



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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Secretary of State Alex Padilla Launches Open Source Campaign Finance Search Engine

SACRAMENTO – California Secretary of State Alex Padilla today launched [Power Search](#), a new open source campaign finance search engine available on the Secretary of State’s website. Power Search allows anyone to swiftly and easily review the source, recipient and amount of state level campaign contributions. It also provides useful summaries of information at the contributor, candidate, ballot measure and campaign committee levels with options for sorting and further exploring the data.

“Both the public and the press should have quick and easy access to campaign finance information,” Secretary Padilla said. “Power Search is the first step in modernizing and upgrading Cal-Access.”

“Power Search is a dynamic tool that will increase transparency and provide the public and the press a clearer view of the flow of campaign dollars. The Power Search project was an innovative approach to creating open source technology. With the leadership of MapLight, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization that tracks money’s influence on politics, we were able to develop Power Search quickly, with minor and absorbable cost to the state,” Padilla added.

The new Power Search tool provides an easy-to-use interface to search campaign finance data that is refreshed daily from the state’s existing CAL-ACCESS system. This new search engine is in response to the public’s desire for a more intuitive tool to search campaign finance data. For example, with Power Search, one can easily view all campaign contributions to an elected official from a particular company or organization. This type of information was not easily searchable through CAL-ACCESS.

With a few clicks, anyone can identify contributions made by corporations, organizations, or individuals from 2001 to the present. Search results can be filtered by recipient, date, amount, location, as well as other criteria, or they can be downloaded into a spreadsheet for further analysis.

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“I applaud MapLight and Secretary of State staff for their commitment and work to bring this project forward for the benefit of the public,” Padilla added. Power Search was developed in a partnership between the Secretary of State’s office and MapLight— a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization that tracks money’s influence on politics.

“MapLight is delighted to work with the Secretary of State to create an innovative online tool for the public’s benefit,” said Daniel G. Newman, President and Co-Founder of MapLight. “Power Search sets a new standard for fast, wide-reaching public access to information about who is funding elected officials, candidates, and ballot measures. We hope that other states and cities will follow Secretary Padilla’s example and adopt open source civic technology to increase public access to public information.”

The project’s development was funded with a grant from the James Irvine Foundation with the goal of providing Californians with access to information critical to democracy.

“The James Irvine Foundation is proud to support innovations like this to improve transparency in California,” said Don Howard, The Irvine Foundation President and CEO. “The CAL-ACCESS Power Search tool is a great first step to making vital information about money in politics more accessible to Californians. We look forward to working with Secretary Padilla and others to develop additional improvements that can strengthen our democracy in the future.”

To experience Power Search, simply go to the Secretary of State’s website and click on the green Power Search button or visit <http://powersearch.sos.ca.gov/>.

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