

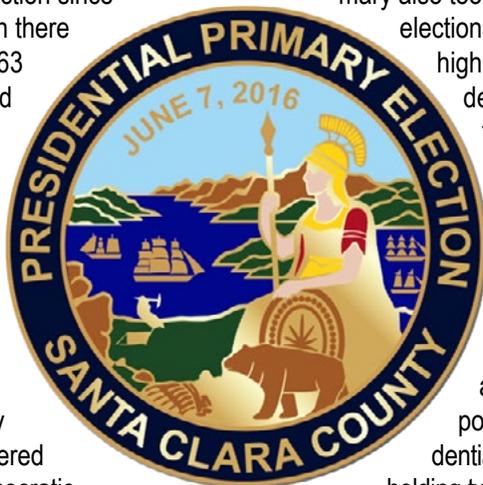
# Executive Summary

## June 7, 2016 Presidential Primary

### Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters Post-Election Report

The June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election saw the largest voter turnout in a presidential primary election since 2008, the last presidential election year when there was no presidential incumbent. Out of 788,063 registered voters, a total of 430,779 cast valid ballots for a total turnout rate of 54.7%. This rate, as well as the turnout rate for vote-by-mail voters, was higher than in the 2012 presidential primary election. Polling place voters turned out at a rate of more than double that of 2012.

One unique feature of the presidential primary is the participation of crossover voters. In the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election, more than one-third of voters registered without a party affiliation opted to vote a Democratic ballot. While more than 63% of voters registered without a party preference voted nonpartisan ballots, 2.8% and 0.4% chose to vote American Independent and Libertarian ballots, respectively.

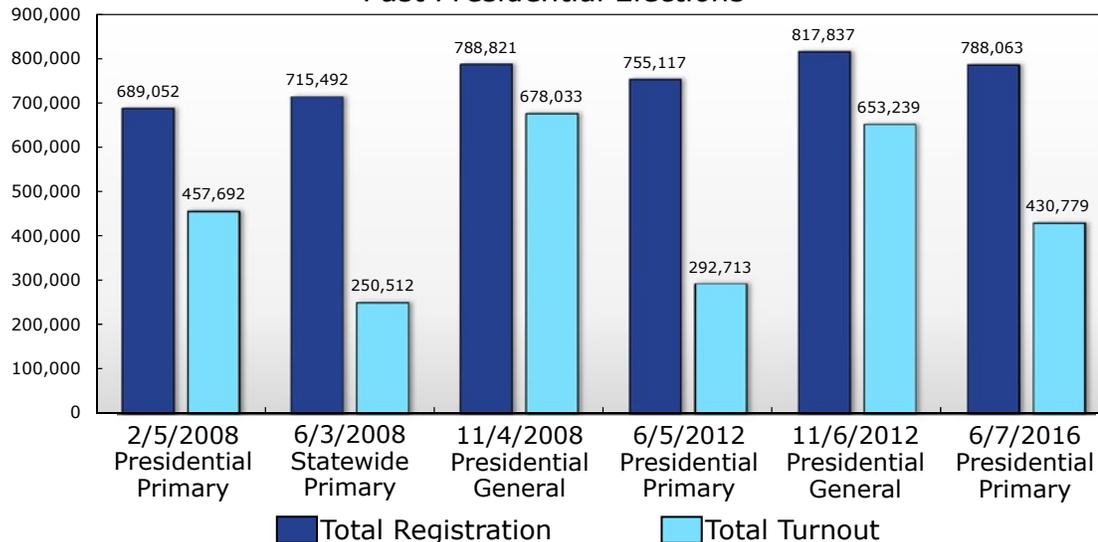


Being a countywide election, the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary also took longer to tally than the most recent smaller elections held in Santa Clara County. Due to the high volume of ballots, extended ballot receipt deadlines, and ballot processing procedures, the Registrar of Voters' office did not finish tallying the polling place ballots until June 23, 16 days after Election Day.

This report compares the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election with similar primaries and the presidential general elections held in 2012 and 2008. Presidential primaries also offer a unique view of voter behavior by political party. In 2008, California split its presidential primary election from the other primaries, holding two primary elections that year – the presidential primary held on February 5, 2008, and a statewide primary held on June 3, 2008. The charts and graphs in this post-election report include both of these primaries for comparison purposes.

