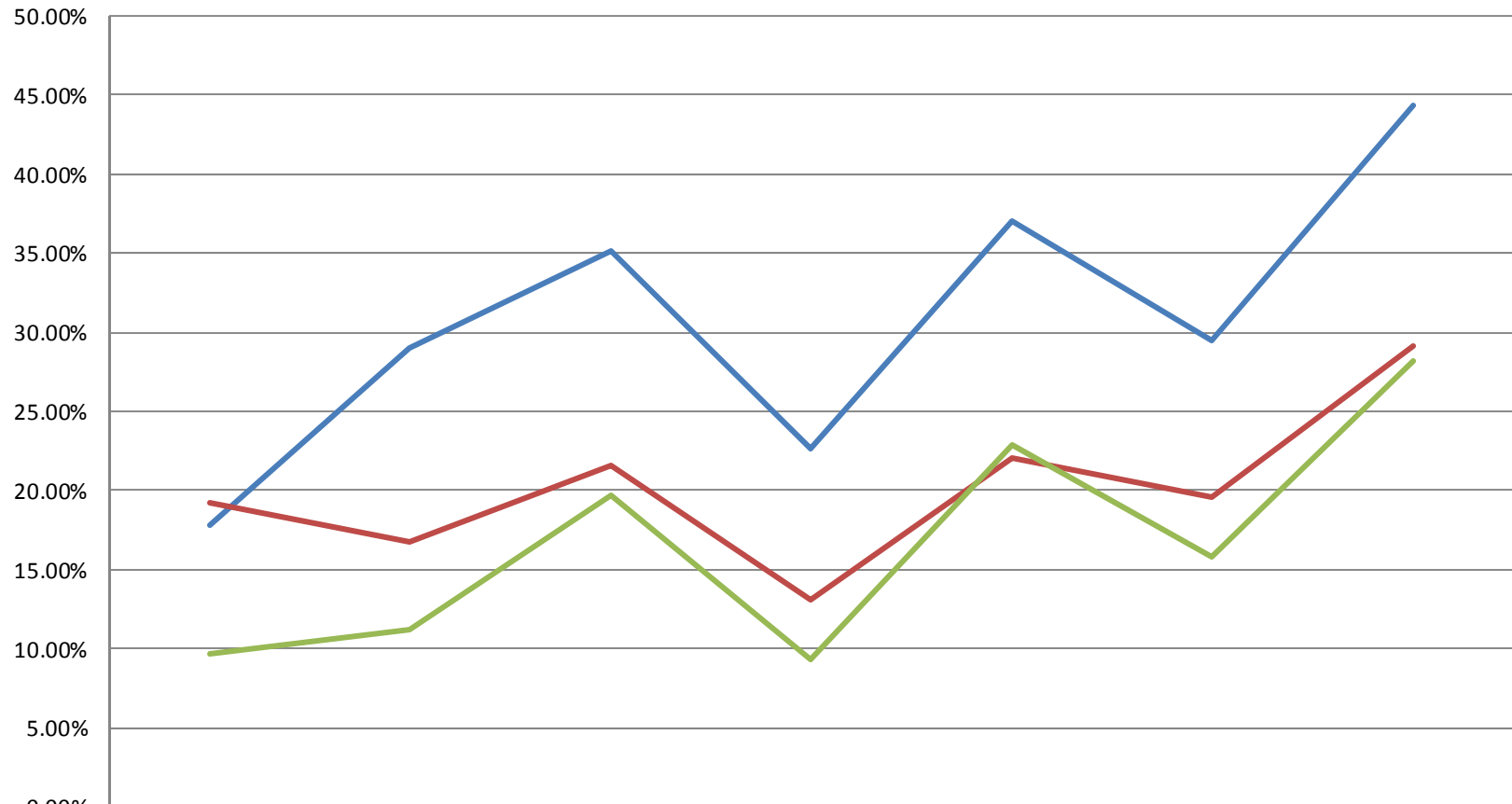
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
18-24	9.48%	6.36%	12.15%	5.87%	10.31%	5.90%	9.36%
25-34	8.22%	7.22%	10.35%	6.47%	10.74%	7.02%	10.84%
35-49	20.07%	20.38%	20.59%	16.46%	18.74%	15.02%	17.22%
50-64	24.54%	27.24%	26.42%	30.29%	29.57%	32.65%	30.70%
65 & Over	37.70%	38.80%	30.49%	40.91%	30.63%	39.42%	31.88%

**Figure 11a: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 18-24 Voting Absentee by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	31.96%	44.08%	43.97%	33.51%	43.28%	42.20%	50.82%
Republican	35.40%	32.20%	35.13%	24.72%	34.15%	35.22%	41.38%
No Party	21.77%	23.86%	30.52%	19.74%	30.20%	30.51%	37.14%

**Figure 11b: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 25-34 Voting Absentee by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	17.78%	28.96%	35.14%	22.64%	37.00%	29.51%	44.39%
Republican	19.16%	16.72%	21.58%	13.12%	22.05%	19.55%	29.13%
No Party	9.67%	11.20%	19.66%	9.32%	22.87%	15.84%	28.14%

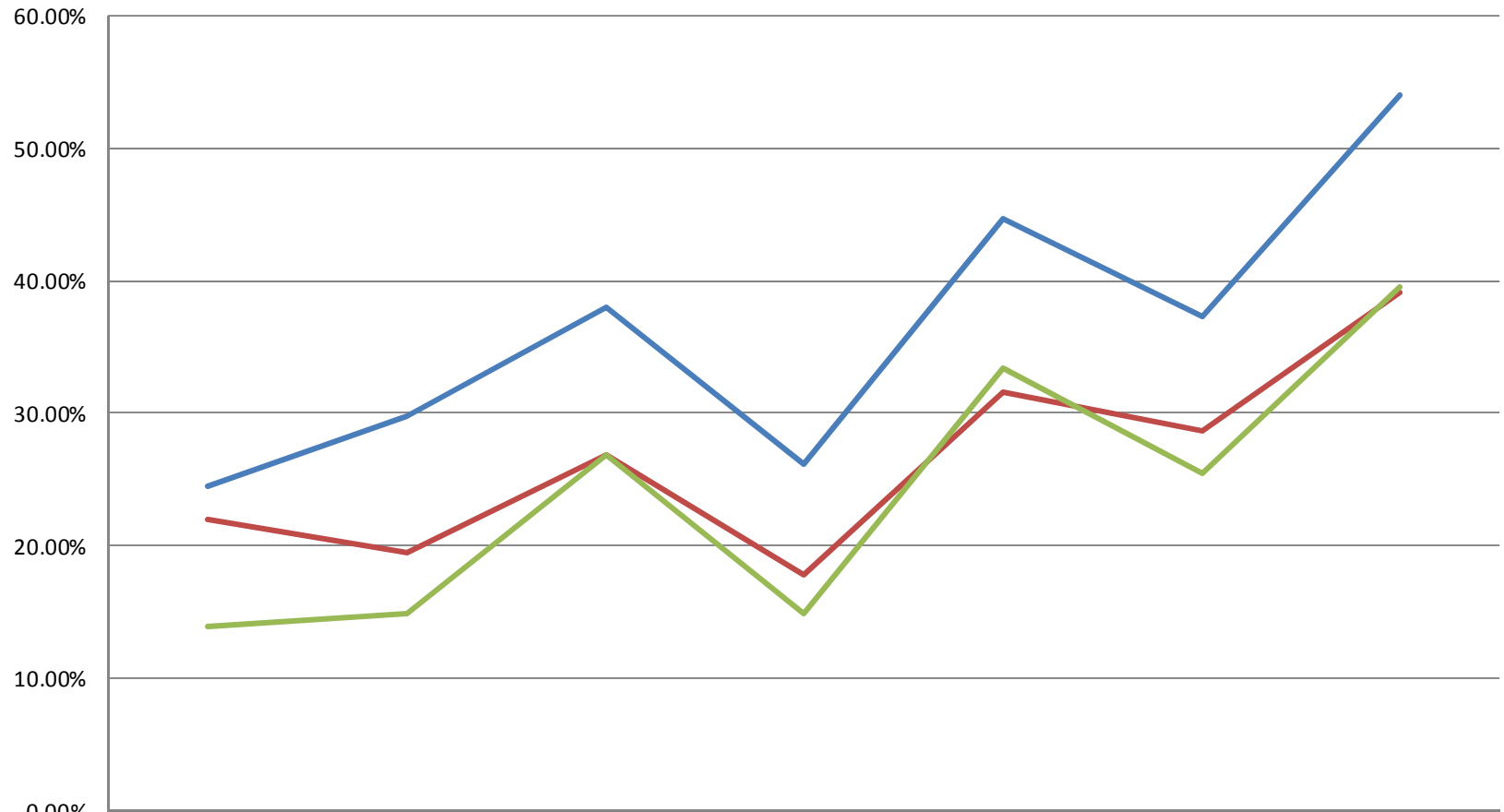


**Figure 11c: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 35-49 Voting Absentee by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



