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Gale predicts turnout of 27 percent for primary election

LINCOLN – Secretary of State John Gale predicted a turnout of 27 percent of registered voters for the May 13 Nebraska primary election.

Gale cited several factors in his forecast for a low turnout:

--The Nebraska presidential primaries do not affect delegate selection to the Republican and Democratic national conventions.

--There aren't many high visibility races throughout the state.

--There is only a limited slate of county offices on the ballot.

"The turnout for the primary election will not be a reflection of voter interest in the November general election, when we will be electing the president among other offices," Gale said. "I believe there will be intense interest in the general election, with very high turnout."

Turnout in recent Nebraska primary elections has varied considerably. The 2006 primary election drew 35 percent of registered voters, compared with 21 percent for 2004.

Current voter registration in the state stands at 1,117,491. Registration breakdown by political affiliation is: Republican Party, 550,581; Democratic Party, 372,864; nonpartisan, 184,437; Nebraska Party, 8,814; and Green Party, 795.

Gale urged Nebraskans to go to the polls on May 13 and exercise their right to vote. "You can't affect the course of government unless you cast your vote," he said.

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