



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

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Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Announces Partnership with Major Latino Health & Advocacy Organizations to Encourage Voter Participation

Joint Effort to Make Registering to Vote Easier and More Convenient

SAN BERNARDINO, CA – Secretary of State Bruce McPherson announced a partnership with the Latino Coalition for a Healthy California and Latino Issues Forum to encourage clients of Latino health clinics and non-profit health clinics to register and vote in the November 7, 2006 General Election.

At a press conference to kick off "Vote for Your Health," Secretary McPherson was joined by Lupe Alonzo-Diaz, Executive Director of the Latino Coalition for a Healthy California and Sarah Olivia Mercer, Senior Program Manager for the Latino Issues Forum. They announced that member clinics and organizations would provide voter registration cards and election information to all eligible clients and patients.

"As Secretary of State, my job is to make sure that every eligible Californian is guaranteed the basic right to vote. And my goal is to encourage each eligible citizen to exercise that right. That is why I have traveled to all 58 counties in California and why I am standing here today. I hope each of you exercise your right to vote this election," said Secretary McPherson.

"Critical issues are being decided. There is no issue more personal than your health. Participation in this partnership is a real way to make the voices of the Latino community heard on health care issues," added Lupe Alonzo-Diaz, Executive Director for the Latino Coalition for a Healthy California.

"Voter registration and turnout are critical to the future of California's Latinos. Your voice counts so let your vote be counted. Register, get informed and vote!" said Sarah Olivia Mercer, Senior Program Manager, Latino Issues Forum.

According to a recent Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) report, California's electorate increasingly does not reflect the state's population and voter registration has grown at a slower rate than the State's population. According to the Secretary of State's most recent report of registration, only 69 percent of eligible voters are registered to vote.

Given the results of the report, Secretary McPherson has joined with a diverse group of community and media organizations to ensure that all of California's eligible voters have the tools they need to participate on Election Day.

Earlier this month, Secretary McPherson joined with the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, La Opinion and Univision to launch a massive voter registration project by inserting 250,000 voter registration cards in the Spanish-language newspaper to make it easier and more convenient for their readers to register to vote. Secretary McPherson also announced a similar effort with five Vietnamese publications to insert 38,000 voter registration cards.

Eligible voters can register to vote in the November 7, 2006 General Election until Monday, October 23rd. Voter registration cards are also available at local elections offices, libraries, DMV and post offices throughout the state. For more information, visit the Secretary of State's website at www.ss.ca.gov or by calling 1-800-345-VOTE or for assistance in Spanish call 1-800-232-VOTA.

The Latino Coalition for a Healthy California is the only statewide organization that emphasizes the health of Latinos in California. They represent 2500 clinics and Latino health organizations in California.

The Latino Issues Forum (LIF) is a non-profit public policy and advocacy institute dedicated to advancing new and innovative public policy solutions for a better, more equitable and prosperous society. Established in 1987, LIF's primary focus is on the broader issues of education, health care, the environment, telecommunications and civic participation.