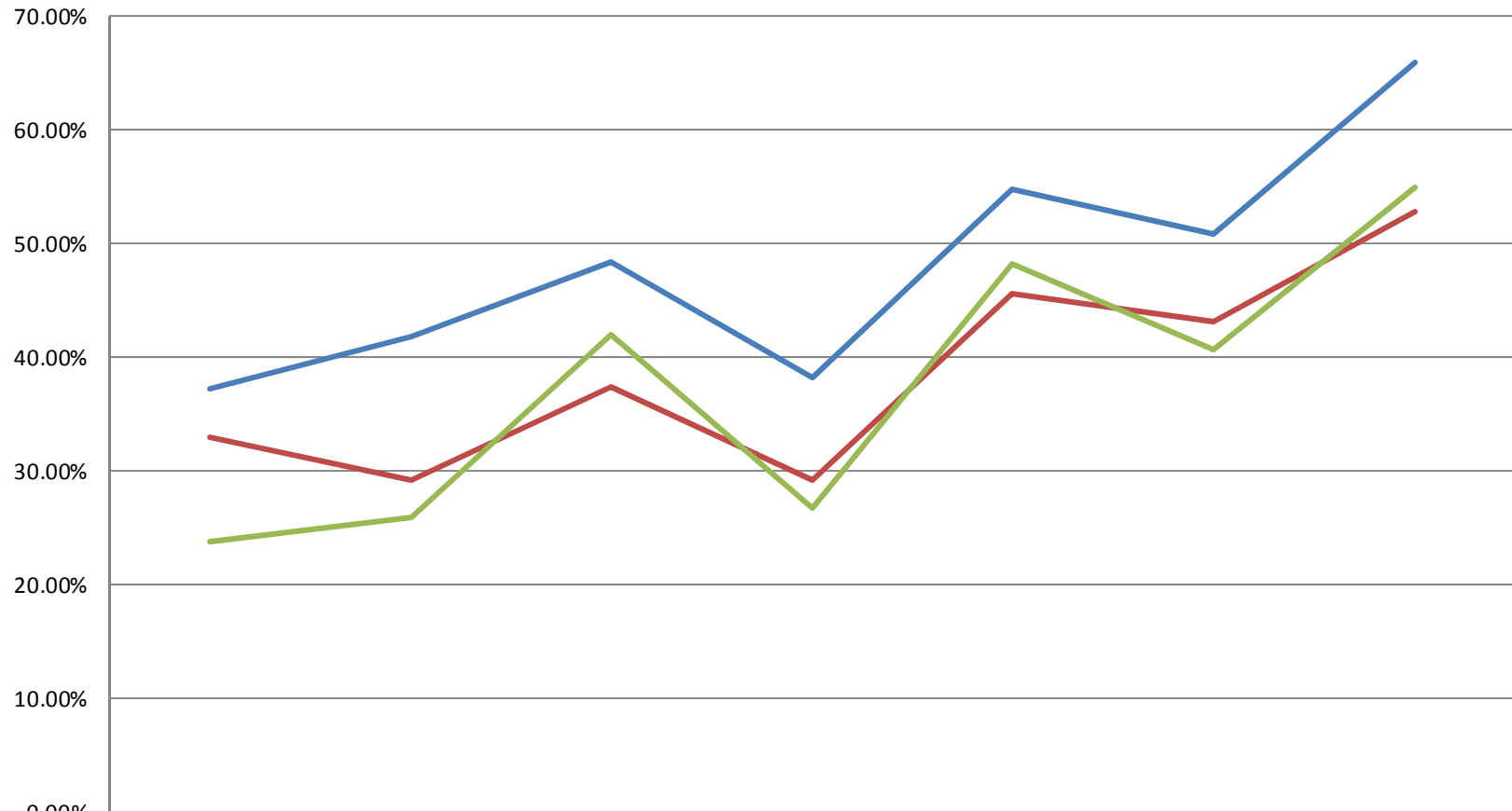
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	17.35%	25.29%	31.40%	19.68%	35.03%	28.34%	43.53%
Republican	16.52%	14.40%	19.56%	11.88%	21.86%	19.41%	28.45%
No Party	8.72%	10.24%	18.26%	9.02%	22.49%	15.99%	27.45%

**Figure 11d: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 50-64 Voting Absentee Within Each Party in Election Years Since 2000**



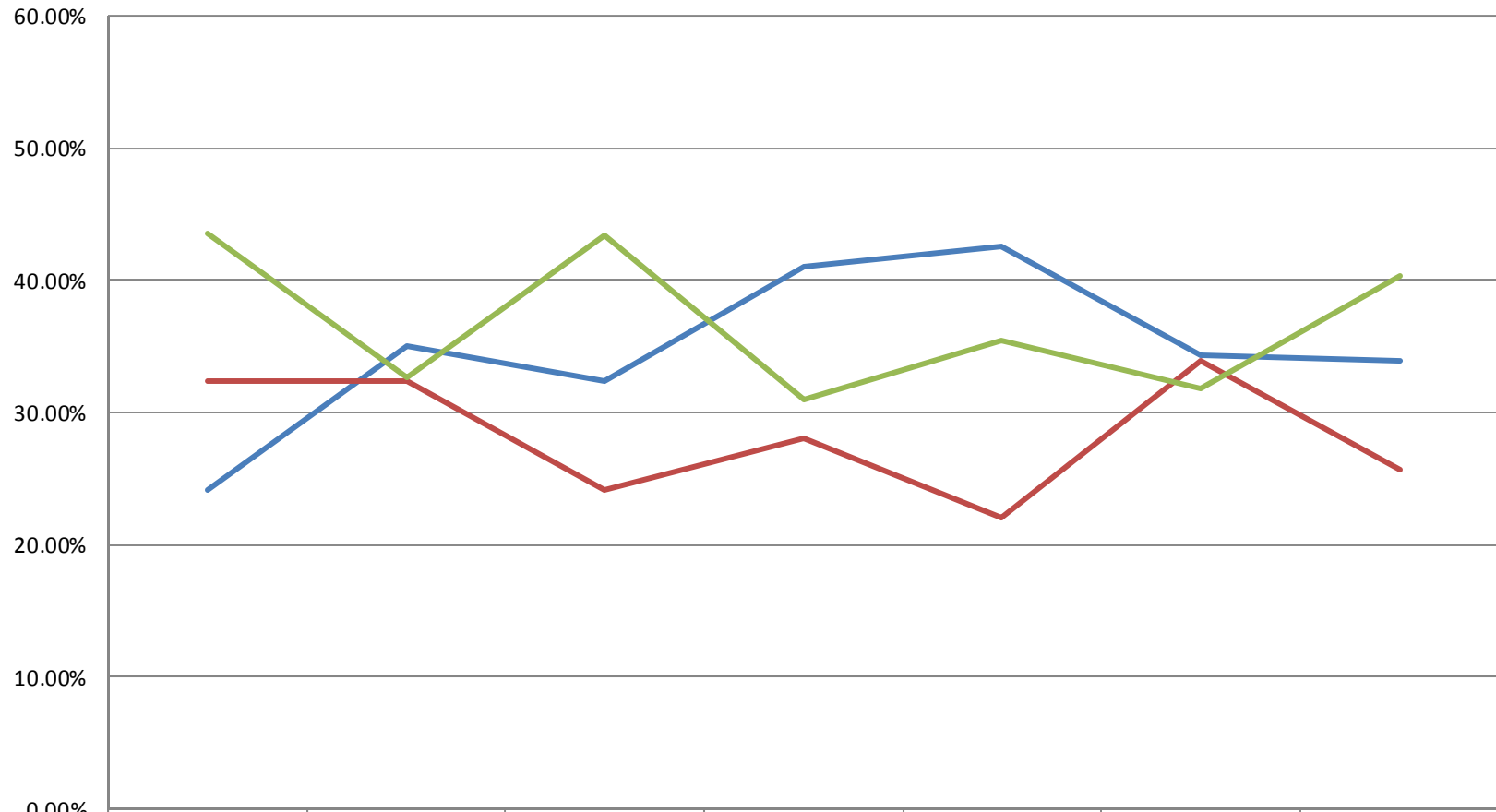
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	24.49%	29.85%	38.02%	26.13%	44.62%	37.28%	54.05%
Republican	22.05%	19.43%	26.86%	17.84%	31.53%	28.68%	39.06%
No Party	13.94%	14.94%	26.81%	14.83%	33.35%	25.41%	39.54%

**Figure 11e: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 65 & Over Voting Absentee by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



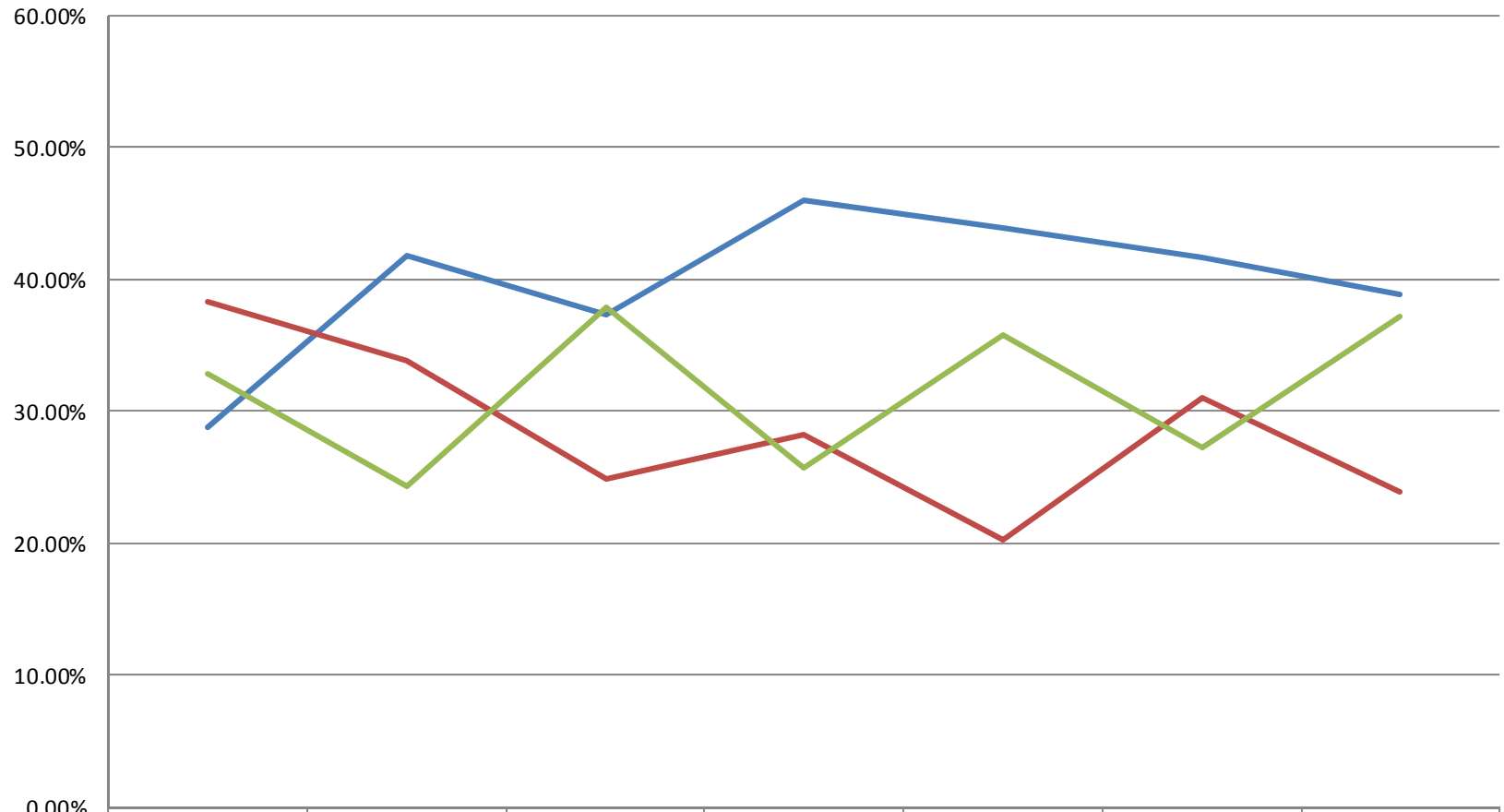
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	37.16%	41.71%	48.42%	38.19%	54.77%	50.76%	65.85%
Republican	32.99%	29.13%	37.35%	29.15%	45.53%	43.10%	52.71%
No Party	23.83%	25.95%	42.01%	26.68%	48.23%	40.59%	54.88%

