



# DEBRA BOWEN

## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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### **Draft Voter Guide & Foreign Language Materials for February Presidential Primary Now on Public Display** *New language translation advisory panel adds expertise to process*

**SACRAMENTO** – The complete draft text of the Official Voter Information Guide for the February 5, 2008, Presidential Primary Election was placed on public display today in the Secretary of State’s offices and on the Secretary of State’s website.

The voter guide, also known as the ballot pamphlet, includes detailed information about the three state initiatives that have qualified for the February 5, 2008, ballot, as well as translations of ballot labels and titles and summaries in six additional languages: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. The English-language information on public display includes ballot labels and titles and summaries prepared by the Attorney General, impartial analyses from the Legislative Analyst’s Office, pro and con arguments, rebuttals to those arguments, and the full texts of Propositions 91, 92, and 93 as prepared by the Legislative Counsel.

A 20-day public display period is required by state law to give people the opportunity to examine official voter information materials before they are finalized, printed and mailed. People can legally challenge the materials by petitioning the Sacramento Superior Court for modifications under Elections Code Section 9092. A judge may require modifications to the ballot pamphlet’s contents “upon clear and convincing proof that the copy in question is false, misleading, or inconsistent” with state law and that ordering the changes “will not substantially interfere with the printing and distribution of the ballot pamphlet as required by law.”

The ballot pamphlet is on public display through November 13 on the Secretary of State’s website at [http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/vig\\_02052008.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/vig_02052008.htm) and at the Secretary of State offices in Sacramento, San Francisco, Fresno, San Diego, and Los Angeles. Mailing of the more than 13 million ballot pamphlets will begin December 27.

For the first time this year, the publicly displayed materials include ballot labels and titles and summaries that have been translated into six major languages other than English that are widely spoken in California.

The public display of foreign-language ballot materials is a new requirement under AB 2430 (Umberg) Chapter 378, Statutes of 2006, which took effect January 1. That law also requires county elections officials to use only the translations provided by the Secretary of State.

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For years, the federal Voting Rights Act and state law have required the Secretary of State's office to provide counties with translations of ballot labels and titles and summaries into those major foreign languages. Before this year, local elections officials could choose to use the Secretary of State's translation or opt for one created locally. Now, uniform translations will be used throughout the state.

The translated materials must be provided to local elections officials at least 68 days before an election for use on their ballots.

Also as part of the new law, Secretary of State Debra Bowen appointed a 12-member advisory panel of "language experts" and nonpartisan organizations serving the affected communities to review the Secretary of State's translations for accuracy.

"This distinguished group of people had the very important task of ensuring that Californians who are most comfortable speaking and reading in their native tongues have access to the same ballot information as everyone else," said Secretary Bowen, the state's chief elections officer. "They provided an invaluable service to California's diverse population."

The following volunteers served on the Ballot-Translation Advisory Group:

- Eunice Ku, San Francisco, law student and volunteer law clerk for Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (Chinese speaker)
- Clark Lee, Walnut, independent consultant on constituent outreach and voter education (Chinese speaker)
- Sachiko Nagao, Sacramento, events coordinator for the Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce (Japanese speaker)
- Rika Yoshida, Sacramento, community volunteer (Japanese speaker)
- Chester Kim, Encino, director of Asian client services for a division of Prudential California Realty (Korean speaker)
- Hee Joo Yoon, Los Angeles, volunteer at the Korean Resource Center (Korean speaker)
- Victor Christy, Sacramento, project director for the voter registration and education program of Californians Count (Spanish speaker)

- Efrain Escobedo, Los Angeles, director of voter engagement for the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund (Spanish speaker)
- Sorcy Apostol, Davis, president of the Philippine National Day Association (Tagalog speaker)
- Ermalina Weitzenberg, Sacramento, retired teacher (Tagalog speaker)
- Xuan Pham, Sacramento, employment specialist at Asian Resources, Inc. (Vietnamese speaker)
- Phuong Vuong, Sacramento, community specialist at Asian Resources, Inc. (Vietnamese speaker)

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

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