



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

BM06:052

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 19, 2006

Contact: Jennifer Kerns
916-653-6575

Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Announces Flexibility of HAVA Funds for Counties

Flexibility will provide greater local control for county elections officials, help to administer elections

SACRAMENTO, CA - Secretary of State Bruce McPherson announced today that he has secured the necessary federal certification to provide California elections officials more flexibility in their use of federal election reform funds.

By certifying the use of these funds with the federal oversight agency, Secretary McPherson is enabling counties to use Section 251 HAVA funds for various election-related purposes, for example to secure and properly use new voting equipment, retrofit voting systems for a voter-verified paper audit trail, and carry out vital absentee, early voting and Election Day functions.

“Through the leadership and persistence of the Secretary of State’s Office, the Secretary of State has worked on behalf of the 58 counties to provide the money we need to fully fund necessary election expenses,” said Steve Weir, Registrar of Voters for Contra Costa County. “We will be able to fund things like storage costs - to protect this multi-million investment in new voting equipment and to make sure the voting systems are secure - and to do common sense things like maintain direct communications with polling places to make sure that voters get all the help they need on Election Day. I thank Secretary McPherson for working on our behalf, and for his leadership on this issue.”

Under an amendment to voting system upgrade contracts; counties can now use these limited, one-time resources prudently to administer our elections more efficiently and effectively. More than \$11.5 million in funding will be earmarked for these purposes from an existing \$195 million contract currently in place for voting system upgrades and ancillary costs. Counties now have the ability to use their proportionate share of the \$11.5 million for storage of voting equipment, for cell phones to be used exclusively for elections purposes, for warehouse equipment exclusively for voting equipment and election purposes, and for retrofitting voting equipment with mandated voter-verified paper audit trails to comply with state law. The required certification of funding for these purposes was developed and submitted to the federal Election Assistance Commission, the federal oversight agency for HAVA.

“In my twelve-year career in the California Legislature, I often supported legislation that encouraged more productive use of funds at the local level, and this is no different,” said Secretary McPherson. “I agree strongly with election officials that this is a good use of funding and I am pleased to be able to provide this flexible solution to our hard-working county elections officials for the successful administration of our elections.”