

# DEBRA BOWEN

## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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### Certified California Election Results: 72% Turnout in November, Majority of Ballots Cast by Mail

**SACRAMENTO** – For the first time in a statewide general election the majority of Californians who voted did so by mail, according to the official results of the November 6 General Election. The Statement of Vote, certified today by Secretary of State Debra Bowen, shows 13.2 million people voted in the presidential election – a turnout of 72% of California’s 18.2 million registered voters.

The highest-ever turnout in a California presidential election was 88.38% in 1964 (a close second: 88.32% in 1960). The lowest-ever turnout in a California presidential election was 65.5% in 1996. The average voter turnout for California presidential elections over the previous 100 years has been about 79%.

A total of 13,202,158 California voters participated in the 2012 presidential election. Of those, about 6.8 million people, or 51%, cast their ballots by mail. The all-time high for vote-by-mail ballot usage in any statewide election is 65% (in the June 2012 primary).

For each statewide election in California, county elections officials have 31 days to report their final results to the Secretary of State. The Secretary then publishes the certified Statement of Vote for the entire state on the 38<sup>th</sup> day after Election Day. The complete November 2012 election results, including county-by-county data and historical statistics on voter turnout, are at [www.sos.ca.gov/elections/sov/2012-general](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/sov/2012-general).

“This year we saw a record number of Californians registered to vote, thanks in part to the online voter registration application I launched on September 19,” said Bowen, California’s chief elections officer. “While the election results show an increasing number of Californians rely on the convenience of voting by mail, 100 years of election data also demonstrate the fact that too many registered voters choose to sit elections out. The crucial factor seems to be whether election issues or candidates strike a chord with each voter. People who register to vote in the final weeks before Election Day often vote at a higher rate than the overall universe of registered voters.”

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For the November 6 election, registering to vote was easier than ever through the Secretary of State's online voter registration application. Secretary Bowen secured federal funding to build the system and then worked to design it with the California Department of Motor Vehicles, 58 county elections officials, and the three election management system vendors operating in the state. Secretary Bowen launched online voter registration in mid-September and more than 590,000 people used the online application to register to vote in the final weeks before the election.

Counties with the highest voter turnout as a percentage of registered voters were Marin (87.4%), Mono (87.3%), and Alpine (84.9%). Countywide turnout was lowest in Merced (63.5%), Fresno (63.8%), and Imperial (64.7%).

In accordance with state law, the Secretary of State will publish a Supplement to the Statement of Vote by April 13. The supplement will include details about how votes were cast for President, United States Senator and each of the statewide ballot measures by city and each legislative, congressional, county supervisorial district, and Board of Equalization district.

California's next regularly scheduled statewide election is the June 3, 2014, primary election.

Keep up with the latest California election news and trivia by following [@CASOSvote](https://twitter.com/CASOSvote) on Twitter. To sign up for ballot measure updates via email, RSS feed or Twitter, go to [www.sos.ca.gov/multimedia](http://www.sos.ca.gov/multimedia).

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