



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

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California and Oregon Elections Officials Call for Non-Partisanship *Officials sign pledge to ensure neutrality and integrity in elections*



CA SOS McPherson pictured on right

Washington, D.C. - California Secretary of State Bruce McPherson, a Republican, and Oregon Secretary of State Bill Bradbury, a Democrat, today publicly signed a five-point pledge to remain neutral, independent and non-partisan in oversight of their State's elections. The two Secretaries announced their pledge today at the annual winter gathering of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) in Washington, D.C.

"Today we are pledging to remain independent and neutral in our oversight of elections in our States and we are encouraging our colleagues to do the same," said McPherson. "We believe that the strength of a democracy is dependent upon the participation of its citizens. One way to motivate citizens to participate is to build greater confidence in the integrity of the process and that is what this oath is intended to do."

The pledge includes a commitment not to take any action in their official capacity as Secretary of State for the purpose of "directly benefiting or disadvantaging any referendums, measures, proposition or initiatives." It also includes a promise to fulfill their duties "in an independent and non-partisan manner that is beyond question."

"With this oath, we are personally pledging to perform our duties in a manner that builds trust and confidence in the elections process and in the Office of the Secretary of State," said Secretary McPherson. "The public expects and deserves the assurance that their elections be administered independently and with the utmost integrity."

Thirty-nine Secretaries of State serve as their state's Chief Elections Official.



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Code of Conduct for Chief Elections Officers

As California's Chief Elections Officer, I have a responsibility to the people of California to oversee the Secretary of State's Office in an independent and non-partisan manner that is beyond question. It is critical that I perform my duties in a manner that builds trust and confidence in the Office of Secretary of State.

Therefore, I pledge the following:

I will not serve in any ongoing official capacity on a campaign supporting any candidates.

I will remain neutral, will not raise or contribute funds, and will not serve in any ongoing official capacity on a campaign supporting any referendums, measures, propositions, recalls, or initiatives, unless they relate directly to the official duties and responsibilities of the Secretary of State.

I will not take any action in my official capacity as Secretary of State for the purpose of directly benefiting or disadvantaging any referendums, measures, propositions, or initiatives.

I will pledge to follow the current campaign finance and disclosure laws that apply to candidates for statewide office.

If I am a candidate for any office, this pledge will not restrict me from any otherwise legal campaign activity on my own behalf.

Signed this _____ day of February, 2006

Bruce McPherson
California Secretary of State