



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

DB08:058

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 15, 2008

CONTACT: Kate Folmar
(916) 653-6575

Secretary of State Debra Bowen Reminds Californians That Monday is Voter Registration Deadline for June Primary *Issues Election Day "Do and Don't" List*

SACRAMENTO – Monday is the deadline to register to vote for Californians who wish to participate in the upcoming June 3, 2008, Statewide Direct Primary Election, Secretary of State Debra Bowen announced today.

“In sports, you can’t play if you don’t show up,” said Secretary Bowen, California’s chief elections officer. “In elections, you can’t vote if you don’t register first. I hope to see every eligible Californian become an active participant in our democracy by registering to vote.”

With just over two weeks until the June 3 primary, Secretary Bowen today also issued an important “Do and Don’t” reminder for voters and people affiliated with political campaigns, which is attached.

“The more people know about their voting rights, the more empowered they are,” Bowen said. “I encourage voters to take this chance to learn as much as they can about their rights.”

Now is also a good time for voters to check with their county elections officials to make sure their voter registration information – including their political party affiliation – is correct. In the February presidential primary, there were scattered reports of people showing up at the polls and learning that they weren’t registered as they thought they were.

Registering to vote is simple and free. Registration forms are available at most post offices, public libraries, city and county offices, the Secretary of State’s offices, and online at http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_vr.htm.

To register to vote in California, a person must be a U.S. citizen, a California resident, and at least 18 years old by Election Day. People who are in prison or on parole for a felony conviction, and people who have been judged by a court to be mentally incompetent, are not eligible to vote in California. An estimated 23 million Californians are eligible to vote, but as of April 4, only 15.9 million were registered.

The last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot for the June primary is May 27.

– MORE –

June 3, 2008, Primary Election Day “Do and Don’t” List

- DO:** Double-check your registration information, including your political party affiliation, by Monday, May 19, which is the last day to register to vote or change your registration before the June 3 primary.
- DO:** Know your crossover voting rights. If you are registered as a “decline-to-state” or nonpartisan voter, the American Independent, Democratic, and Republican parties are all allowing you to participate in their June 3 primaries. You have a right to request a ballot for any one of those three parties. If you do not, you will be given a nonpartisan ballot that contains ballot propositions and nonpartisan local races, but excludes partisan contests for Congress, state Senate, and state Assembly.
- DO:** Read up on the issues and candidates before voting. Information about statewide contests and ballot initiatives is available in the Official Voter Information Guide produced by the Secretary of State’s office and mailed to all registered voters. It’s also available online at <http://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/>, along with foreign language and audio versions of the guide. Sample ballot pamphlets sent out by individual counties offer more information about local candidates and measures.
- DON’T:** Offer incentives to voters for agreeing to vote or refrain from voting a certain way. This is illegal under state and federal law.
- DO:** Return your vote-by-mail ballot by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day to any polling place in the county where you are registered to vote or to your county registrar of voters. Vote-by-mail ballots received after 8:00 p.m. on Election Day will not be counted, so it’s best to mail them several days beforehand.
- DON’T:** Discourage or hinder anyone’s right to vote. Voter intimidation is illegal.
- DO:** Know your polling place. If you don’t know where your polling place is, look-up information is available at http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_pppl.htm. If you vote at a polling place in your county other than your designated location, you can request a provisional ballot, which will be counted later after an elections official verifies that you are eligible to vote and have not already voted in that election. Ballots may differ even within counties or cities, so it’s best to vote at your designated polling place to ensure you can vote on every contest and measure you’re entitled to vote on. A poll worker can give you information on how to track your provisional ballot.
- DON’T:** Campaign for votes or solicit petition signatures within 100 feet of a polling place. Electioneering in the immediate area around polling places is illegal.