**Figure 12a: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 18-24 by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



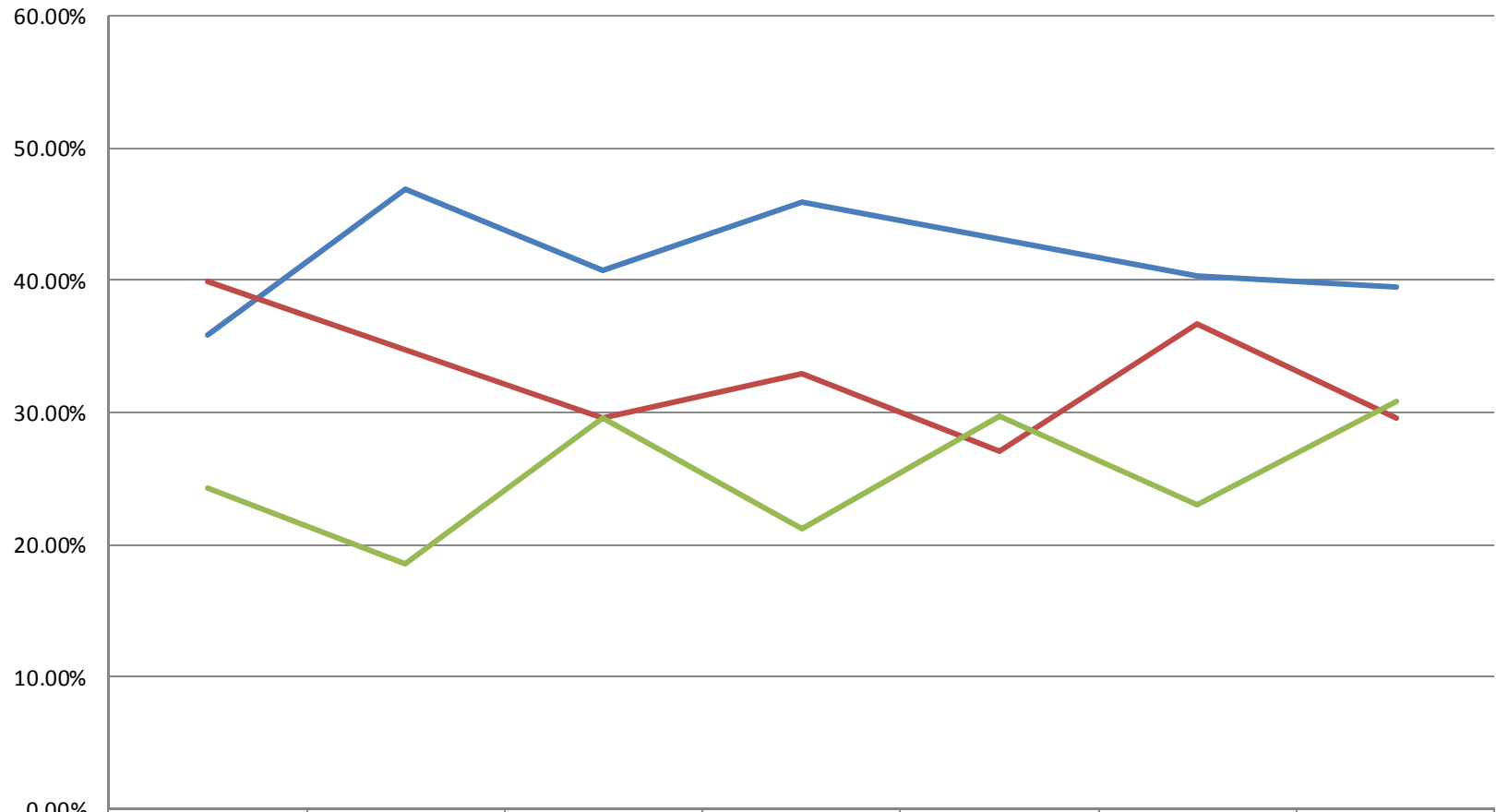
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	24.07%	35.06%	32.42%	41.02%	42.54%	34.32%	33.93%
Republican	32.41%	32.31%	24.16%	28.02%	22.00%	33.89%	25.73%
No Party	43.51%	32.62%	43.42%	30.96%	35.46%	31.79%	40.33%

**Figure 12b: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 25-34 by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



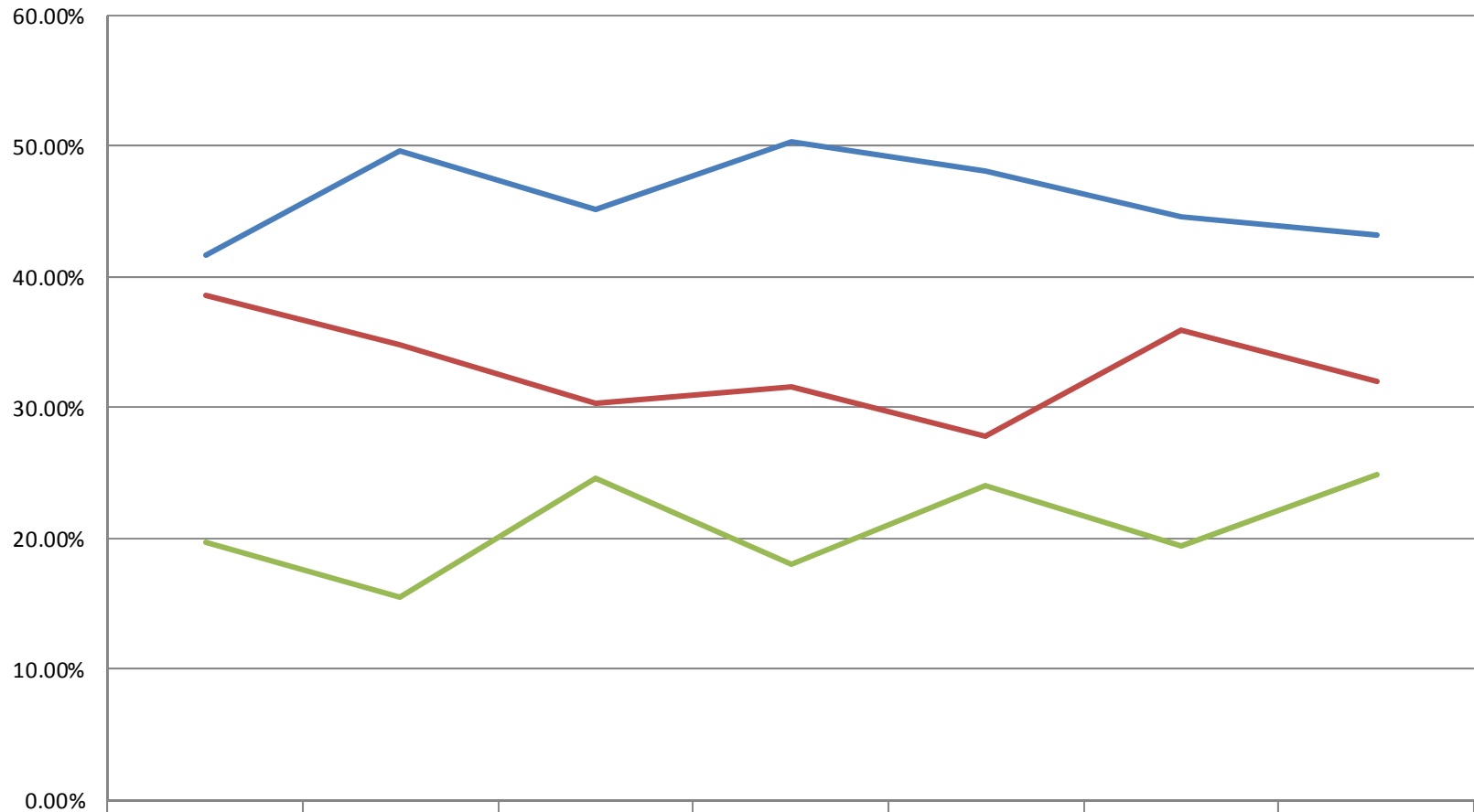
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	28.79%	41.77%	37.29%	46.04%	43.85%	41.63%	38.93%
Republican	38.37%	33.87%	24.88%	28.19%	20.31%	31.09%	23.88%
No Party	32.84%	24.36%	37.84%	25.76%	35.84%	27.27%	37.19%

