NEWS RELEASE
CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE KEVIN SHELLEY

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Secretary of State Shelley Certifies Vote Results, Reports Record Turnout

SACRAMENTO -- A record number of registered voters cast ballots in the November election, according to Secretary of State Kevin Shelley, who certified the results of the presidential general election today.

"We had a number of records set with this election," Shelley declared. He noted this was the highest number of ballots cast in any California statewide election, with 12,589,683 voters deciding the fate of presidential, US Senatorial, congressional, State Senate, and Assembly candidates, as well as 16 statewide ballot measures and hundreds of local candidate and ballot measure contests.

"Faced with a record number of voters, county election officials rose to the challenge," Shelley said. "I commend their work and share their commitment to California's voters."

The turnout number represents 76.04% of registered voters. The last time California's voter turnout percentage was this high was in the 1980 presidential general election when Ronald Reagan defeated Jimmy Carter. California's turnout that year was 77.24% of registered voters.

Shelley also noted there was a record voter registration population. Some 16,557,273 people were on voter rolls, 43% of which are Democrats, 34.7% of which are Republicans, and 17.7% declined to affiliate with a qualified political party.

While not an all-time record, a record percentage of voters in a statewide general election cast their ballots by mail this year. Some 4,105,179 absentee ballots were cast, representing 32.61% of all voters who participated in the election. The absentee ballot record was set in the March primary earlier this year, when 34.31% of the votes were cast by absentee ballot.

County election officials had 28 days to complete their official canvass procedures and certify the results to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State had a certification deadline tomorrow to compile the returns from all 58 counties.

Shelley noted that we anticipate a supplemental report from counties that will include the number of provisional ballots that were cast and counted in this election, as well as how many permanent absentee voters are now on the rolls. This data is not required to be part of the statement of vote, but Shelley's office has requested it be provided.

Final returns will be posted Monday morning on the Secretary of State's web site: vote2004.ss.ca.gov.

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