



# NEWS RELEASE

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## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **New Motor Voter Act Heads to State Senate Floor**

**SACRAMENTO** – Legislation sponsored by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla to modernize California’s motor voter registration system was approved by the State Senate Appropriations Committee today. AB 1461 is jointly authored by Assemblymembers Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego), Luis Alejo (D-Salinas), and Kevin McCarty (D-Sacramento).

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. The proposed law will next be heard by the full State Senate.

“We can use technology to modernize the voter registration process and empower more Californians to vote,” Secretary Padilla said. “As Secretary of State, I have a responsibility to remove barriers to voting. AB 1461 would provide an opportunity to help millions of Californians participate in our elections. The New Motor Act would be a significant step in addressing the record low voter turnout we saw during the 2014 General Election.”

Californians who are identified as eligible voters when visiting the DMV would have their information sent to the Secretary of State’s office for automatic voter registration. Voters who are registered under the New Motor Voter Act would receive a postcard allowing them to select a party preference or opt-out of registration.

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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