



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS RELEASE

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New Voter Registration Stats Show Continued Uptick in Voters with No Party Preference

SACRAMENTO — Secretary of State Debra Bowen today published the latest statewide voter registration report, which shows a higher percentage of eligible Californians are registered to vote since this time four years ago while fewer than ever are indicating a political party preference.

The 60-day Report of Registration shows more than 17 million Californians are registered to vote, 21.3 percent of whom chose no party preference – a new all-time high. The previous record high of unaffiliated voters was 21.2 percent, reported in the Secretary's last Report of Registration three months ago.

The complete report, which includes voter registration data for a variety of political subdivisions, is at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ror/ror-pages/60day-presprim-12. The report reflects data gathered 60 days before the June 5 Presidential Primary Election, with updates to voter registration rolls in California's 58 counties 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.

“By registering to vote, more than 17 million Californians have taken the first step in deciding the fate of ballot propositions and choosing which candidates for president, U.S. Congress, state legislature and more will square off in November,” said Secretary Bowen, the state's chief elections officer. “Registering to vote is easier than ever with the fillable form offered on my website, and I expect to see these voter registration numbers go even higher by the May 21 deadline to register.”

The voter registration form at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/register-to-vote/ can be filled in online then printed, signed and mailed. (The form is even pre-addressed to the registrant's county elections office.) Californians can also pick up a voter registration form at any U.S. post office, public library or county elections office. Voters can check their registration status through a portal at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/registration-status.

The last day to register to vote in the June 5 primary election is May 21. The last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot is May 29.

– MORE –

The registration totals for the seven qualified political parties and voters who have no party preference follow.

| | <u>April 4, 2008</u> | | <u>April 6, 2012</u> | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Political Party</u> | <u># Registered</u> | <u>% of Total</u> | <u># Registered</u> | <u>% of Total</u> |
| American Independent | 331,532 | 2.09 % | 430,635 | 2.53 % |
| Americans Elect | N/A | N/A | 3,104 | 0.02 % |
| Democratic | 6,920,324 | 43.54 % | 7,408,884 | 43.49 % |
| Green | 121,867 | 0.77 % | 110,431 | 0.65 % |
| Libertarian | 79,186 | 0.50 % | 93,217 | 0.55 % |
| Peace and Freedom | 56,000 | 0.35 % | 59,536 | 0.35 % |
| Republican | 5,220,666 | 32.84 % | 5,163,541 | 30.31 % |
| No Party Preference | 3,069,696 | 19.31 % | 3,630,726 | 21.31 % |
| Miscellaneous | 96,671 | 0.61 % | 137,340 | 0.81 % |
| TOTAL | 15,895,942 | 100 % | 17,037,414 | 100 % |

California law requires statewide voter registration data updates 154, 60 and 15 days before each primary election, and 60 and 15 days before each general election. There is one “off-year” update released in February of years with no regularly scheduled statewide election.

About California’s Primary Elections

California’s Top Two Candidates Open Primary Act, which took effect January 1, 2011, renamed partisan offices as voter-nominated offices, which include state constitutional, state legislative, and U.S. congressional offices. Under the new primary law, all candidates for voter-nominated offices are listed on one ballot and only the top two vote-getters in the primary election – regardless of party preference – move on to the general election.

The Top Two Candidates Open Primary Act does not apply to candidates running for U.S. president, county central committees, or local offices. Qualified political parties in California may hold presidential primaries in one of two ways: a closed presidential primary, in which only voters indicating a preference for a party may vote for that party’s presidential nominee; or a modified-closed presidential primary, in which the party also allows voters with no party preference (NPP) – previously known as decline to state voters – to vote for that party’s presidential nominee. The Democratic and American Independent parties will permit NPP voters to request their 2012 presidential primary ballots; the Americans Elect Party has chosen not to participate in the June 5 primary; and the other four qualified parties will hold closed presidential primaries.

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