**Figure 12c: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 35-49 by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



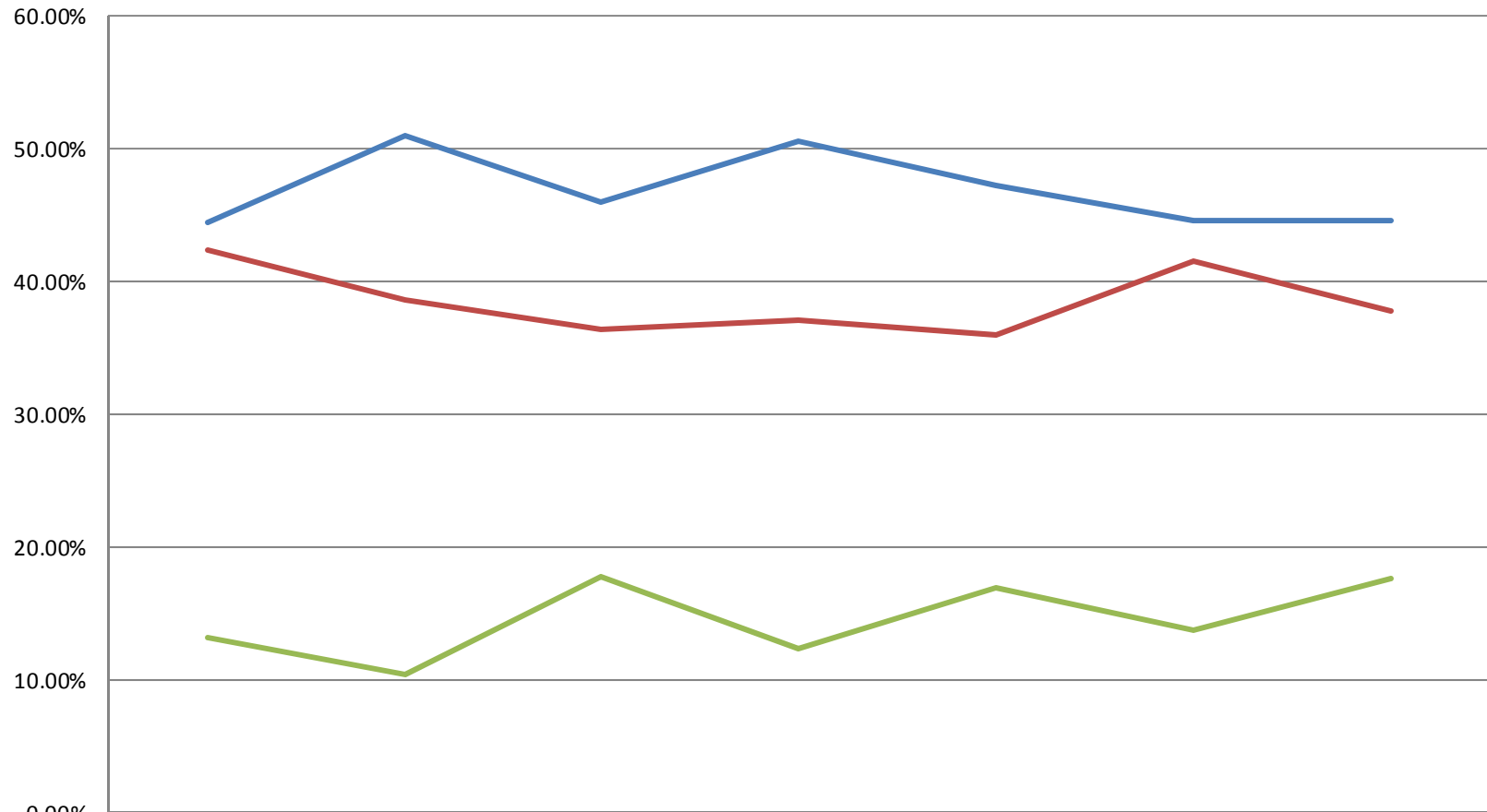
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	35.91%	46.81%	40.80%	45.92%	43.17%	40.25%	39.52%
Republican	39.86%	34.67%	29.58%	32.85%	27.07%	36.73%	29.65%
No Party	24.23%	18.52%	29.63%	21.23%	29.77%	23.02%	30.84%

**Figure 12d: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 50-64 by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	41.62%	49.68%	45.11%	50.37%	48.08%	44.62%	43.17%
Republican	38.64%	34.85%	30.30%	31.64%	27.88%	35.98%	31.99%
No Party	19.75%	15.47%	24.59%	18.00%	24.04%	19.40%	24.85%

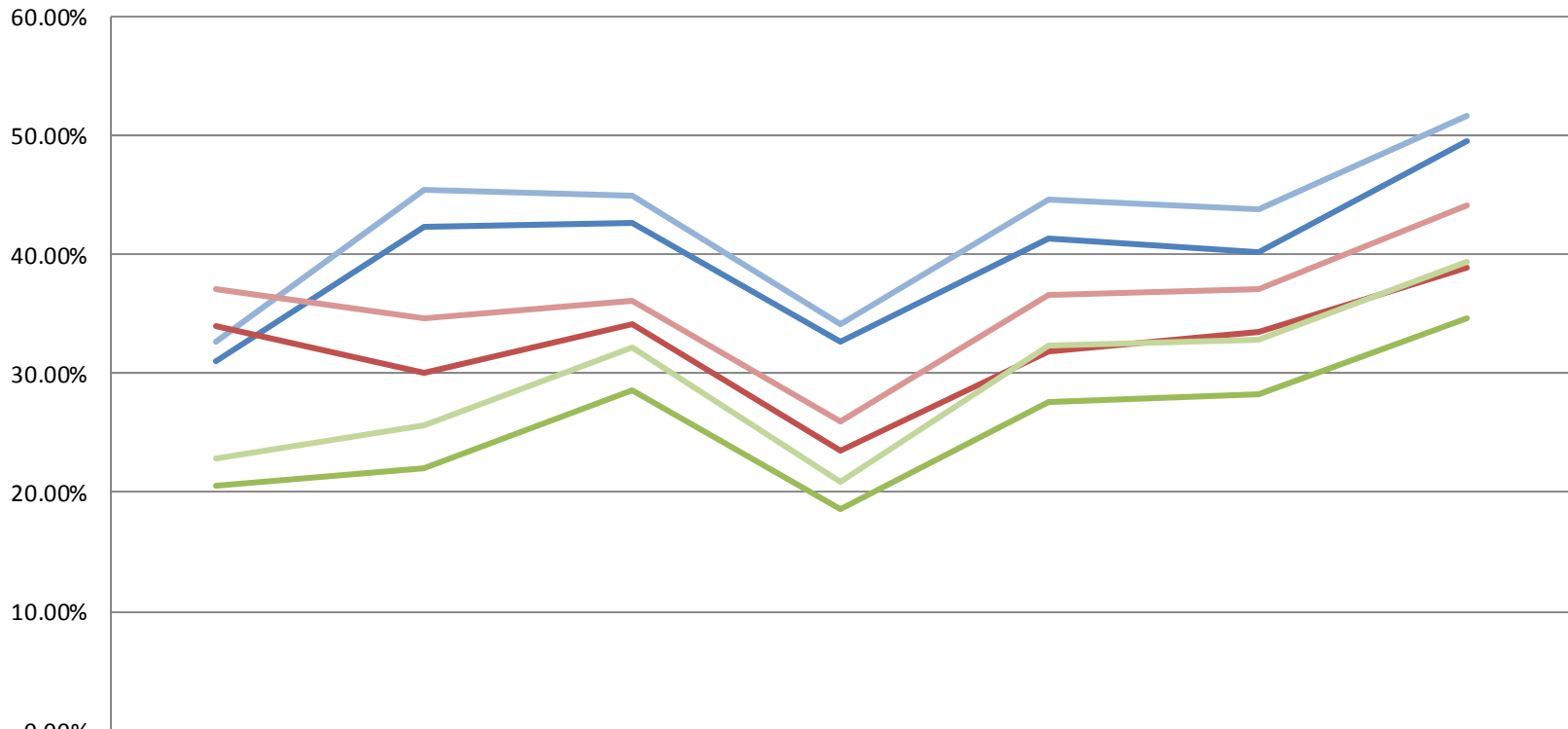
**Figure 12e: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 65 & Over by Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Democrat	44.48%	50.92%	45.93%	50.54%	47.17%	44.63%	44.59%
Republican	42.35%	38.61%	36.35%	37.13%	35.95%	41.56%	37.73%
No Party	13.17%	10.47%	17.72%	12.33%	16.89%	13.81%	17.67%

