



# NEWS RELEASE

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## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Secretary of State Alex Padilla to File Amicus Brief on “One Person-One Vote” Case**

*The United States Supreme Court Challenge to “One Person-One Vote” Threatens Fair Representation in California*

**SACRAMENTO** – Secretary of State Alex Padilla issued the following statement on the Evenwel v. Abbott case before the United States Supreme Court.

The United States Supreme Court recently announced that it will hear a challenge to the method used to draw legislative district boundaries that could have far reaching consequences affecting the ability of Californians to be fairly represented.

In Evenwel v. Abbott, the Texas plaintiffs seek to use the number of voters as the measure of a district’s size – a practice that would challenge established redistricting principles that rely on total population to draw district lines.

This misguided effort threatens to create a system across the nation that would devalue and ignore millions of Californians. By creating districts that could vary in size by tens of thousands of persons or more, resources could be unfairly allocated to districts with significantly smaller populations.

More than 50 years ago the U.S. Supreme Court in Reynolds v. Sims affirmed “one-person, one-vote” a bedrock principle of our democracy. Since then, the Court has steadfastly adhered to this principle, refusing invitations to revisit it, even as recently as 2013. It is essential that the Supreme Court uphold well-established notions of fair representation by ensuring that every person in the diverse communities across our state and nation are counted during the redistricting process.

Changing the rules would create a system that could exclude children, legal permanent residents, non-citizens, and potentially persons who are eligible, but not yet registered to vote. A system that sends the message that if you aren’t counted, you don’t matter, is a direct affront to our values as Californians and as Americans. This issue cuts to the very core of our representative democracy. As California’s chief elections officer, I am committed to ensuring that we remove barriers for those seeking to participate in our political process. I’ve sponsored legislation that would help as many as 6.6 million eligible, but unregistered California citizens become

registered voters. I have also welcomed thousands of new citizens from every corner of the globe into our democracy at naturalization ceremonies across our state. Everyone counts and everyone should be counted to ensure fair and equitable representation.

Our country has been down this road before. When slaves were counted as three-fifths of a person for purposes of reapportionment, it was wrong. When women were excluded from the voting booth because of their gender, it was wrong. When people were excluded from voting because they didn't own property, or because they were African American, Asian, Latino or Native American, it was wrong. The politics of exclusion have no place in our nation.

I intend to file an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court and do all I can to ensure that the rights of Californians are protected and preserved.

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