

DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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Secretary of State Debra Bowen Reports One in Five Voters Now Registered Decline-to-State; More Total Voters Since Last Statewide Primary in a Gubernatorial Election Year

SACRAMENTO – Heading into the 2010 election year, 20.2 percent of California voters identify themselves as “decline-to-state” (DTS), an all-time high as a percentage of total registered voters, according to the Secretary of State’s latest Report of Registration released today. The report also shows more than 16.9 million Californians are registered voters, up from 15.8 million at this same time four years ago.

The report includes data gathered 154 days before the June 8 Statewide Direct Primary Election and 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 as the addition of new registrants.

The percentage of DTS voters – sometimes called nonpartisan or unaffiliated voters – has more than doubled in the last 20 years. In four years, the percentage of people registered with the Democratic Party has increased from 42.7 percent to 44.6 percent, while the percentage of people registered with the Republican Party has decreased from 34.7 percent to 30.8 percent.

“Whether or not you choose to register with a particular political party, the most important choice is to register to vote and then to make your voice heard on Election Day,” said Secretary of State Debra Bowen, the state’s chief elections officer. “While there is still plenty of time – until May 24 – to register to vote in the June 8 primary, why wait?”

The complete January 5, 2010, Report of Registration can be found on the Secretary of State’s website at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ror/ror-pages/154day-prim-10/index.htm.

California has a “modified closed primary” system that permits each party to determine whether it will allow DTS voters to participate in their primary election. The Democratic and Republican parties will permit DTS voters to request their ballots in the June 8 primary; the other four qualified parties will not permit DTS voters.

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 released in February of years with no regularly scheduled statewide election.

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

	<u>January 5, 2010</u>		<u>January 3, 2006</u>	
<u>Political Party</u>	<u># Registered</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u># Registered</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
American Independent	382,380	2.26 %	310,987	1.97 %
Democratic	7,545,617	44.62 %	6,747,602	42.68 %
Green	111,395	0.66 %	145,786	0.92 %
Libertarian	84,462	0.50 %	83,465	0.53 %
Peace and Freedom	55,036	0.33 %	59,193	0.37 %
Republican	5,199,961	30.75 %	5,483,104	34.68 %
Decline to State	3,412,529	20.18 %	2,874,236	18.18 %
Miscellaneous	118,194	0.70 %	106,039	0.67 %
TOTAL	16,909,574	100 %	15,810,412	100 %

The last day to register to vote in the June 8 primary election is May 24. The last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot is June 1.

To keep up on statewide election information news from Secretary Bowen's office, follow @CASOSvote on Twitter.

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