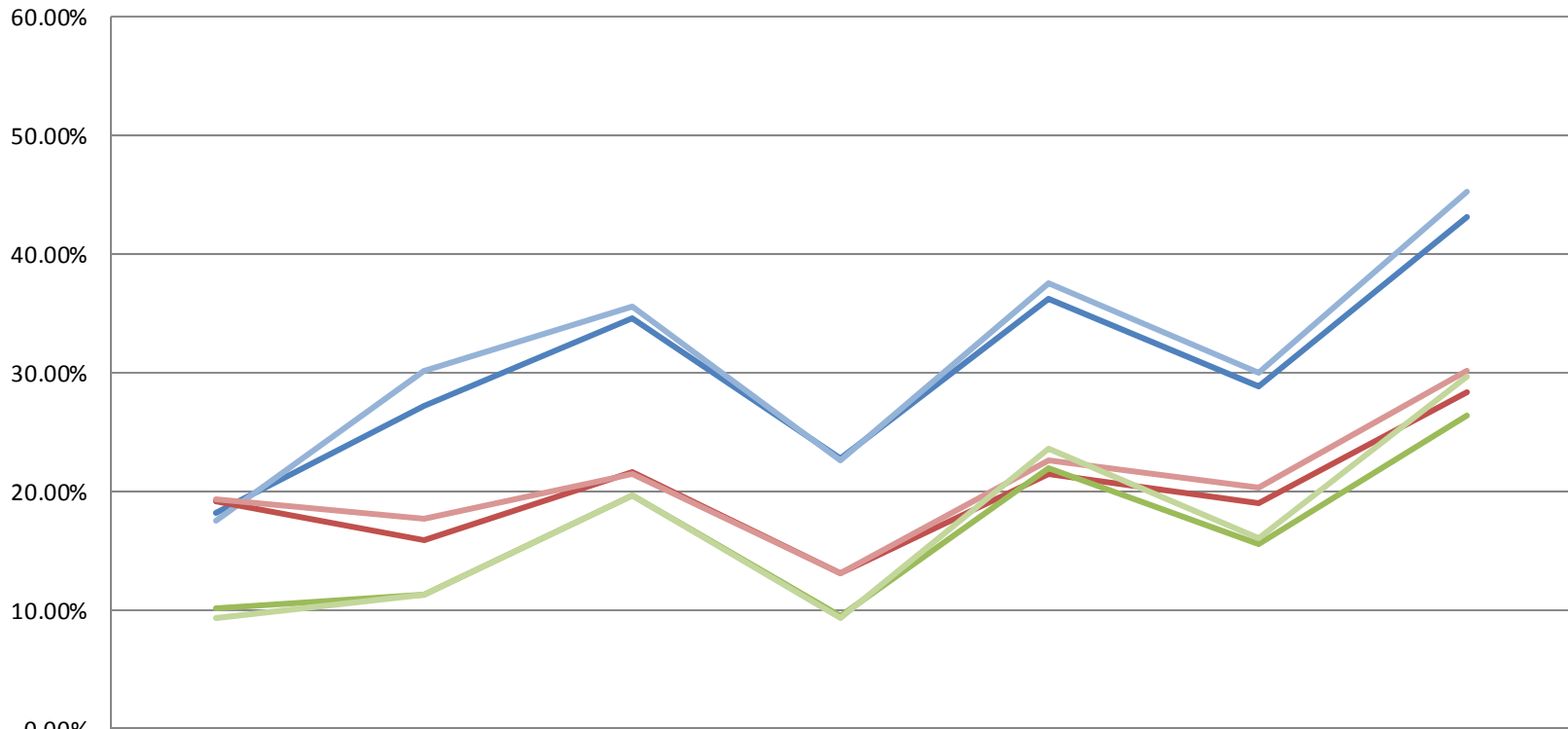


**Figure 13a: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 18-24 Voting Absentee by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



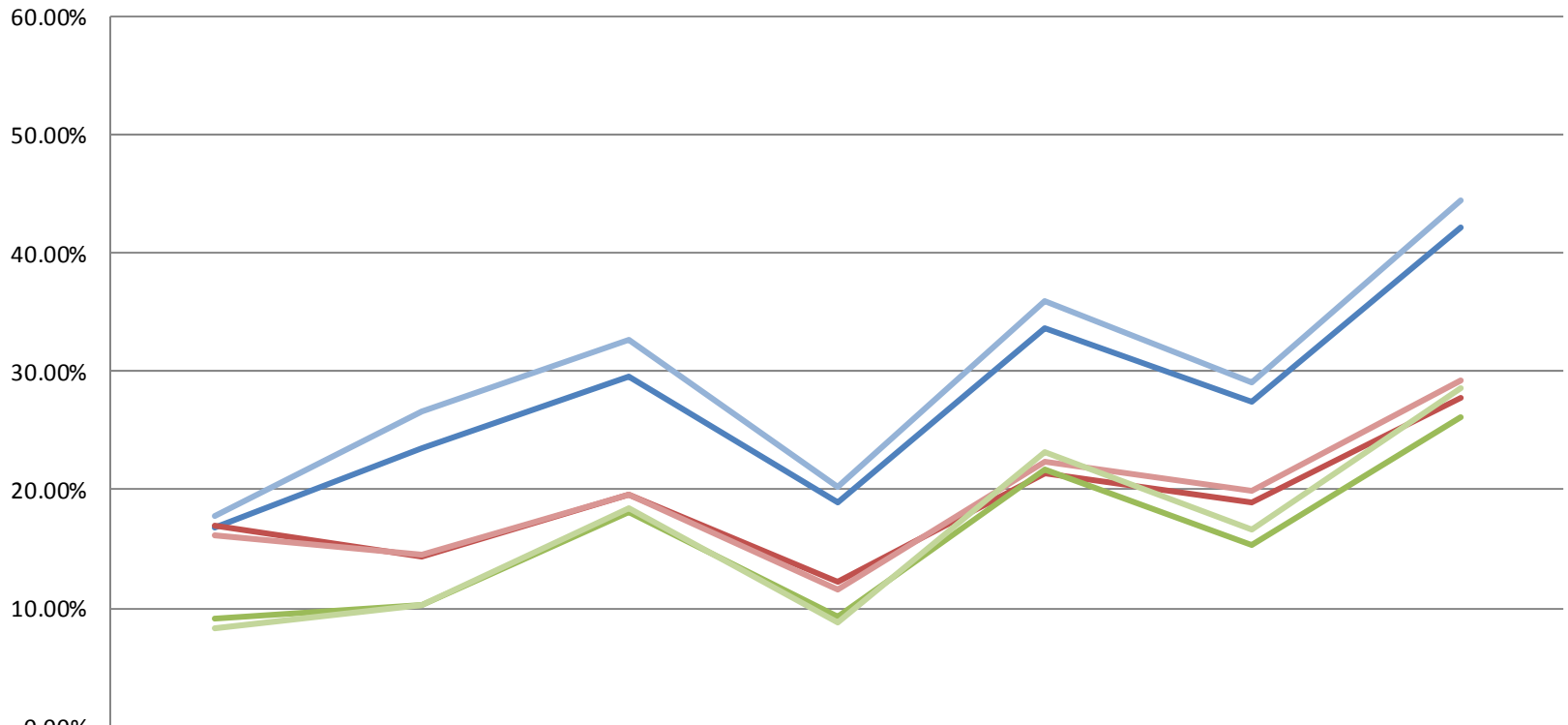
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	31.03%	42.34%	42.60%	32.64%	41.38%	40.19%	49.58%
D-Women	32.61%	45.41%	44.99%	34.21%	44.66%	43.82%	51.66%
R-Men	33.99%	30.07%	34.19%	23.57%	31.85%	33.54%	38.87%
R-Women	37.00%	34.61%	36.16%	26.03%	36.64%	37.11%	44.18%
NP-Men	20.57%	21.96%	28.63%	18.56%	27.65%	28.25%	34.58%
NP-Women	22.78%	25.61%	32.11%	20.87%	32.38%	32.78%	39.29%

**Figure 13b: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 25-34 Voting Absentee by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



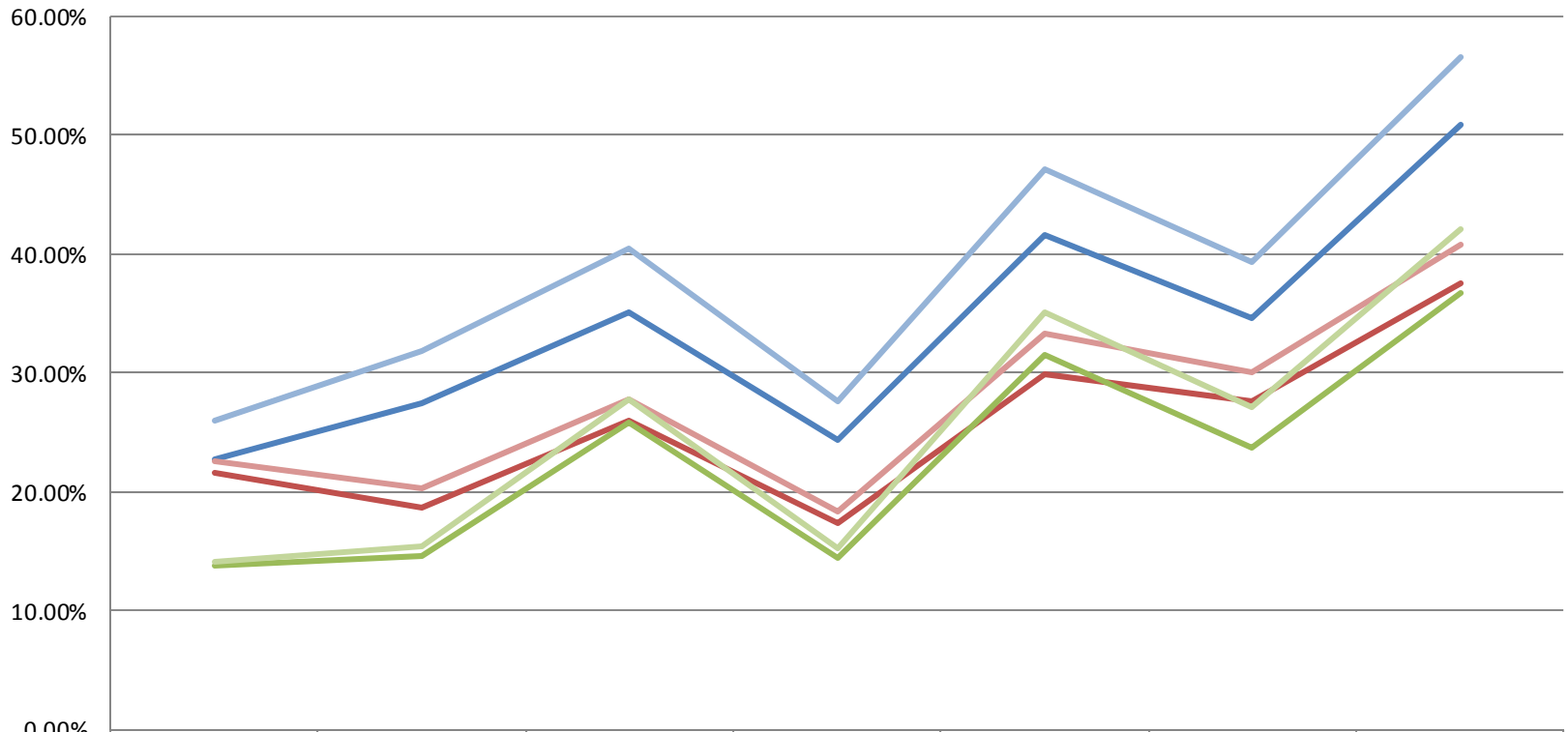
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	18.20%	27.25%	34.52%	22.74%	36.16%	28.81%	43.14%
D-Women	17.51%	30.07%	35.57%	22.57%	37.58%	30.02%	45.23%
R-Men	19.09%	15.90%	21.65%	13.14%	21.50%	18.93%	28.29%
R-Women	19.23%	17.65%	21.50%	13.10%	22.66%	20.25%	30.09%
NP-Men	10.20%	11.21%	19.68%	9.40%	21.96%	15.56%	26.35%
NP-Women	9.22%	11.19%	19.65%	9.26%	23.64%	16.10%	29.68%

