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January 1, 2009

Mr. Gregory Schmidt
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

E. Dotson Wilson
Chief Clerk of the Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Gentlemen:

Attached please find the Secretary of State's report on the use of signature stamps during the 2008 elections, which is required by California Elections Code section 354.5. I hope you will find the report informative. If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact me at (916) 653-7244.

Sincerely,


Debra Bowen
Secretary of State

January 1, 2009
Secretary of State
Report to the Legislature Regarding Signature Stamps

California Elections Code section 354.5, requires the Secretary of State to submit a report to the Legislature on the use of signature stamps during the 2008 elections.

Prior to the enactment of AB 18 (Blakeslee:Ch.485, Statutes of 2007), a person who could not write could satisfy the Election Code requirement to provide a signature by using a mark, subject to certain conditions. One condition was that a witness had to write the person's name near the mark.

AB 18 enabled a person who, due to a disability, is unable to provide a handwritten signature to use a signature stamp in situations where the California Elections Code requires a signature (e.g., on a vote-by-mail ballot or an initiative petition). Also, a registered voter may use a stamp to obtain a ballot or vote-by-mail ballot only after they submit an affidavit of registration in the presence of a county elections official, using the signature stamp to sign the affidavit.

Elections officials in each of California's 58 counties were surveyed by the Secretary of State in December 2008 regarding the use of signature stamps. They were asked whether any voters had submitted affidavits of registration using signature stamps and whether any voters had used stamps in lieu of a signature on the vote-by-mail envelope or the precinct roster to obtain a ballot at a polling place. As detailed on Attachment A, 33 voters statewide completed voter registration cards and used signature stamps to vote during the 2008 elections.

There were no reported allegations of voting fraud on election-related documents as a result of the use of signature stamps during 2008.

Secretary of State - Signature Stamp Survey	
December 2008	
County	Number of Voters Using Signature Stamps
Alameda	0
Alpine	0
Amador	0
Butte	2
Calaveras	0
Colusa	0
Contra Costa	2
Del Norte	0
El Dorado	0
Fresno	0
Glenn	0
Humboldt	2
Imperial	0
Inyo	1
Kern	2
Kings	0
Lake	1
Lassen	0
Los Angeles	2
Madera	0
Marin	0
Mariposa	0
Mendocino	0
Merced	0
Modoc	1
Mono	0
Monterey	0
Napa	0
Nevada	0
Orange	0
Placer	0
Plumas	0
Riverside	0
Sacramento	0
San Benito	0
San Bernardino	0
San Diego	12
San Francisco	0
San Joaquin	0
San Luis Obispo	8
San Mateo	0
Santa Barbara	0
Santa Clara	0
Santa Cruz	0
Shasta	0
Sierra	0
Siskiyou	0
Solano	0
Sonoma	0
Stanislaus	0
Sutter	0
Tehama	0
Trinity	0
Tulare	0
Tuolumne	0
Ventura	0
Yolo	0
Yuba	0
TOTAL	33