



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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New Motor Voter Act Approved by State Senate

SACRAMENTO – Legislation sponsored by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla to modernize California's motor voter registration system was approved by the State Senate Transportation and Housing 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 Senate Appropriations Committee.

"As Secretary of State, removing barriers to voting and empowering more Californians to participate in our democracy are my top priorities," Secretary Padilla said. "Over 6.6 million Californian citizens are unable to cast ballots during elections because they are not registered to vote. The New Motor Act would create a modernized, seamless process to help millions of citizens register to vote. This would be a significant step in addressing the record low voter turnout we saw during the 2014 General Election," Padilla added.

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.

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.

[A recent report by the UC Davis Center for Regional Change](#) found that only 62.8% of Latino and 50.7% of Asian-American California citizens were registered to vote.

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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