**Figure 13c: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 35-49 Voting Absentee by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



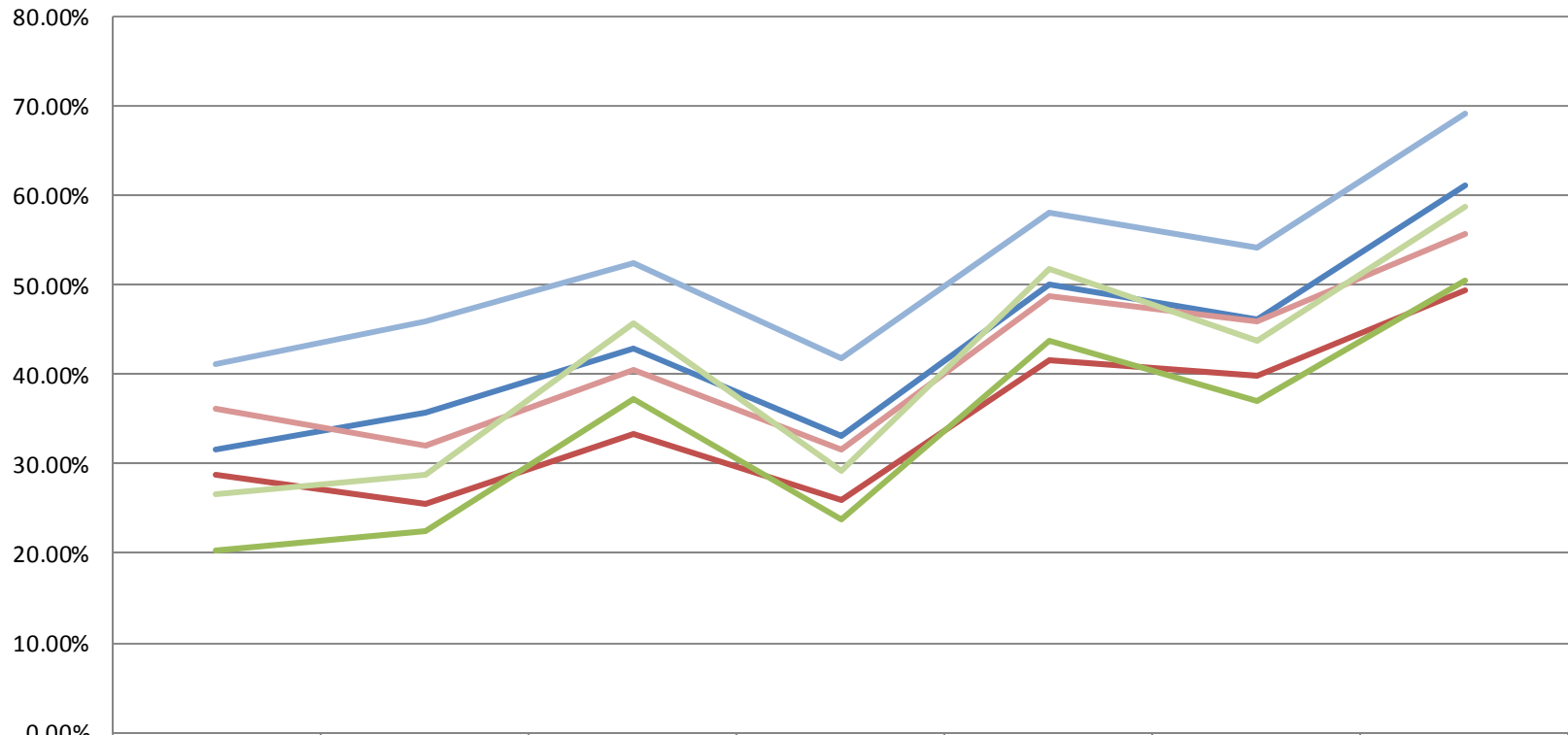
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	16.75%	23.49%	29.60%	18.91%	33.72%	27.41%	42.10%
D-Women	17.81%	26.66%	32.72%	20.25%	35.94%	29.00%	44.51%
R-Men	16.92%	14.28%	19.61%	12.21%	21.35%	18.98%	27.80%
R-Women	16.08%	14.53%	19.52%	11.52%	22.41%	19.90%	29.20%
NP-Men	9.12%	10.17%	18.14%	9.33%	21.77%	15.30%	26.10%
NP-Women	8.37%	10.31%	18.36%	8.74%	23.11%	16.67%	28.65%

**Figure 13d: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 50-64 Voting Absentee by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



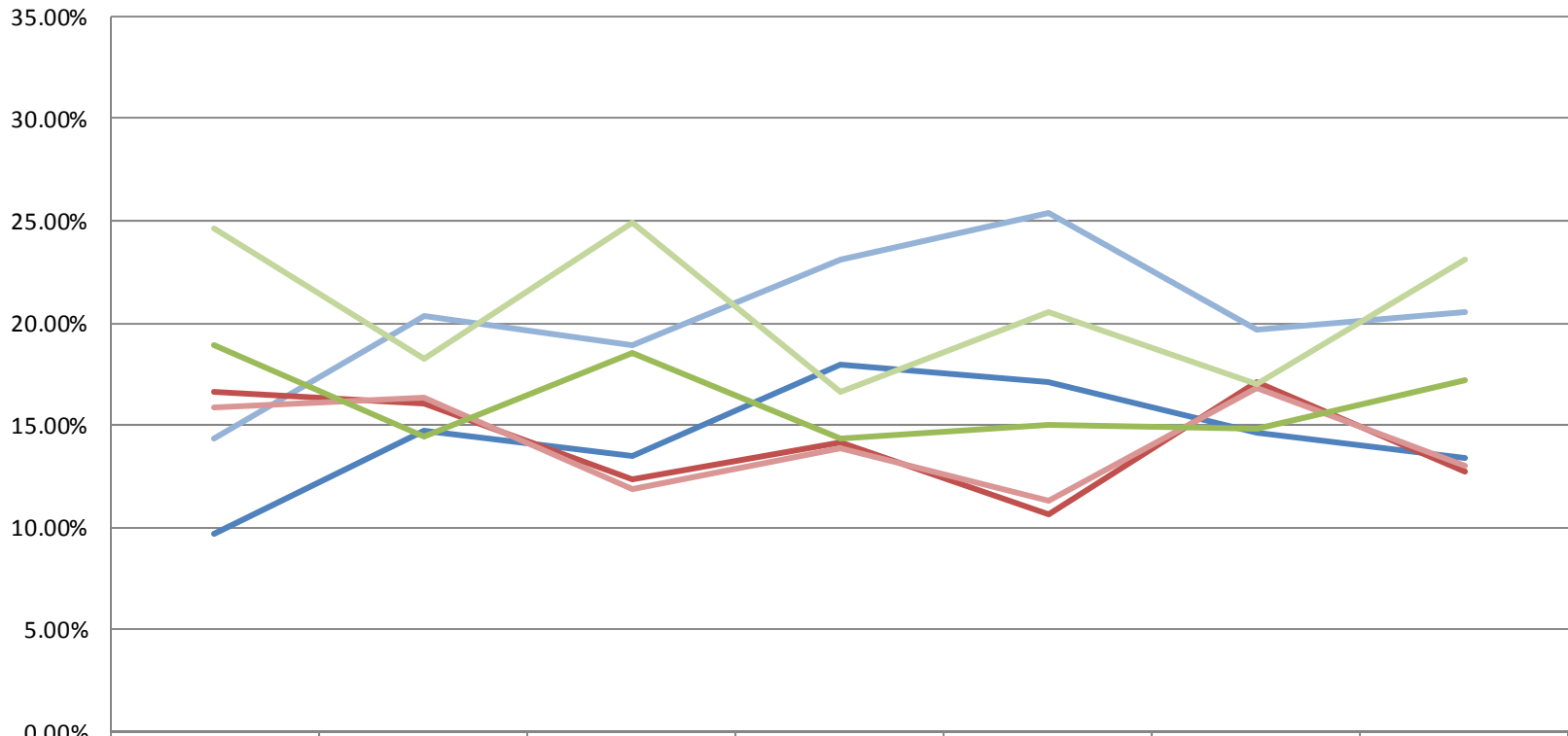
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	22.68%	27.40%	35.14%	24.31%	41.53%	34.65%	50.81%
D-Women	25.99%	31.89%	40.43%	27.65%	47.08%	39.38%	56.49%
R-Men	21.60%	18.63%	25.97%	17.32%	29.90%	27.62%	37.54%
R-Women	22.50%	20.25%	27.78%	18.38%	33.25%	30.10%	40.71%
NP-Men	13.75%	14.53%	25.79%	14.38%	31.48%	23.73%	36.79%
NP-Women	14.12%	15.35%	27.78%	15.27%	35.12%	27.12%	42.09%

