



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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916-653-6575

Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Takes Action on Behalf of California's Voters to Ensure All Voted Absentee Ballots are Delivered by Election Day

Large ballots may require additional postage in some counties

SACRAMENTO, CA - Secretary of State Bruce McPherson sent a letter to the Postmaster General today asking that all voted absentee ballots be delivered to county elections offices in time to be counted on Election Day, regardless of insufficient postage. Secretary McPherson is urging the Postmaster General to alert local Postmasters and encourage cooperation with local elections officials to ensure all absentee votes cast are counted.

"As Secretary of State, my number one priority is to protect the integrity of the vote. No voter should be disenfranchised because his or her ballot did not contain adequate postage," Secretary McPherson said. "That is why I am personally appealing to the Postmaster General on behalf of the voters to ensure that each vote cast is counted."

Due to the size of the November 7, 2006 General Election ballot, the standard \$0.39 postage most voters are accustomed to using to return their voted absentee ballots may be insufficient in some counties in California. With lengthy ballots in several counties, due to state and local races and measures, the General Election absentee ballot will weigh slightly more than one ounce, therefore, 63 cents postage will be required in some counties.

While many of the counties are already working with their local post offices to pay the insufficient postage and ensure delivery of voted ballots, Secretary McPherson is asking the Postmaster General to contact local postmasters throughout the state to alert them to this situation and ensure that all absentee ballots are delivered by Election Day to the county elections offices.

Based on county responses to a recent survey conducted by the Secretary of State's office, the return of absentee ballots in the following counties will require more than the standard 39-cent stamp: Contra Costa, Glenn, Inyo, Mariposa, Monterey, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Stanislaus, Ventura and Yuba. Other counties have indicated that if the voter leaves the stub on the ballot, rather than tearing it off before mailing it back, it will increase the weight to trigger the need for additional postage.

See attached letter to Michael Daley, Vice President Pacific Area Operations, US Postal Service.



BRUCE MCPHERSON | SECRETARY OF STATE | STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ELECTIONS | 1500 11th Street, 5th floor, Sacramento, CA 95814 | tel 916.657.2166 | fax 916.653.3214 | www.ss.ca.gov

October 12, 2006

Michael Daley
Vice President Pacific Area Operations
United States Postal Service
11255 Rancho Carmel Dr
San Diego, CA 92197-0100

Re: Postage cost for returned voted absentee ballots in some California Counties

Dear Mr. Daley:

Due to the size of the November 7, 2006 General Election ballot, the standard \$.39 postage most voters are accustomed to using to return their voted absentee ballots may be insufficient in some counties in California. With lengthy ballots in several counties, the General Election absentee ballot will weigh slightly more than one ounce; therefore, 63 cents postage will be required to return the voted ballot, which will likely be covered by the use of two 39-cent stamps.

Many of the counties have alerted their voters to the fact that mailing back their voted absentee ballot will require additional postage through notices to the voter, media releases and special postings. While many of the counties are already working with their local post offices to pay the insufficient postage and ensure delivery, I am asking that you contact your local postmasters throughout California to alert them to this situation and to guarantee that they are working with the local county registrars of voters to ensure that all voted absentee ballots are timely delivered to the county elections offices. Elections Code Section 3017 requires that voted absentee ballots must be received by the local election official before the close of polls on Election Day. It is important that no voter is disenfranchised due to lack of postage or insufficient postage when returning his or her voted absentee ballot.

In the June 2006 statewide Primary Election 2,471,354 absentee voters cast their ballots. This represented approximately 47% of the ballots cast for that election. We can expect that the November General Election will have even higher numbers requesting and subsequently casting absentee ballots throughout the state.

Based on county responses to a recent survey conducted by my office, I have determined that the return of absentee ballots in the following counties will require more than the standard 39-cent stamp: Contra Costa, Glenn, Inyo, Mariposa, Monterey, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Stanislaus, Ventura and Yuba. Other counties have indicated that if the voter leaves the stub on the ballot, rather than tearing it off before mailing it back, it will increase the weight, which will also trigger the need for additional postage.

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Please help me guarantee that each voted absentee ballot is timely delivered to the county elections office on Election Day. I look forward to your support in this effort. Please contact me directly at (916) 653-7244 if you need additional information. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce McPherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bruce" being more prominent and the last name "McPherson" following in a similar style.

BRUCE McPHERSON
Secretary of State