



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

BM06:062

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, May 5, 2006

Contact: Nghia Nguyen Demovic
916-653-6575

Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Attends Cinco de Mayo Activities and Meets with High School Students

LOS ANGELES, CA - Secretary of State Bruce McPherson today attended the Cinco de Mayo events held on Olvera Street in downtown Los Angeles and met with high school students from Manual Arts High School to discuss voter education and civic participation.

Partnering with NALEO to register voters, Secretary McPherson's Office hosted a voter registration booth on Olvera Street during the Cinco de Mayo festivities.

"Registering eligible voters on the street where Los Angeles was founded so many years ago is an honor. I am pleased at the response in registrations that we have received and I welcome these new voters," said Secretary McPherson. "Voting is every citizen's basic right and I am impressed that so many people are looking forward to participating in the democratic process."

Secretary McPherson also met with Manual Arts High School students in the afternoon to encourage them to register to vote as soon as they are eligible and when they turn 18 years old. Educating young adults about participating in the elections process is part of Secretary McPherson's efforts to increase voter registration and participation.

"It is truly rewarding to be able to talk to young people about getting involved in the democratic process," said Secretary McPherson. "I hope that these students will encourage their friends and families to register to vote and encourage them to cast a ballot on June 6th."

Secretary McPherson declared April Voter Education and Participation Month and spent the month traveling the state encouraging eligible Californians to register to vote and educating them about the new elections laws. Citizens can register to vote until the 15-day close of registration, which is May 22nd. Attached is "What's New for the 2006 Federal Elections," information about new laws that will have an impact on this year's elections. For more information, please visit the Secretary of State's website at 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

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.