



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Secretary of State Debra Bowen Announces Military and Overseas Voter Ballots Available 60 Days Before November 4, 2008, General Election

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today reminded military and overseas voters that county elections officials are preparing their vote-by-mail ballots for mailing.

County elections officials are required to begin mailing ballots to registered California voters serving in the armed forces or living abroad 60 days before any statewide election. Tomorrow marks 60 days before the November 4, 2008, General Election.

To qualify as a military or overseas voter in California elections, a voter must be:

- A member of the United States armed forces or an auxiliary branch;
- A U.S. citizen temporarily living outside U.S. territorial limits or the District of Columbia;
- A person living on a merchant vessel documented under U.S. law; or
- A spouse or dependent of a member of the U.S. military or an auxiliary branch.

“All eligible California voters, regardless of whether they’re in Anaheim, Afghanistan, or Australia, have an opportunity to vote in the November 4 election,” said Secretary Bowen, the state’s chief elections officer. “Even voters who are out of the country can still make their voices heard and their choices known on Election Day.”

More than six million Americans who live overseas or serve in the military face unique challenges when voting because states and the federal government have a variety of rules for registering to vote and casting ballots by mail.

California military and overseas voters may use a Federal Post Card Application to simultaneously register to vote and request a vote-by-mail ballot. California law also allows voters to request vote-by-mail ballots from, and return them to, county elections officials by fax.

These voters generally vote on a simplified ballot that allows them to simply write in their preferred candidates and offices sought, and their yes or no votes on propositions.

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The Secretary of State's office has a dedicated email address that links military and overseas voters from across the globe to staff that can offer additional assistance at mov@sos.ca.gov. More resources are available from the Overseas Vote Foundation at www.overseasvotefoundation.org.

To download a copy of the Federal Post Card Application or for more information about military and overseas voting, go to www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_mov.htm.

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