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December 31, 2013

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

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

VIA EMAIL AND HAND DELIVERY

Dear Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Wilson:

Attached is my office's report on student voter registration efforts carried out over the past calendar year, which is required by California Elections Code section 2146(d). If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact me at (916) 653-7244.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra Bowen".

Debra Bowen
Secretary of State

DB:elg:pc:op

Attachment

cc: Ms. Diane Boyer-Vine
Legislative Counsel

December 31, 2013
Secretary of State
Annual Report to the Legislature on Student Voter Registration

California Elections Code section 2146(d) requires the Secretary of State to submit an annual report to the Legislature on student voter registration efforts the office has undertaken pursuant to Article 3.5 of the Code, the Student Voter Registration Act of 2003. It is the Legislature's intent that every high school and college student receive a voter registration application with his or her diploma and that every school do all in its power to ensure students are provided the opportunity to apply to register to vote.

SB 854 (Ridley-Thomas), Chapter 481, Statutes of 2007, amended Elections Code section 2146 to require every California Community College (CCC) and California State University (CSU) that operates an automated class registration system to, in coordination with the Secretary of State, permit students during the class registration process to receive a voter registration application that is preprinted with personal information relevant to voter registration by January 1, 2010. Under the law, the University of California (UC) is encouraged to comply with the section.

The Secretary of State launched an online fillable voter registration application in 2009 for students to fill out online, print at home or on campus, sign and mail directly to their county elections official. The appropriate county elections official's address was automatically added to the form based on the voting address provided by the applicant. Every CCC, CSU, and UC campus, regardless of the type of class registration system the school has in place, was able to link to the dedicated website established by the Secretary of State. In September 2012, the Secretary of State launched California's online voter registration application system allowing people to electronically submit their entire voter registration application, including their signature on file with the Department of Motor Vehicles, via a secure infrastructure developed by the Secretary of State.

The Student Voter Registration Act of 2003 also requires the Secretary of State to provide every high school, CCC, CSU and UC campus with voter registration applications. As stated in this office's January 1, 2009, annual report to the Legislature, the previous implementation of this program, where voter registration applications were automatically mailed to each high school and college campus based solely on the number of 17- and 18-year-old students enrolled, was not cost effective. In 2008, the Secretary of State's office printed and mailed over 2.5 million student voter registration applications to high school and college campuses and only 16,489, or 0.66%, were completed by students wishing to register to vote and returned to the Secretary of State. The average cost of a returned student voter registration application was \$12.68.

Since 2009, given the cost of the program, and feedback from many schools that they did not need additional voter registration applications, the Secretary of State's office has been proactively contacting all public and private high schools, and all CCC, CSU, and UC campuses to ask how many, if any, voter registration applications the campuses would like to receive.

In 2013, of the 271 responses from high schools, 189 requested voter registration applications. Of the 52 responses at the college level, 20 CCC, one CSU and one UC campus requested voter

registration applications. The cost of mailing the student voter registration applications to high schools and college campuses in 2013 was approximately \$1,077.00. The cost for return postage of the voter registration applications was \$801.28.

As part of the Secretary of State's outreach to high schools, all campuses were encouraged to provide a link on their school website to the Secretary of State's online voter registration application, "RegisterToVote.ca.gov." This site, though it does not track the number of students who utilize it, is virtually identical to the site created for the CCC, CSU, and UC campuses under SB 854, providing students and staff with the ability to complete a voter registration application online. In response to the Secretary of State's request to add this link, 156 high schools reported posting the link to the online voter registration application on the school's website.

Attachment A reflects voter registration data for 2013 pursuant to the Student Voter Registration Act of 2003 and compares that data from similar reports provided for 2012 and 2011.

Readers may note the rise in registrations from 2011 to 2012 and the drop in registrations from 2012 to 2013. Historically, voter registration numbers fluctuate based on the number of, and interest in, the elections held in a given year. In 2013, there were no statewide elections. It is anticipated there will be a marked increase in voter registration activity in 2014 given there will be two statewide elections.

2013 STUDENT VOTER REGISTRATION

Figure 1: The number of students who have completed a voter registration application online under the program CCC, CSU, and UC campuses adopted to comply with SB 854 in 2013 compared to the number of registration applications completed in 2012 and 2011.

	Completed Online Voter Registration Applications Under SB 854 Program – 2013	Completed Online Voter Registration Applications Under SB 854 Program – 2012	Completed Online Voter Registration Applications Under SB 854 Program – 2011
California Community College	6,336	7,285	2,972
California State University	4,097	5,999	2,511
University of California	3,542	4,568	1,749
No school identified ¹	4,905	5,965	1,341
Total Number of Students	18,880	23,817	8,573

Figure 2: The number of student voter registration paper applications mailed to high schools, CCC, CSU, and UC campuses and the number of paper student voter registration applications that were returned to the Secretary of State in 2013 compared to the number of paper registration applications completed in 2012 and 2011.

	Number of Student Voter Registration Applications Requested – 2013	Number of Student Voter Registration Applications Requested – 2012	Number of Student Voter Registration Applications Requested – 2011
High School Campuses ²	24,197	17,016	28,415
CCC Campuses	15,390	7,525	5,400
CSU Campuses	40	0	5,500
UC Campuses	2,000	0	11,000
Total Number of Student Voter Registration Forms Distributed	41,627	24,541	50,315
Total Number of Student Voter Registration Forms Returned to the Secretary of State³	1,593	11,358	4,696

¹ Students are not required to enter school identifying information as part of the voter registration application process.

² Additionally, 156 high schools reported that they offered the Secretary of State's online voter registration application to students and staff by placing the link RegisterToVote@sos.ca.gov on the school's website.

³ The student voter registration application distribution process is completed during the fall of each year. Therefore, the number of applications returned each year is most likely a result of the previous year's mailing.