



# NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **KEVIN SHELLEY**

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## **Secretary of State Kevin Shelley Announces Recommendations from Task Force on Voter Privacy**

SACRAMENTO, CA – Secretary of State Kevin Shelley today released recommendations made by the Task Force on Voter Privacy. The Task Force was created pursuant to legislation authored by Shelley in 2002 (Assembly Bill 2832, Chap. 959) when he served as Majority Leader of the State Assembly.

“Californians are increasingly concerned about protecting their privacy,” said Secretary Shelley. “The Task Force made recommendations that enhance the protection of private information contained in voter files and ensure that voters receive vital information on how to protect themselves from identity theft and other crimes.”

Among the key recommendations issued by the Task Force to increase voter privacy protections are:

- Requiring additional restrictions to prevent misuse by those authorized to use voter registration information.
- Establishing safeguards against voter intimidation in the collection and processing of voter signatures for ballot measures, referenda and recall petitions.

“While current law includes many protections for voters’ information, this report clearly reveals that more needs to be done,” said Shelley. “And voters need to understand how their information is handled.”

The Task Force further recommends that legislation be adopted which would increase criminal and civil penalties for misuse of voter information, limit the uses of voter registration information, and establish uniform practices to ensure voter privacy statewide. The Task Force members also urged greater clarity in the information provided to voters. For instance, they recommend notifying voters about potential secondary uses of their voter registration information, clarifying voter registration requirements, and more clearly identifying to voters which items on the voter registration form are optional.

The Task Force held four public hearings over several months where they took testimony on the various voter privacy issues. The hearings focused on how to keep voter forms and documents private, the enforcement of current voter privacy laws, ensuring confidentiality, and how to ensure both access to and the privacy of information in the voter file.

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The seven-member Task Force, appointed by the Secretary of State, is comprised of county election officials, privacy rights experts, consumer advocates and law enforcement officials.

Secretary Shelley will sponsor legislation this week, Assembly Bill 2079 by Assemblywoman Jenny Oropeza (D - Long Beach), that aims to codify the consensus recommendation of the Voter Privacy Task Force. AB 2079 is scheduled for consideration on Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> in the Senate Elections and Reapportionment Committee.

The Task Force report and additional Task Force information is available for viewing at:  
[http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/voter\\_privacy\\_task\\_force.htm](http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/voter_privacy_task_force.htm)