NEWS RELEASE
CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE KEVIN SHELLEY

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# Secretary of State Kevin Shelley Announces Regional Offices to Begin Accepting Domestic Partnership Forms

*New Certificates now Available*

SAN FRANCISCO --- Secretary of State Kevin Shelley announced today that beginning immediately the Secretary of State's four regional offices will process new domestic partner registrations at the front counters. Those that register will receive a newly designed domestic partnership certificate, suitable for framing.

The Domestic Partner Registry was created in 2000 for same-sex couples and for opposite sex couples where one partner is over the age of 62. The ability to register is especially important to same-sex couples, because without it these couples are literally strangers in the eyes of the law, especially when it comes to worker-related benefits.

"Domestic partner registrations provide more than just symbolic significance," said Secretary Shelley. "They are part of a growing trend by employers for providing equal benefits to workers who are either gay or lesbian."

New registrants will automatically receive the new certificate as part of their registration. To register as domestic partners, couples can download the form from the Secretary of State's website at: www.ss.ca.gov. It should be filled out, notarized and mailed with a $10.00 filing fee to: Secretary of State, P.O. Box 942877, Sacramento, CA 94277-0001.

Registration is also available at all of the regional Secretary of State offices in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego and Fresno.

Prior to Secretary Shelley's tenure, couples didn't receive a certificate, only a copy of a "government-issue" registration form. Couples, who registered prior to June 2003, will also automatically receive the new certificates.

In 1999, Shelley, as the Assemblymember from San Francisco/San Mateo, co-authored legislation that created the statewide domestic partner registry. And in 1990, as a San Francisco Board of Supervisor member, he co-sponsored the ordinance to create that city's domestic partners registry.

-30-