



From the Office of Secretary of State John A. Gale

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The following Op-Ed was submitted by Secretary of State John Gale.

Voting: The path to a better future

LINCOLN – For hundreds of thousands of Nebraska citizens, an important decision awaits. For whom and what issues will you decide on November 8?

Traditionally, voting in Nebraska is a day-of- election experience. A large majority of voters will go to the polls. If voter registration is any indication, there is a lot of interest in participating.

However, registration is only the first step in the process. In order for this election to be truly meaningful, a record turnout of citizens must show up and vote, from the top of the ticket all the way to the bottom. All races can impact your daily life; especially, the state and local ones.

Our presidents make decisions that affect federal policies on taxes, foreign affairs, trade relationships, immigration, upgrade of infrastructure from highways to airports, health care and others.

Nebraskans are electing three members of Congress to look after our interests in Washington, D.C. and more than 46 people (including 13 incumbents) are vying for 24 legislative seats, seeking their chance to represent many of us in the Unicameral.

Additionally, we're being asked to weigh in on Referendum 426, the ballot issue related to the future of the death penalty. Public interest concerning this policy has

been high, and many debates and public hearings have occurred on the question. Keeping the death penalty or abolishing the death penalty and substituting life imprisonment without parole, is now in our hands.

At the local level, those who are elected will be making tax and growth decisions that directly impact our lives. It may be school or community college bonds, sales taxes, public power, water quality, economic development, or roads and bridges, among others. We rely on those leaders to make decisions and represent our best interests.

We've made great strides in Nebraska to provide multiple opportunities to register to vote including in-person, by mail, online and through the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). We also have many avenues to vote, both early and on Election Day. We've made democracy easier, but still need citizen participation. Those who vote ultimately decide who will govern.

Tens of millions of Americans have fought over 240 years to secure our freedoms and liberties, and millions have died or sustained scars and disabilities in pursuit of that goal. It is a tough duty sometimes to be an involved citizen; but, those veterans did their duty when called upon, and our grandchildren are hoping for a life of liberty, freedom, and opportunity earned for them by those veterans. You can do your part by voting. Your vote is your footprint on America's and Nebraska's path to a better future.

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