## Results Overview

Total Registration and Turnout  
Past Presidential Elections



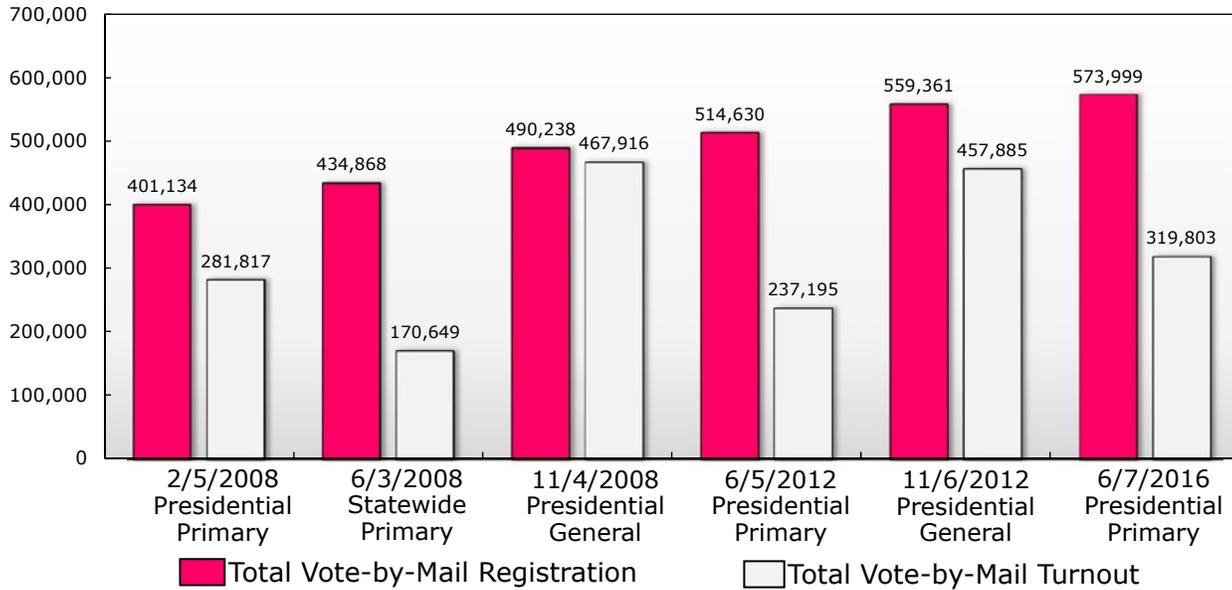
Voter turnout for primary elections is generally lower than in presidential general elections. As in the 2008 presidential primary, the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election saw a voter turnout rate of between 50% and 60%, while the presidential general elections in 2008 and 2012 saw a much higher turnout rate. By contrast, the 2008 statewide primary had the lowest turnout rate among presidential-year elections in the past eight years.

## FAQ

**Q:** Why were there two primaries in 2008?

**A:** California had always held its presidential primary in June until 1996, when the election was moved up to March with the goal of having a greater effect nationally on presidential races. By 2005, California lawmakers viewed the large gap between the March primary and the November general election as contributing to increasing campaign costs, so the primary was moved back to June. As the 2008 presidential election approached, however, many still wanted California to have a greater impact on the presidential race, so a law was passed splitting the primaries in 2008, with the presidential primary held in February – the earliest ever in California. The primaries were recombined to be held together in June beginning in 2012.

