



# NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

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Contact: Nghia Nguyen Demovic  
916-653-6575

## **Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Hosts Voter Registration Drive** *Effort Part of Voter Education and Participation Month*

SACRAMENTO, CA - Secretary of State Bruce McPherson began a voter registration drive today outside the Secretary of State's headquarters in Sacramento. The drive provides an opportunity for eligible voters to register to vote and will be set up between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. each Monday through May 8<sup>th</sup> and from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. everyday from May 15<sup>th</sup> through the 15-day close of registration on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The drive is being held in front of the Secretary of State's headquarters at 1500 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Secretary McPherson proclaimed April as Voter Education and Participation Month. This voter registration drive is part of the month-long events taking place throughout the state.

"Just over 70% of California's 22.5 million eligible citizens are registered to vote," said Secretary McPherson. "Registering to vote and participating in elections is every eligible Californian's right. We are working hard to ensure that every person who is eligible and wants to vote is able to do so."

Secretary of State staff will be available throughout the drive to answer questions and educate registrants about the new requirements that recently went into effect due to the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and new state laws.

For more information on this or other events occurring throughout the state, please contact the Secretary of State's Press Office at 916-653-6575 or visit the website at [www.ss.ca.gov](http://www.ss.ca.gov).

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**WHAT'S NEW FOR THE 2006 ELECTIONS**  
**New federal laws will have an impact on this year's elections.**  
**Learn how they will impact you and Your Vote.**

**New Identification Requirements:**

- To register or re-register to vote after January 1, 2006, you **must** provide a California driver's license or state ID number, if you have one, in the fields provided on the voter registration form. If you don't have either of these, you must provide the last four numbers of your social security number in the field provided.
- The elections official must verify your ID number before putting you on the list of registered voters, so be sure to register well in advance of the election.
- Some people who registered by mail for the first time in California and did not fill in their ID number may have to show ID when they vote at a polling place, or include a photocopy of their ID with their absentee ballot. Contact your local elections officials if you have questions. Find your elections official by calling 1-800-345-VOTE or by visiting: [http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_d.htm](http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections_d.htm)

**Voting Equipment Must Be Accessible to Voters with Disabilities:**

- New federal law requires that beginning in 2006, each polling place must have at least one voting machine available to voters with disabilities.
- Voters with disabilities should be able to vote privately and independently.

**Your County May Have New Voting Equipment:**

- Many counties have purchased new voting systems to meet federal and state laws. If you are not familiar with how to cast a ballot on this system, ask the precinct worker to show you how the system works.
- All voting systems in California must pass strict tests and meet all federal and state standards before being approved for use.

**You Have the Right to Cast a Ballot:**

- If you are not on the list at your polling place, you have the right to cast a "provisional" ballot. The poll worker will give you information about how to find out if your vote was counted, and if it was not, why not.
- A "provisional" ballot is just like a regular ballot, except it goes into an envelope or pending status until the election official can determine your eligibility. The ballot will be counted if the election official can determine your eligibility.
- If you are in the wrong polling place, the poll worker may try to help you by giving you directions to the right polling place, where your name should be on the list and you could vote a regular ballot. If you choose not to go there, you can vote a provisional ballot.