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California Secretary of State Alex Padilla says Oregon's New Motor Voter Law Makes Sense for California

SACRAMENTO – As California struggles to address historic low voter turnout, new Secretary of State Alex Padilla sees promise in a new Motor Voter law signed into law last week by Oregon Governor Kate Brown.

“While many states are making it more difficult for citizens to vote, our neighbor to the north offers a better path,” said Secretary Padilla, California’s chief elections official. “I believe the Oregon model makes sense for California,”

“One of the biggest barriers to citizen participation is the voter registration process. A new, enhanced Motor Voter law would strengthen our democracy. It would be a game changer,” said Secretary Padilla. “While Oregon could expand its voter rolls by as much as 300,000 voters through their new enhanced Motor Voter process, California could expand its rolls by millions.”

“There are nearly seven million eligible but unregistered California voters,” Padilla said. According to the Pew Charitable Trusts’ Election Performance Index, California ranked 38th in voter registration in 2012.

“This change may not happen overnight, but if we are serious about increasing voter turnout, we should follow Oregon’s lead and commit ourselves to registering as many California citizens as possible,” Padilla said.

The new Oregon law will register citizens to vote or update their registration when they get or renew a driver’s license. “For all those citizens who want to exercise their voting rights, we should make every effort to facilitate their participation,” Padilla added.

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