



California
School
Employees
Association

Michael Bilbrey
Association President

Dave Low
Executive Director

Governmental Relations
1127 11th St., Suite 346
Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 444-0598
(800) 867-2325
FAX (916) 444-8539
www.csea.com

Dave Low
Director

Jai Sookprasert
Assistant Director

Dolores Duran-Flores
Legislative Advocate

Steve Henderson
Legislative Advocate

Tristan Brown
Legislative Advocate

Member of the AFL-CIO

The nation's largest
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AFL-CIO

September 18, 2015

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: AB 1461 (Gonzalez) – Request for Signature

Dear Governor Brown:

The California School Employees Association (CSEA), AFL-CIO, supports Assembly Bill 1461 (Gonzalez) The New Motor Voter Act, which requires the Secretary of State and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to establish the California New Motor Voter Program to increase automatic voter registration.

In 2012, California ranked 38th in voter registration. California has more than 6.6 million eligible voters, but still suffers from historic low voter turnout. In 2014, only 5.2 million votes were cast in California, compared to 10 million in the 2010 midterm elections. Issues regarding low turnout are exacerbated by burdens on individuals to register to vote.

Nearly seven million Californians are eligible to participate in the electoral process, but simply have not registered to vote in order to do so. This lack of participation skews the outcomes for all Californians in the electoral, legislative, and budgetary process. AB 1461 will assist citizens who obtain or renew a driver's license or identification card at the DMV, to automatically be registered to vote unless that individual declines.

In recent years, modern technology has transformed voter registration and voting practices. Since 2012, California has offered online voter registration which established electronic data sharing between the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the Secretary of State. By July 2016, California is scheduled to launch VoteCal, a new statewide centralized voter registration database that will replace voter registration files currently maintained by each of the state's 58 county elections officials. In addition, this year's budget provided nearly \$2.5 million to establish electronic voter registration at the DMV.

The New Motor Voter Act will take full advantage of modern technology to ensure that data is collected in an efficient manner, with respect for the security of individual information. Great steps were taken by the author to work with immigrant rights organizations to ensure every individual is protected against inadvertent registration. Facilitating the participation of all citizens in our democracy is a laudable goal, and AB 1461 takes a major step towards that goal with minimal impact on current state resources.

For these reasons, we respectfully request your signature on AB 1461.

Sincerely,

Tristan Brown
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez, California State Assembly
Dave Low, Executive Director

TB:ct