



SECRETARY OF STATE
KEVIN SHELLEY
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

KS03:053

Remarks by Secretary of State Kevin Shelley
July 23, 2003
(as prepared)

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for coming.

Before we start I want to say that once again the thoughts and prayers of all Californians go out to the people of New York City and especially to the family of city councilman James Davis, who was tragically killed earlier today. Our hearts are with you.

As California's Secretary of State, it is my duty today to certify the first recall election of a governor in California history.

As of today my office has received over 1.6 *million* total signatures. Of these, more than 1.3 million are valid. We have now received more than 110 percent of the required signatures, therefore the recall is deemed to qualify.

That is why, today, I have exercised my duty as Secretary of State and certified the recall election.

Moments ago, I sent the Lt. Governor formal notification of our action. He must now set the date of the recall election this fall -- no sooner than 60 days and not later than 80 days from today.

I want to take this opportunity to personally thank all of the elections officers and staffs from every one of California's 58 counties. They have done an extraordinary job under difficult circumstances. They performed brilliantly, despite the intense pressures set by the legal reporting deadlines - and difficult circumstances caused by local budget shortfalls.

I also want to thank the entire staff of this office. They worked night and day to meet the required deadlines. I have never seen public servants so dedicated to their duties - and I want to personally thank them for their work and sacrifice.

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All of us were very aware that we were making history and setting precedent. We worked very hard to make sure that if the state was going to take this unprecedented step - we would take it deliberately and with full confidence that the process had been followed carefully.

I know that emotions have been very heated, particularly during these past few weeks. Advocates wanted us to go faster, or slower, depending on their position.

My position has been that first and foremost we proceed carefully and get it right. And that's what we have done.

Our role in certifying this recall election is now done. I want to say, however, that our work is just beginning.

As the state's chief elections officer I want to make sure that every California voter knows about this special election - and has full opportunity to participate.

This is the first statewide special election in California history. The challenges are profound. I plan to work closely in the days ahead with local elections officers to make sure we are ready when Election Day arrives this fall.

This could very well be one of the most important ballots our citizens may ever cast. That's why I will spend the next months making sure that every vote counts.

Thank you all for being here. I will be happy to take your questions.