



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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New Motor Voter Act Approved by State Senate Elections Committee

SACRAMENTO – Legislation sponsored by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla to modernize California’s motor voter registration system was approved by the State Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee today.

The California New Motor Voter Act, AB 1461, would register every eligible citizen who goes to a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office to get a driver’s license or renew one, potentially adding millions of new registered voters to California’s voter rolls. AB 1461 is jointly authored by Assemblymembers Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego), Luis Alejo (D-Salinas), and Kevin McCarty (D-Sacramento). The proposed law will now be considered by the State Senate Transportation and Housing Committee.

“California saw record low voter turnout for the 2014 November General Election,” Secretary Padilla said. “Currently 6.6 million Californians are on the sidelines during election season because they are not registered to vote. The first step to improving voter turnout is to help boost the number of California citizens who are registered to vote. The New Motor Act would create a modernized, seamless voter registration process that can help empower millions of California citizens to participate in our democracy.”

Voters would retain their right to opt out or cancel their voter registration at any time. The proposed law would continue to protect those covered by existing confidentiality policies, such as victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

“Our Democracy is at its strongest when the most people possible are participating, and the California New Motor Voter Act is an opportunity to easily bring millions of already eligible voters into the electoral process,” said Assemblywoman Gonzalez. “By modernizing and streamlining the registration process, we can help ensure all Californians get the best possible representation.”

Registration has been a barrier to voting for millions of Californians. Approximately 6.6 million California citizens are eligible but not registered to vote. On Election Day last year more than 40,000 people logged on to the Secretary of State website trying to register to vote. Unfortunately it was too late.

Millions of Americans have been prevented from participating in elections because they are not registered to vote. A recent study using Google search data estimated that 3 million to 4 million Americans wanted to participate in the 2012 general election, but unfortunately could not vote because it was too late to register.

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