



## From the Office of Secretary of State

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### **For Immediate Release**

Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale submitted the op-ed article below to Nebraska newspapers.

### **Exercise your precious right and vote in the November election**

By John Gale  
Nebraska Secretary of State

As Nebraska's chief election officer, I find this presidential election to be bracing and exciting as 135 million Americans are expected to exercise their very precious right to cast a vote for president.

I fully understand that the barrage of political ads, especially the negative ones, can be discouraging. I also understand that getting a clear grasp of what either major candidate proposes to do if elected to address the nation's pressing issues can be challenging.

As potential voters, we seldom get all our questions answered. We hope for clarity, but often final choices come down to a judgment call.

Everyone is busy in their daily lives. Most of us will do our best to learn the most we can, so we can make the best call when we cast our ballot.

However, some give up, and some never care. They remind me of what Patrick Henry called "sunshine soldiers," people who give up when the going gets tough.

Sure, this isn't easy. But don't we regularly have to make judgment calls without a full picture? Life's experiences hone our instincts and our logic, allowing us to make decisions about people and about events. We do this often without all the facts we might like to have and without a crystal ball to know the future.

Eventually, we have to decide and cast our ballot. We usually will rely in part on our gut instinct as well as what we know. This is how we make the choice of which forks in the road of life we should travel.

After the bitter and bloody Civil War battle of Gettysburg, President Abraham Lincoln spoke at the dedication of the Gettysburg cemetery in 1863, saying "that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." If President Lincoln could do what he did to reunite our nation and rid our nation of slavery, why can't we do our part by registering and voting?

Dwight D. Eisenhower was the supreme commander of Allied Forces in Europe during World War II and later as president led the free world against the emerging threat of communist totalitarianism. If Eisenhower could do these things, making the hard, momentous decisions that had to be made, can't we at least do our best as citizens and go vote?

Neither Lincoln nor Eisenhower would have had the chance to lead our nation if voters hadn't elected them. That's what elections are all about. As candidates, they showed they had the blend of courage, integrity, experience and a firm vision for America that a majority of voters believed in. Partisanship may have some bearing in your vote, but your conscience should be your compass.

Believe me when I say your vote does count. In the 2000 presidential race, 537 votes in Florida out of 106 million votes cast nationwide decided which candidate got the Florida electoral votes. That decided the election.

If you inform yourselves as best you can about the key issues of foreign and domestic policies for America's future, it will help your focus. Talking with friends about America's future can help.

At some point, you'll finally know what your gut instinct tells you. Don't leave this election to others. As a registered voter, exercise your free will as an American citizen and cast your vote. You'll help ensure that our government "shall not perish from the earth."

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