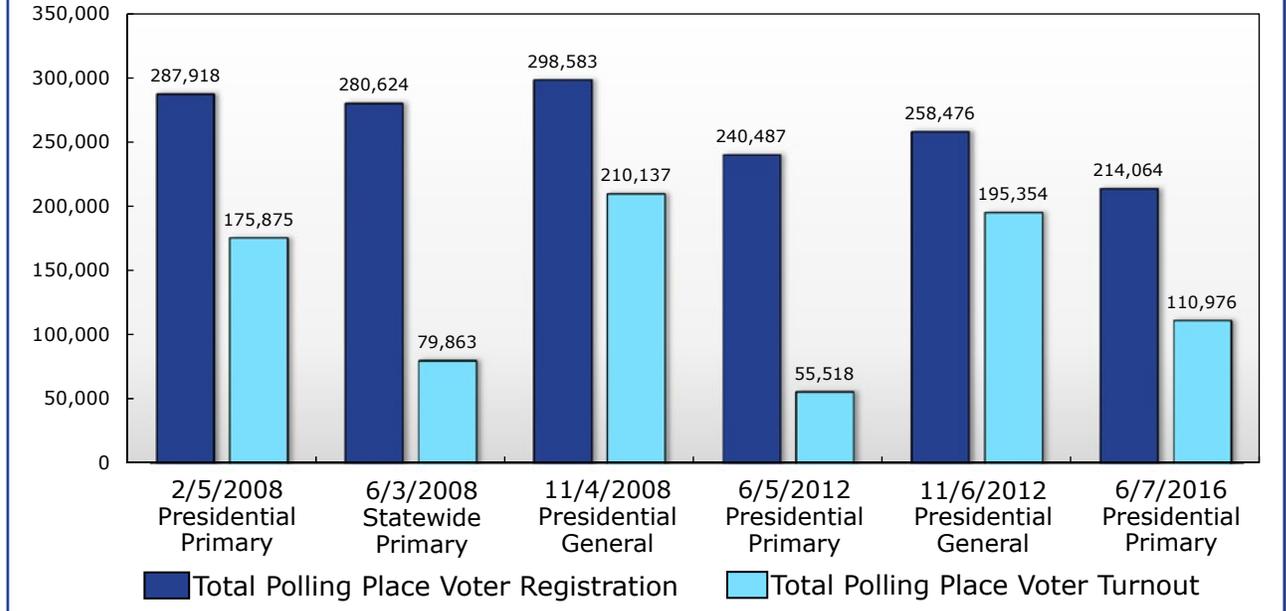
## Vote-by-Mail Registration and Turnout Past Presidential Elections



In 2001, the California Legislature passed a law to allow residents to become permanent vote-by-mail voters. Since the law went into effect the following year, the percentage of vote-by-mail voters in Santa Clara County has trended upward. On the other hand, vote-by-mail turnout, and turnout

in general, depends on a number of factors, including voter interest in the election and whether an incumbent is up for re-election. These charts reveal a stark contrast between presidential primary and general election turnout for both voting methods.

