

**JOHN A. GALE**

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**News Release**

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**2012 primary election turnout trends higher**

LINCOLN – Preliminary turnout figures show that 25.9 percent of registered voters cast ballots in the Nebraska May 15 primary election, according to Secretary of State John Gale.

The turnout figure will grow higher once election officials tally the number of provisional ballots that will be counted as valid. A provisional ballot is cast when there are questions regarding a voter's eligibility.

"I'm pleasantly surprised that turnout was so high," said Gale, who gave credit to voters for performing their civic duty.

Preliminary figures show that 24 counties had turnout figures that were 35 percent or higher and Boone County had the highest turnout out rate at 59.8 percent.

"We are encouraged that the 2012 turnout figure shows an upward trend compared to past primary election turnouts," Gale said. From 2002 to 2010, voter turnout was less than 25 percent of registered voters in four of the five Nebraska primary elections, which are held every two years.

"Primary elections are not going to draw as high a turnout as general elections," Gale noted. "But it is important for the health of our democracy that we improve turnout rates in primary elections."

Looking ahead to the Nov. 6 general election in Nebraska, Gale foresees strong interest in the election as the presidential race will be on the ballot. "I think we will have a very high turnout for the November election," he said.

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