

Not to Be Blunt, New Jersey and the Racial Motivations Behind Legalized Cannabis

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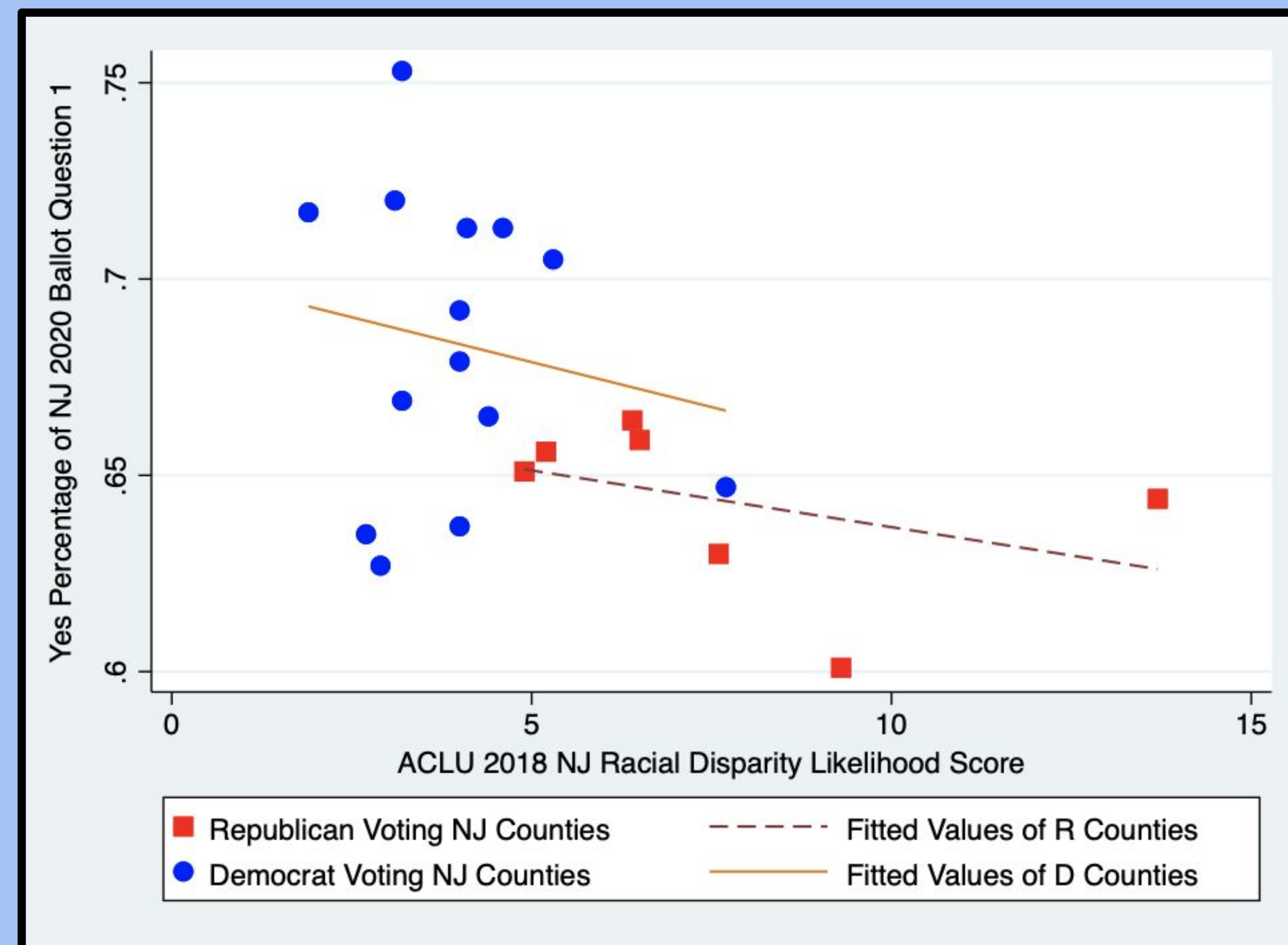
Introduction:

- Do racial disparities in marijuana possession arrests motivate minority groups to legalize cannabis in New Jersey?
- H1: Communities more directly affected by racial disparities in marijuana possession crimes are more likely to seek legalization to amend for the asymmetrical arrests and hardships.
- H2: Voters are more inclined to vote in accordance with their party lines rather than being affected by their immediate community.

Methods:

- **Participants:** Every vote in New Jersey 2020 ballot Q1 to legalize marijuana
- **Ballot Question 1 Yes Percentage** represents the percent at which each New Jersey County voted to pass ballot question 1 of 2020
- **ACLU 2018 Racial Disparity likelihood multiplier** is based off the arrests rates for marijuana possession per 100k of white persons when compared to African Americans
- **Trump 2020 vote share** is the percentage at which 2020 Presidential Candidate President Donald Trump received
- **African American Share of NJ Population** is the 2019 estimated population of African Americans in New Jersey according to the US census bureau
- **This study utilized linear multivariate regressions to analyze data.**

Racial Disparities seen in marijuana possession arrests can affect opinions on legalizing marijuana. However, those numbers are Dwarfed by **Partisan Effects**



This plot offers the explanation that Blue voting counties in 2020 had a lower probability of a racial disparity based off marijuana possession to begin while Red voting counties were less in favor of legal cannabis and naturally more conservative. Following the the same pattern Red counties increased in racial disparity likelihood as legal marijuana favorability decreased.

Standard errors in parentheses * p<0.1, ** p<0.05	(1) Ballot Question 1 Yes Percentage	(2) Ballot Question 1 Yes Percentage
ACLU 2018 Racial Disparity	-0.01** (0.00)	:-0.00 :(0.00)
Trump 2020 Vote Share		:-0.14 :(0.10)
African American Population in NJ		:-0.13 :(0.11)
Constant	0.70** (0.02)	:-0.72** :(0.05)
Observations	21	21

Results:

- An initial statistically significant relationship between the ACLU disparity score and the New Jersey Ballot Question 1 vote.
 - Once Race and Political affiliation is introduced the initial relationship is diminished, showing significance now through political leanings.

Standard errors in parentheses * p<0.1, ** p<0.05	(1) (R Counties) Ballot Question 1 Yes Percentage	(2) (D Counties) Ballot Question 1 Yes Percentage
African American Population in NJ	0.10 (0.23)	:-0.22** :(0.10)
Constant	0.64** (0.02)	:-0.65** :(0.02)
Observations	7	14

- Displayed above show how the African American Populations do not affect the counties President Trump won while the counties that President Biden won in 2020 have a strong statistically significant relationship.

Discussion:

- It has appeared that Legal Marijuana has become politicized and a tool for left leaning parties to attract those interested in receiving benefits from legalization. Whether it is wealthy business people or inner city communities.
- This study shows how Democrats depend on minority groups and appealing to policies that can attract more voters for their candidates while still holding the parties beliefs.