

DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

DB07:006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2007

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Number of Registered Voters Drops in California

SACRAMENTO – Nearly one million fewer people are registered to vote in California than there were two years ago, according to the Secretary of State's newest Report of Registration released today. The report, issued every odd-numbered year, reflects updates to voter registration rolls including the removal of registrants who have passed away, moved out of state, or have been determined to be ineligible to vote, as well the addition of new registrants.

"The unfortunate reality is, while 22 million Californians are eligible to vote, only 69 percent of them are taking the first step to engage in our democracy by registering to vote," said Secretary of State Debra Bowen, the state's chief elections officer. "We have to do more to let people know how powerful their voices are – and how easy it is to exercise their right to use them – and that means investing more time and effort in showing them why they should get involved."

The registration totals for the six qualified political parties and voters who have declined to state their political affiliation are:

	<u>Feb. 10, 2007</u>		<u>Feb. 10, 2005</u>	
<u>Political Party</u>	<u># Registered</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u># Registered</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
American Independent	313,461	2.00 %	330,082	1.99 %
Democratic	6,667,437	42.52 %	7,156,449	43.04 %
Green	138,861	0.89 %	157,565	0.95 %
Libertarian	83,420	0.53 %	89,328	0.54 %
Peace and Freedom	58,264	0.37 %	67,238	0.40 %
Republican	5,362,473	34.19 %	5,734,536	34.49 %
Decline to State	2,953,414	18.83 %	2,973,317	17.88 %
Miscellaneous	105,028	0.67 %	120,158	0.72%
TOTAL	15,682,358	100 %	16,628,673	100 %

"Part of the drop in registration numbers can be attributed to better tracking and the removal of so-called 'deadwood' from the rolls, but the state's population is continuing to grow, and the number of registered voters isn't," Bowen added. "The percentage of people who have registered to vote versus the total number of people eligible to register has dropped five points in the past two years. This means fewer people are making the critical decisions that affect the lives of all 37 million Californians."

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DB07: 006
March 12, 2007
Page 2

The total percentage of registered voters as a portion of total eligible voters has declined from 74 percent to 69 percent since the February 10, 2005, Report of Registration.

Of the 58 counties in California, 35 counties have a Republican plurality and 22 have a Democratic plurality of registered voters. Alpine County has reported an equal number of registered Democrats and Republicans.

By law, voter registration updates must occur 154, 60, and 15 days before each primary election, and 60 days and 15 days before each general election. There is one off-year update reporting registered voter totals as of February 10.

Updated voter registration data through February 10 is reported by each county to the Secretary of State by March 1 in odd-numbered years. The Secretary of State is required to compile the data and release it shortly thereafter.

The complete February 10, 2007, Report of Registration can be found on the Secretary of State's website at: http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_u.htm. Hard copies are available upon request through the Secretary of State's Press office at (916) 653-6575.

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