## Polling Place Voter Registration and Turnout Past Presidential Elections

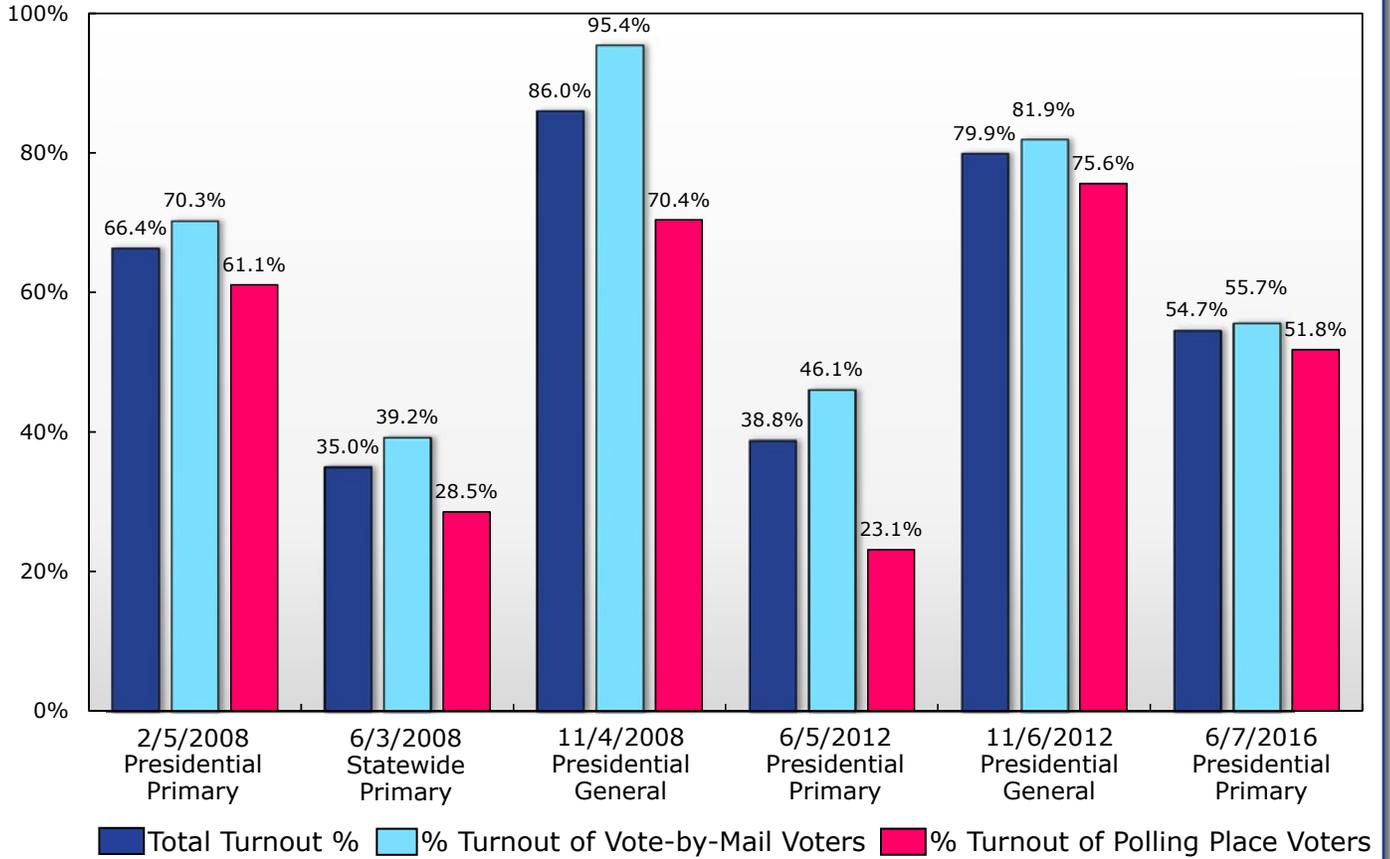


### FAQ

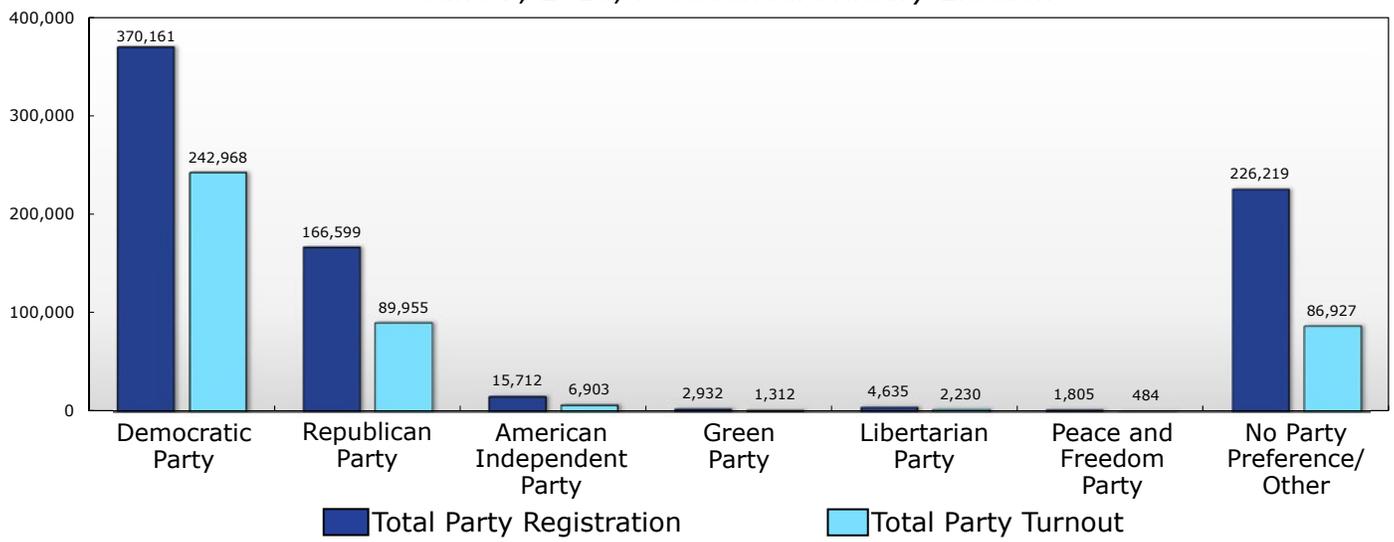
**Q:** What is the difference between vote-by-mail (VBM) and polling place voters?