**Figure 13e: Percentage of Iowa Voters in Age Group 65 & Over Voting Absentee by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



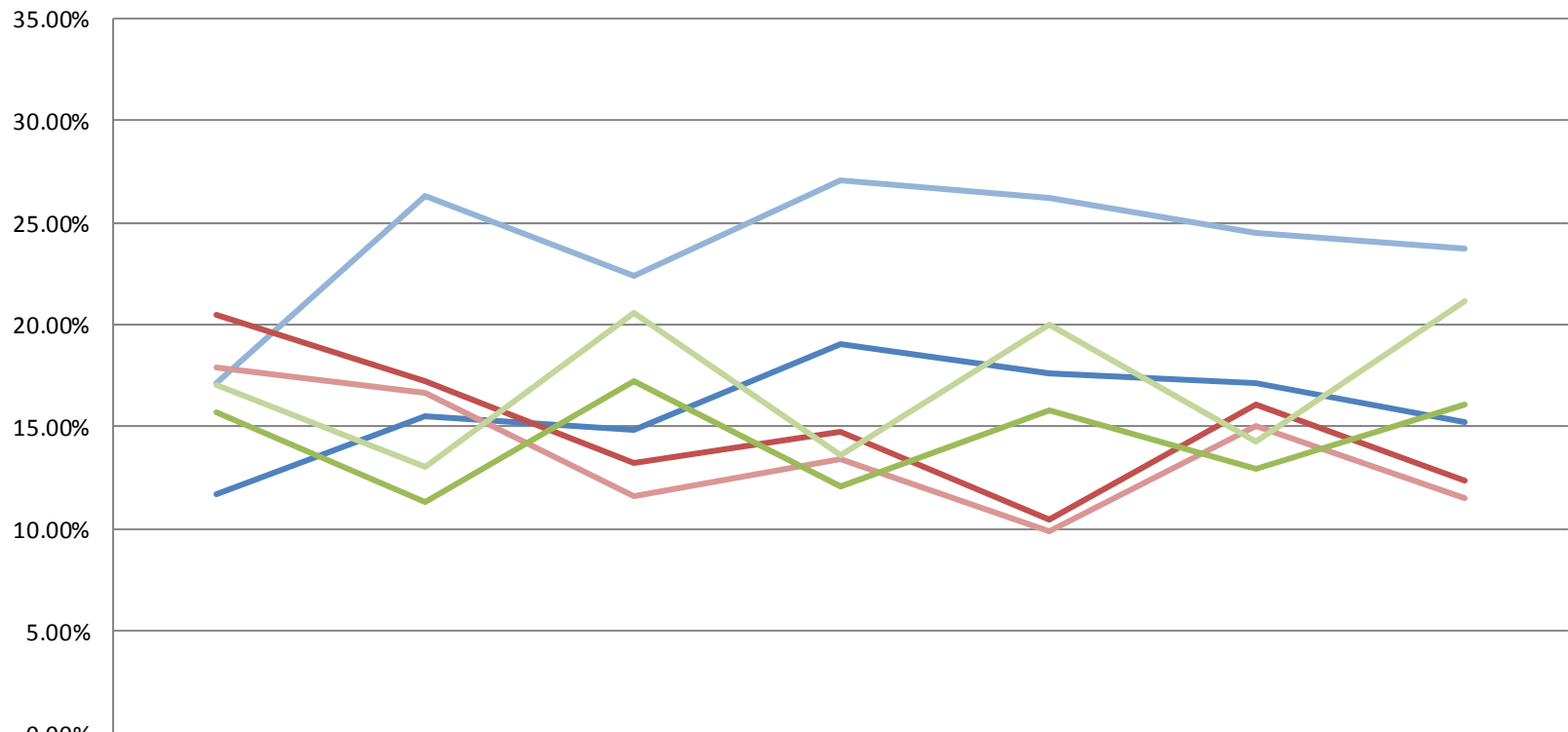
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	31.59%	35.80%	42.80%	33.16%	50.05%	46.10%	61.14%
D-Women	41.10%	45.95%	52.38%	41.89%	58.13%	54.18%	69.19%
R-Men	28.87%	25.49%	33.26%	26.04%	41.57%	39.93%	49.33%
R-Women	36.11%	32.05%	40.51%	31.70%	48.76%	45.82%	55.64%
NP-Men	20.24%	22.44%	37.21%	23.85%	43.84%	37.08%	50.42%
NP-Women	26.63%	28.88%	45.65%	29.13%	51.74%	43.76%	58.64%

**Figure 14a: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 18-24 by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



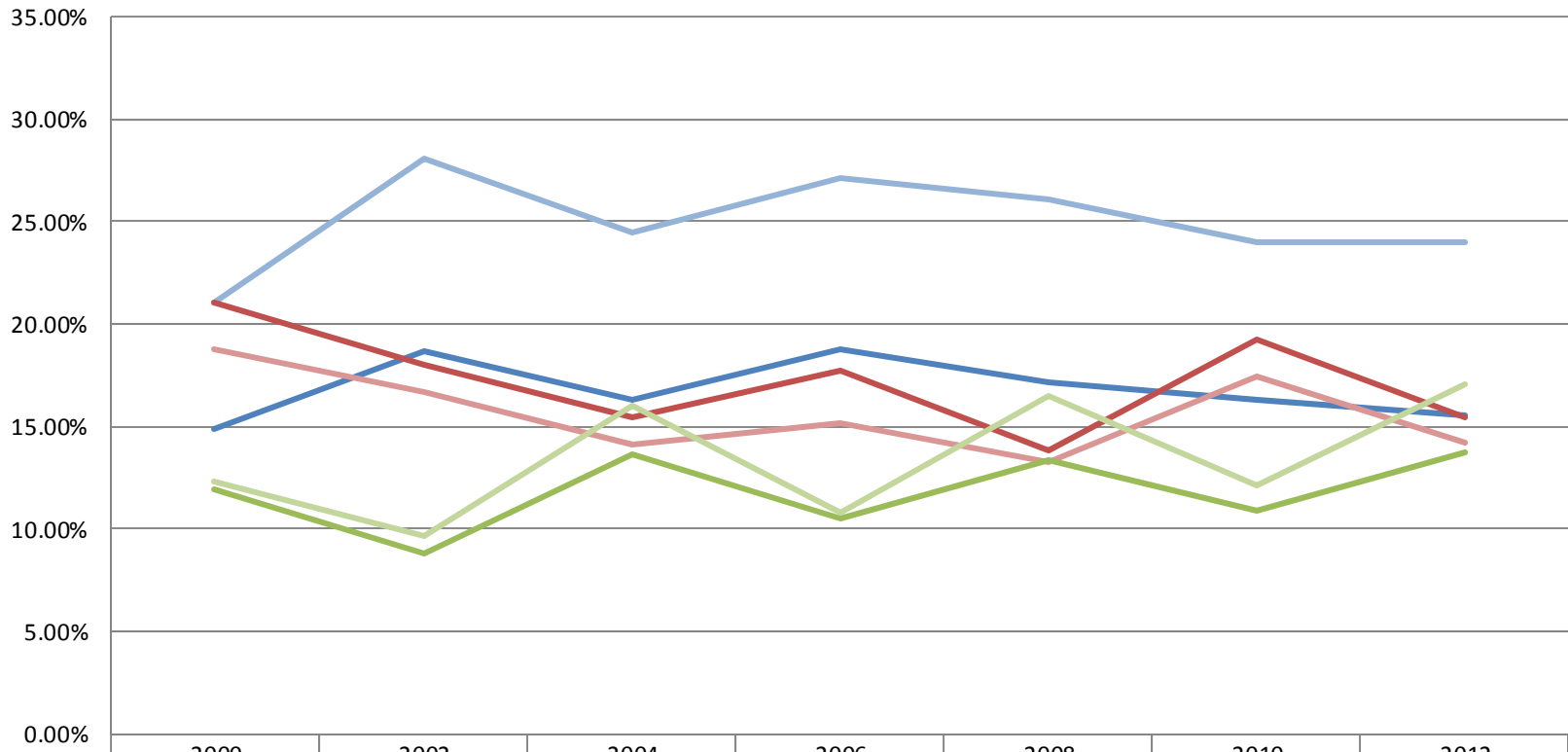
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	9.72%	14.69%	13.47%	17.94%	17.13%	14.64%	13.43%
D-Women	14.35%	20.37%	18.94%	23.08%	25.41%	19.68%	20.50%
R-Men	16.59%	16.03%	12.32%	14.14%	10.67%	17.10%	12.74%
R-Women	15.83%	16.29%	11.85%	13.88%	11.33%	16.80%	12.99%
NP-Men	18.94%	14.40%	18.56%	14.29%	14.97%	14.79%	17.21%
NP-Women	24.57%	18.22%	24.86%	16.67%	20.49%	16.99%	23.13%

