

# DEBRA BOWEN

## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

DB07:076

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 18, 2007

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### Secretary of State Debra Bowen Reports Decline-to-State Voter Ranks Continue to Swell Heading into 2008 Presidential Election Year

**SACRAMENTO** – The number of voters who decline to affiliate with a political party has increased by more than three percentage points, compared to the last comparable count before a presidential primary election, according to the Secretary of State's newest Report of Registration released today. The report, with data gathered 154 days before a statewide primary election, reflects updates to voter registration rolls including the removal of registrants who have passed away, moved out of state, or have been determined to be ineligible to vote, as well as the addition of new registrants.

The registration totals for the six qualified political parties and voters who have declined to state their political affiliation are:

	<u>Sept 4, 2007</u>		<u>Sept 30, 2003</u>	
<u>Political Party</u>	<u># Registered</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u># Registered</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
American Independent	316,811	2.04 %	298,963	1.94 %
Democratic	6,599,660	42.50 %	6,735,349	43.63 %
Green	136,018	0.88 %	166,740	1.08%
Libertarian	82,669	0.53 %	89,760	0.58 %
Peace and Freedom	56,957	0.37 %	77,734	0.50 %
Republican	5,254,795	33.84 %	5,448,469	35.29 %
Decline to State	2,980,622	19.20 %	2,484,275	16.09 %
Miscellaneous	99,544	0.64 %	98,802	0.64%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,527,076</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>15,437,370</b>	<b>100 %*</b>

\* 2003 total also includes voters affiliated with the Natural Law party, which is no longer qualified in California.

Of the 58 counties in California, 36 counties have a Republican plurality and 21 have a Democratic plurality of registered voters. Alpine County has reported an equal number of registered Democrats and Republicans.

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When compared to the same period during the presidential primary election season four years ago, voter registration has been generally flat. The number of registered voters has increased by 89,706 over the past four years, but new registrations are not keeping pace with population growth. As a result, the percentage of people eligible to register to vote who are actually registered to vote has fallen from about 71% to just under 68%.

By law, voter registration updates must occur 154, 60, and 15 days before each primary election, and 60 days and 15 days before each general election. There is one off-year update reporting registered voter totals as of February 10. Fewer people were on the voter rolls last month than in March 2007, when the last Report of Registration was released.

“The drop is partly attributable to better tracking and removal of so-called ‘deadwood’ from the rolls,” said Secretary Bowen, the state’s chief elections official. “However, in a growing state like California, any leveling off of voter registration is troubling. The early primary in California, and the excitement surrounding the first presidential election since 1952 in which no incumbent president or vice president is running, should drive those registration numbers up over the next three months.”

The complete September 4, 2007 Report of Registration is on the Secretary of State’s website at: [http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_u.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_u.htm). Hard copies are available to the media upon request through the Secretary of State’s Communications Office at (916) 653-6575.

The last day to register to vote in the February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary Election is January 22, and the last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot is January 29.

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