



# NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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## Bill to Modernize Elections Clears Assembly Committee

**SACRAMENTO** – A bill to create a new elections model that provides Californians greater options for when, where, and how to cast a ballot was approved by the State Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee today.

SB 450 is sponsored by Secretary of State Alex Padilla and authored by Senators Ben Allen (D-Santa Monica) and Bob Hertzberg (D-Van Nuys). The legislation now heads to the State Assembly Appropriations Committee.

“The way we live has changed, but the way we vote has not,” Secretary of State Padilla said. “We can make the voting experience smoother and more convenient by automatically sending every voter a vote-by-mail ballot and expanding in-person early voting opportunities. Instead of limiting voters to one location on one day to cast their ballot, we can provide options for when, where, and how they cast their ballot. Modernizing elections would benefit working Californians and strengthen our democracy.”

### Vote-by-Mail Ballots

Every registered voter would be delivered a ballot 28 days before Election Day.

Voters would be able to mail their ballot in, drop it off at a vote center or ballot drop-off location, or vote in-person at a vote center.

### Vote Centers

Under the new election model that would be created by SB 450, polling places would be replaced by vote centers. Voters would have the freedom to cast a ballot at any vote center in their county instead of being tied to a single polling location. Vote centers look and feel like polling places, but provide additional benefits and options for voters.

At a vote center, a voter may:

- Cast a ballot in-person
- Drop-off their ballot
- Access Same Day Voter Registration
- Receive a replacement ballot
- Use accessible voting machines
- Access language assistance and translated materials

There would be one vote center for every 10,000 registered voters on Election Day and the Saturday, Sunday, and Monday leading up to Election Day. From the 4 to 10 days before Election Day, there would be one vote center for every 50,000 registered voters.

### **Ballot Drop-Off Locations**

Ballot drop-off locations provide voters with an additional way to return their ballot.

Starting 28 days before Election Day there would be at least one drop-off location for every 15,000 registered voters.

Drop-off locations must be secure, accessible to voters with disabilities, and located as near as possible to public transportation routes.

### **Voter Education and Public Process for Adopting Vote Center Plans**

Every county that adopts the new election administration model would be required to draft and adopt a detailed plan through an open, public process.

Counties would be required to hold education workshops with community groups, including organizations that assist voters with disabilities and language minority communities.

### **Timeline for Implementation**

SB 450 would allow, beginning in 2018, Calaveras, Inyo, Madera, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Shasta, Sierra, Sutter, and Tuolumne counties to implement the new election model. All other counties would be allowed to adopt SB 450 in 2020.

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