

DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

DB09:028

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2009

Contact: Kate Folmar
(916) 653-6575

Need May 19 Special Election News on the Go? Secretary Bowen Now Offering Updates, Results Via Twitter

SACRAMENTO – Starting today, Californians who are interested in the May 19 Statewide Special Election can receive official information from the Secretary of State’s office via Twitter.

“Californians are among the most tech-savvy voters in the nation,” said Secretary of State Debra Bowen, the state’s chief elections officer. “Now, I can offer them election news as it happens through Twitter. That way, people don’t have to repeatedly hit the ‘refresh’ button on their computers or stay glued to their televisions to keep up on the latest.”

Now through Election Day, people who sign up to follow @CASOSvote on the micro-blogging website Twitter.com will get special election reminders and trivia. After the polls close at 8:00 p.m. on election night, they also will receive regularly updated results for the six ballot propositions on the statewide ballot and for the two special election contests in Senate District 26 and Congressional District 32.

Today is the last day to register to vote in the May 19 special election. May 12 is the last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot.

The Secretary of State’s office has a Facebook page and it already offers voters access to ballot measure information, advisories to county elections officials, voting systems announcements and news updates through RSS and Twitter feeds. More information on these multimedia offerings is available at www.sos.ca.gov/multimedia.

A pioneer in open government, Secretary Bowen has long championed using technology to increase public participation. As an Assemblywoman, Bowen was the first state lawmaker to ask for and receive a government email address to better communicate with voters.

In 1993, she authored the first-in-the-nation law that put legislative information online, giving the public Internet access to information about California bills, committee analyses, state legislators’ voting records and much more. The law has served as a model for other states and countries.

Secretary Bowen was also the first California lawmaker to voluntarily put her campaign finance reports on the Internet in 1995, five years before all candidates for state office were required to post that information online.

###