**A:** VBM voters are voters who have registered to permanently vote by mail, meaning that for every election, these voters receive their ballot in the mail. Polling place voters are voters who typically vote at the polls and do not usually receive a ballot by mail. Sometimes, due to how precincts are drawn, polling place voters can be assigned to mail ballot precincts. These voters may alternatively cast their ballot at a polling place if they wish.

### Voter Turnout Percentages Past Presidential Elections

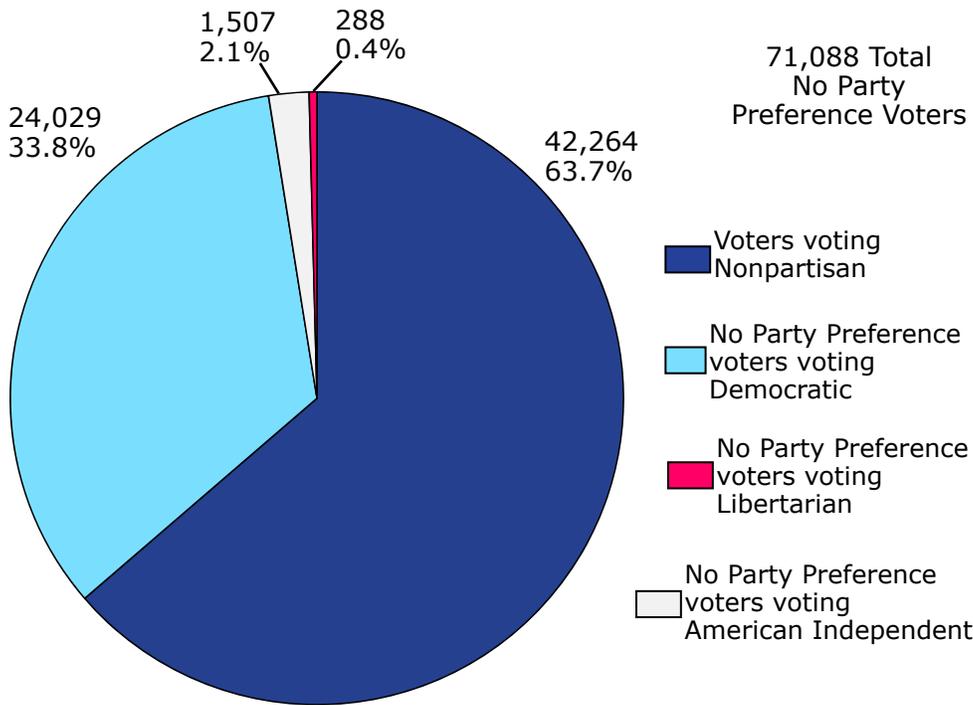


### Voter Turnout by Party June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election



Historically, a higher percentage of vote-by-mail voters have voted in presidential-year elections than have polling place voters. In the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary, only the Democratic and Republican parties saw a majority of their voters cast a ballot.

### Crossover Voters June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election



71,088 Total  
No Party  
Preference Voters

Even though voters without a party preference could request a ballot to cast a vote for an American Independent, Democratic, or Libertarian presidential candidate, a sizable majority of **No Party Preference** voters cast a regular nonpartisan ballot without the contest for president.

