



From the Office of Secretary of State John A. Gale

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Gale issues turnout prediction for May 15 primary

LINCOLN – Secretary of State John Gale expects voter turnout will reach 28 percent in the May 15 primary. That would be on par with the official turnout from the 2014 primary election. But, he adds, the potential is there for a much stronger turnout, if Nebraskans head to the polls on Election Day.

“Participation is key to the success of any election,” Gale noted. “I hope Nebraskans take the time to vote since many federal, state and local races need our input.”

There are 1,199,660 Nebraskans registered for the primary. That is 47,516 more people than were registered for the primary in 2014.

Online voter registration ended on April 30. In the week prior, voter registration surged, thanks to a reminder sent by Facebook. From Monday, April 23 through Thursday, April 26, 5,780 voter registrations, new and updates, were submitted online through NEReg2Vote and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

“Taking into account the increase in voter registration, the contested nature of the races in the primary, and other factors, like the percentage of people likely to vote early, it is reasonable to expect that voter turnout will hit 28 percent,” said Gale.

Gale went on to note that historically, smaller counties have the best participation in statewide elections.

In 2014, 17 counties exceeded 50 percent turnout in the primary. Of those 17, six counties were near or exceeded sixty percent turnout. Seventy-two out of 90 counties had 32 percent turnout or better.

Early voting remains an option for those who are not able to vote on Election Day. So far, more than 6,000 people have voted early, in-person at their county election office. They can continue to do so through May 14.

In addition, around 75,700 ballots have been requested by mail. Of those, nearly 37,800 have been returned or almost 50 percent. “It’s important for voters to

remember that it can take several days for a ballot to reach the correct county election office in order to arrive by Election Day,” said Gale. “Don’t delay if you are still holding a ballot, either get it in the mail immediately or be sure to drop it off at your county election office.”

By mail ballots can be hand delivered up until the time that polls close on May 15. However, they must be returned to the county election office and not at a polling place.

Polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Central Time (CDT) and 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Mountain Time (MDT). The first results will be available on the Secretary of State’s website at www.sos.ne.gov, as soon as the polls close. They will be updated throughout the night.

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