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## **Gale expects high turnout for November election**

LINCOLN – High-profile races and issues are expected to produce a high voter turnout for the Nov. 2 election in Nebraska, according to Secretary of State John Gale.

He predicted a turnout of 75 percent of the state's registered voters. The last presidential election in 2000 drew a turnout of 65.2 percent of registered voters.

Voter registration in the state for the November election stands at a record 1,160,199, 6.5 percent higher than the figure of 1,085,217 four years earlier.

The registration breakdown by political affiliation is: Republican Party, 575,781; Democratic Party, 396,767; Libertarian Party, 4,717; Nebraska Party, 4,575; Green Party, 398; and nonpartisan, 177,961.

“In the ranking of elections, this election ranks as a Super Bowl, or, more aptly, a super ballot,” Gale said. “We have highly visible candidates at all levels, highly charged issues and intense public interest. Everything points to a very high turnout.”

The ballot offers voters presidential and congressional contests, as well as important legislative and local races, he said.

In addition, there are a number of statewide ballot issues – proposals offered by the Legislature covering casino gambling, funding the Nebraska State Fair and tax breaks for preserving historic buildings, and a four-part initiative package addressing expanded gambling. “These should all be significant issues to Nebraskans, so voters need to be doing their homework,” Gale said.

He cited the following factors of high public interest in the election:

--A good increase in voter registration despite an existing base of 84 percent of eligible voters already registered.

--A dramatic surge across the state in requests for absentee ballots.

--Debates, forums and talk shows on the ballot issues.

--Active and visible public involvement by political leaders, houses of worship, agricultural groups, gambling interests, State Fair supporters and historic building preservationists.

“Your vote does count, so count yourself in,” Gale said. “Government belongs to those who show up.”

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