### FAQ

**Q:** What does **No Party Preference** mean?

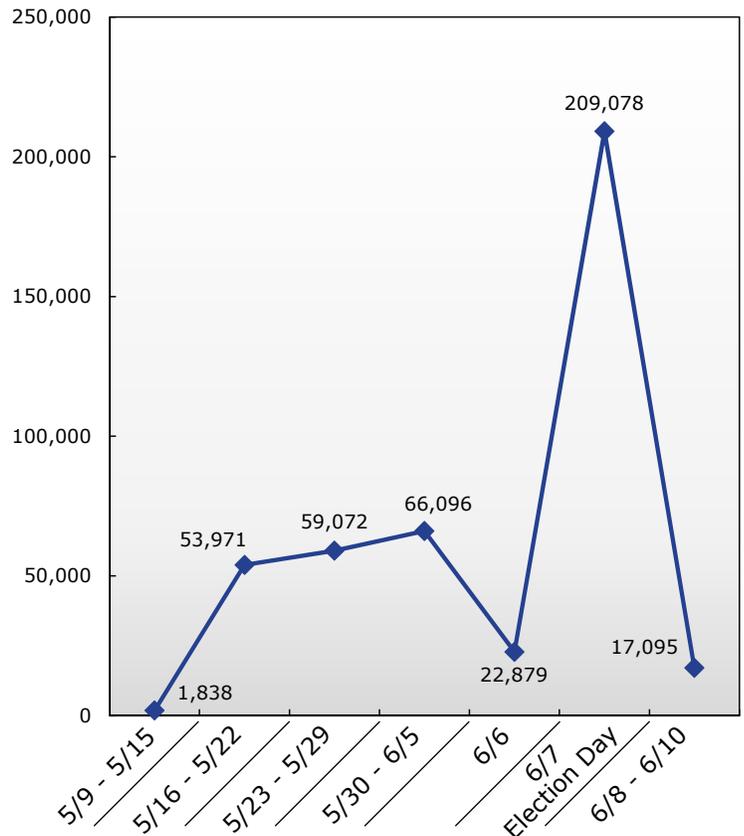
**A:** Voters who registered to vote without specifying a political party are known as No Party Preference voters. These voters were formerly referred to as "decline-to-state" voters.



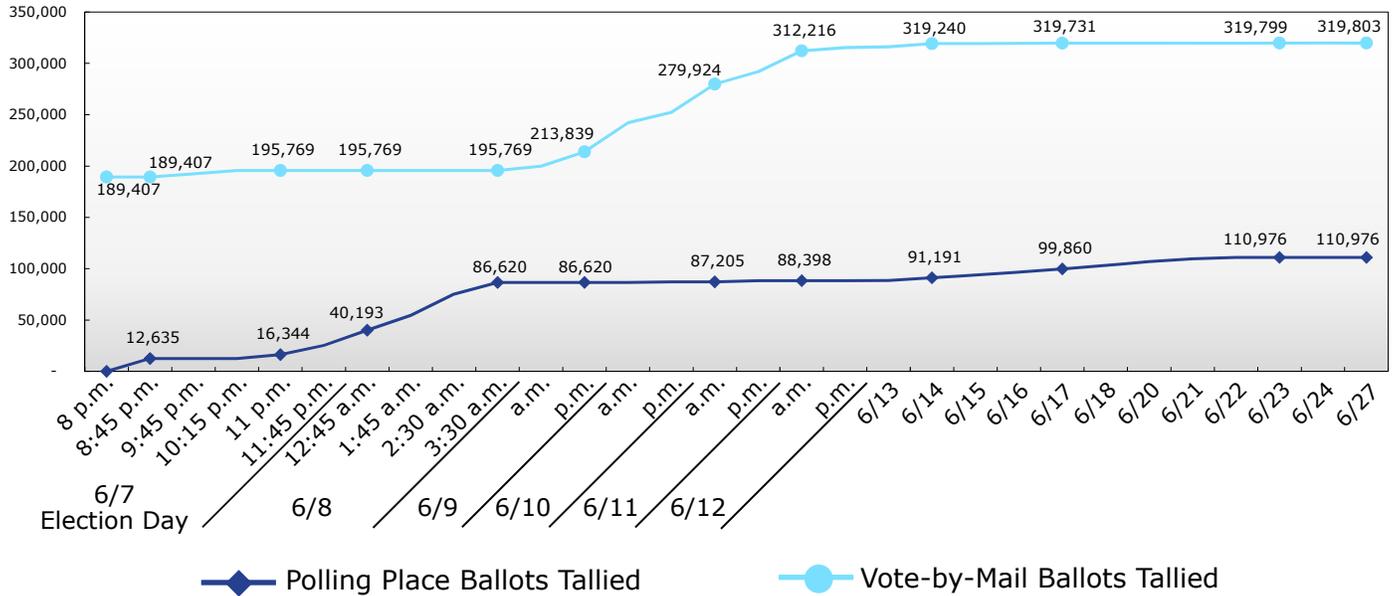
Pallets containing tens of thousands of vote-by-mail ballots are stored while awaiting tallying on Election Night. Because California law does not allow the Registrar of Voters (ROV) to open vote-by-mail envelopes and count the ballots until 10 days before Election Day, the ROV must securely store upwards of 100,000 ballots until the 10-day mark passes.

