



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **KEVIN SHELLEY**

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Secretary of State Shelley Posts Preliminary Recommendations to Improve Poll Worker Training on Web Site, Seeks Public Comment

Sacramento – Secretary of State Kevin Shelley today released the preliminary recommendations of his Task Force on Uniform Poll Worker Training Standards, outlining recommended education and training requirements for the state's poll worker workforce, and invited public comment before the standards are finalized as part of his program to assist with poll worker training under the provisions of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA).

Chaired by Yolo County Registrar of Voters Freddie Oakley, the 16-member Task Force's 53-page report outlines minimum levels of standards and shares "best practices" that are currently employed in several counties. Chief among its recommendations are enhanced training that addresses poll worker authority, handling of absentee and provisional ballots, suggestions on ways to deal respectfully with cultural and language differences and disabled voter needs, and elevated focus on the set-up, break-down and operation of all types of voting equipment to be used in the county where workers are serving.

Shelley expressed support for the preliminary recommendations and encouraged public comments. "I look forward to final recommendations of this task force because it is essential that we standardize the training of poll workers, given the complexities of state and federal election laws and new technologies in the polling place," Shelley said.

The task force work is in response to both the HAVA mandate and Senate Bill 610 of 2003, a Shelley-sponsored bill carried by Senator Martha Escutia (D-Whittier).

The Task Force recommendations can be viewed at http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/pollworker_training_task_force.htm. During this 30-day period (Friday, November 19 and Saturday, December 18, 2004), the public is encouraged to send written comments by any of the following methods:

Write to: Secretary of State Kevin Shelley
Attn: Poll Worker Training Standards
1500 11th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Email: TaskForceComments@ss.ca.gov

Fax: (916) 653-9675

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After this 30-day public comment period, the Task Force will consider the comments, and then submit final recommendations to the Secretary and the Legislature. The Secretary is then required by law to consider these recommendations in establishing statewide uniform poll worker training standards by June 30, 2005.

Members of the Task Force, in addition to Chair Freddie Oakley, are Ernest "Chuck" Ayala (AARP, San Francisco), Kathay Feng (APALC, Los Angeles), Maria de la Luz Garcia (NALEO Educational Fund, Los Angeles), Bonnie Hamlin (LWV, Oakland), Luana Horstkotte (Protection and Advocacy, Inc., Sacramento), Barbara Jones (Alpine County Clerk, Markleeville), Mary Jungi (Sierra County Clerk-Recorder, Downieville), Conny McCormack (Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, Los Angeles, represented by Deborah Martin, Assistant Registrar-Recorder), Elliott Petty (Neighbor to Neighbor Youth & Voter Empowerment Program, Los Angeles), Steve Rodermund (Orange County Registrar of Voters, Santa Ana, represented by Neal Kelley, Chief Deputy Registrar of Voters), Phil Ting (Asian Law Caucus, San Francisco), Dr. Geraldine Washington (President of NAACP Los Angeles, Los Angeles), and Stephen Weir (Contra Costa County Clerk, Martinez).