



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

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Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Announces New Resources for Voters with Disabilities

Visits with Members from Community Rehabilitation Services in East Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES, CA - Secretary of State Bruce McPherson today met with consumers and community members from the Independent Living Centers of the Los Angeles area to discuss his extensive efforts to help make voting easier and more accessible for voters with disabilities.

"All of California's voters must be given every opportunity to have equal access to the democratic process," said Secretary of State Bruce McPherson. "Since taking office, it has been a top priority of mine to provide individuals with disabilities the best resources available to vote on Election Day with as much privacy and independence as possible. I'm pleased to announce that we have developed these additional resources today and look forward to continuing our efforts in this area."

Secretary McPherson announced the development of a new brochure, *Your Voting Rights, A Guide for Voters with Disabilities*. The guides will be available in Spanish, large print, Braille, and on audiocassette. They will be distributed to and available from County Election Offices, Independent Living Centers, and other disability organizations throughout California.

There was a demonstration at today's event of Los Angeles County's accessible voting systems, InkaVote Plus and Diebold TSx. Voters were able to view the machines and learn the procedures and steps they can expect when they vote in the upcoming November Election.

"Community Rehabilitation Services was pleased to host this event which highlighted the accessible equipment and materials to empower people with disabilities in the community to see the equipment first hand in a non threatening, pressure free environment. Community members were given the opportunity to speak to Secretary of State McPherson first hand," said Eric Vasquez, Executive Director of Community Rehabilitation Services.

The 2002 Federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requires that every polling place in the nation be equipped with voting systems accessible to voters with disabilities starting with elections in 2006. The November 7, 2006 General Election marks California's second statewide election under the HAVA mandate. Since becoming Secretary of State, Secretary McPherson has partnered with Independent Living Centers throughout the state to assist and encourage individuals with disabilities to take part in the electoral process.

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