



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

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Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Attends the Unveiling of San Francisco's New Accessible Voting System

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Secretary of State Bruce McPherson today joined San Francisco's Department of Elections Director John Arntz and members of the disability community for the unveiling of San Francisco's new accessible voting system. As part of April's "Voter Education and Participation Month," Secretary McPherson watched as members of the disability community tested the new voting system and educated them on the new federal and state laws that went into effect on January 1, 2006.

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and state law requirements state that each polling place must have at least one voting machine accessible to voters with disabilities to allow them to vote independently and privately. San Francisco's new voting system is the ES&S Automark voting system.

"I applaud San Francisco Director of Elections John Arntz and his staff for hosting this event and for providing this new resource for voters with disabilities. For members of the community to test these voting systems before Election Day is key in the preparation for the upcoming election," said Secretary McPherson.

San Francisco County will use the ES&S Optical Scan voting systems in each of their polling places, as well as for their early voting. There will be one accessible Automark machine in each of their polling places to fulfill the federal and state law accessibility requirements.

For more information on the ES&S Automark voting system, please visit the Secretary of State's website at http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections_vs.htm.

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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

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.