**Figure 14b: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 25-34 by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	11.67%	15.51%	14.88%	19.01%	17.62%	17.10%	15.24%
D-Women	17.12%	26.26%	22.41%	27.03%	26.23%	24.53%	23.69%
R-Men	20.47%	17.24%	13.25%	14.74%	10.43%	16.06%	12.35%
R-Women	17.89%	16.63%	11.63%	13.46%	9.88%	15.03%	11.52%
NP-Men	15.76%	11.29%	17.28%	12.13%	15.79%	12.99%	16.07%
NP-Women	17.08%	13.07%	20.55%	13.64%	20.04%	14.28%	21.12%

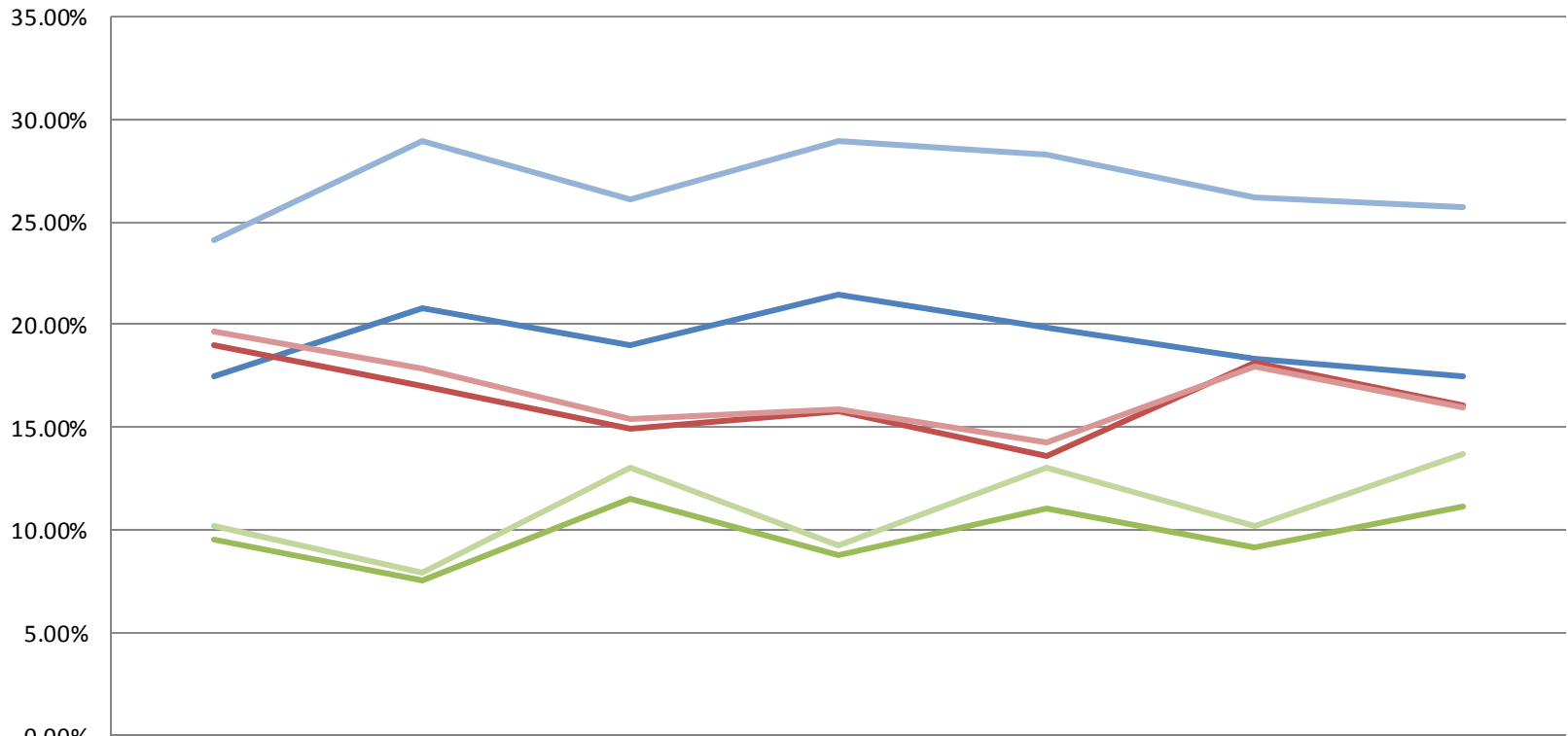
**Figure 14c: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 35-49 by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	14.92%	18.71%	16.30%	18.79%	17.13%	16.28%	15.57%
D-Women	21.00%	28.10%	24.50%	27.12%	26.04%	23.97%	23.94%
R-Men	21.08%	17.97%	15.43%	17.70%	13.85%	19.28%	15.48%
R-Women	18.78%	16.69%	14.15%	15.15%	13.21%	17.45%	14.17%
NP-Men	11.96%	8.84%	13.63%	10.46%	13.31%	10.87%	13.76%
NP-Women	12.27%	9.69%	16.00%	10.76%	16.46%	12.15%	17.08%

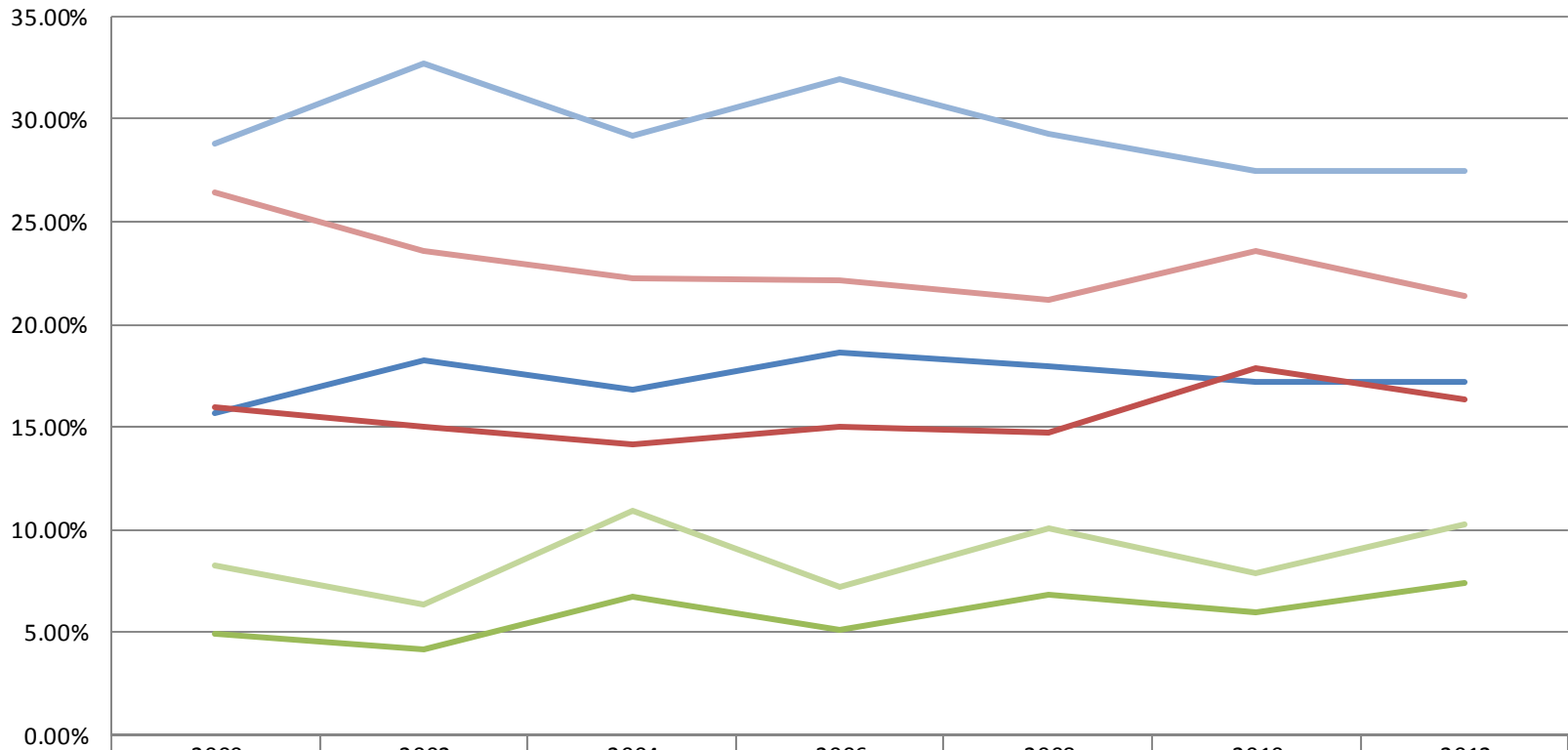


**Figure 14d: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 50-64 by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	17.50%	20.76%	18.97%	21.43%	19.81%	18.33%	17.46%
D-Women	24.12%	28.92%	26.14%	28.94%	28.27%	26.22%	25.71%
R-Men	18.96%	17.01%	14.89%	15.77%	13.60%	18.15%	16.01%
R-Women	19.68%	17.84%	15.42%	15.86%	14.28%	17.93%	15.97%
NP-Men	9.55%	7.58%	11.53%	8.78%	11.02%	9.13%	11.13%
NP-Women	10.20%	7.89%	13.06%	9.22%	13.02%	10.24%	13.72%

**Figure 14e: Distribution of Iowa Absentee Voters in Age Group 65 & Over by Gender and Party in Election Years Since 2000**



	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
D-Men	15.66%	18.26%	16.78%	18.60%	17.92%	17.19%	17.16%
D-Women	28.82%	32.67%	29.14%	31.93%	29.25%	27.50%	27.43%
R-Men	15.97%	15.03%	14.13%	14.96%	14.73%	17.90%	16.37%
R-Women	26.38%	23.58%	22.23%	22.17%	21.21%	23.58%	21.36%
NP-Men	4.91%	4.12%	6.77%	5.12%	6.83%	5.99%	7.42%
NP-Women	8.26%	6.34%	10.95%	7.22%	10.06%	7.85%	10.26%