



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **KEVIN SHELLEY**

KS04:059

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, September 03, 2004

Contact: Press Office
916-653-6575

Secretary of State Welcomes Progress on Release of Federal Voter Funds

Important Step for November Election

SAN FRANCISCO, CA-- Secretary of State Kevin Shelley today welcomed approval of \$15.2 million in federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds by the Department of Finance and noted that it is an important step in ensuring county and state officials can ensure the security and integrity of the November election.

The state Department of Finance approval of the money came one week after a delay in the funds disbursement.

The funds will be used by county election officials for poll worker training, voter education and security measures mandated in April by the Secretary of State's office related to the use of touch-screen voting machines.

Some of those security measures include providing voters with the option of a paper ballot, reviewing the software of touch-screen voting machines, spot checking those machines on Election Day, and submitting a poll-worker training plan to the Secretary of State.

"These programs are critical to conducting the November election fairly and securely, and it is essential that they are funded immediately," said Shelley. "We have worked diligently with the Department of Finance. We are pleased that the Department has responded positively to our request of August 30 to release the money and we look forward to working with the Joint Legislative Budget Committee for final release of the funds.

"I urge the Administration and the Legislature to review and approve, with appropriate oversight, the additional needed funds for a successful November election," said Shelley. "Among the urgent needs these funds would address are voter education, poll monitoring, military and overseas voting, and publishing the respected 'Easy Voter Guide' sponsored by the League of Women Voters, the State Library and others."

"I will continue to work closely with the Department of Finance, the Legislature and county elections officials to ensure that necessary resources are available to conduct the election successfully and to ensure that California continues to be a model of voting reform," said Shelley.

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) was passed by Congress and signed by President Bush in 2002. It provides funds for states to modernize voting equipment, to improve training for poll workers and election officials, and to educate voters.