The ROV received nearly half the ballots cast in the election prior to Election Day, nearly half the ballots on Election Day, and the remaining almost 5% of the ballots after Election Day. While ballots received at polling places on Election Day are tallied first, vote-by-mail ballots received on Election Day and later are not tallied until staff can verify voters' signatures on the ballot envelopes.

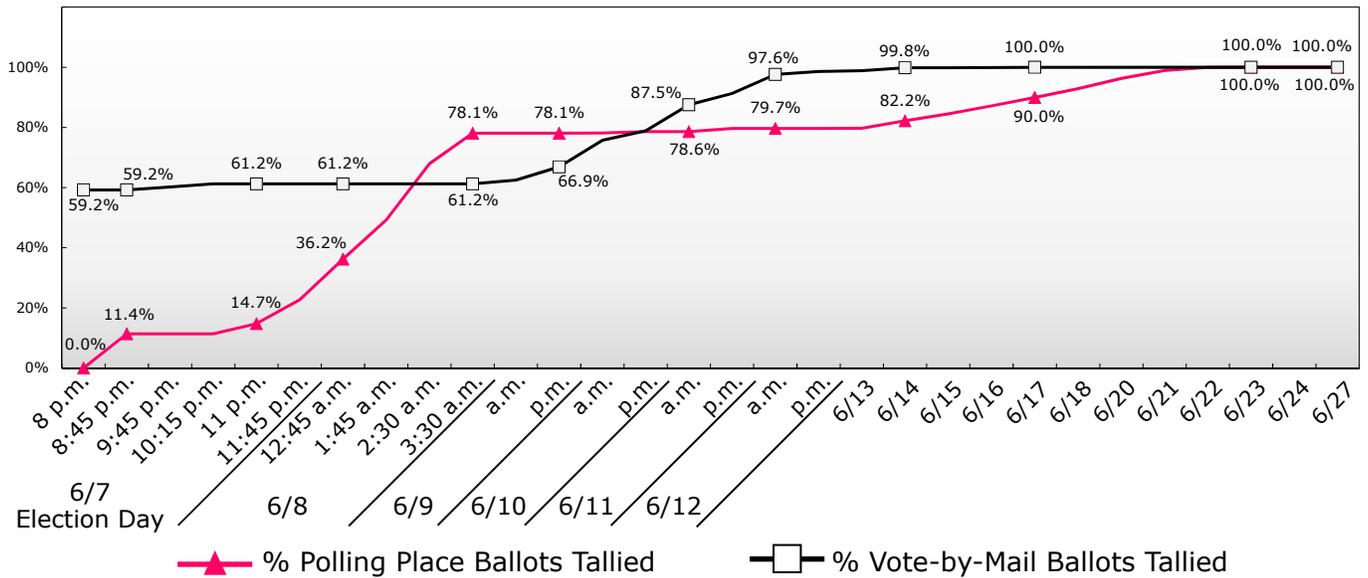
### Ballots Received Over Time June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election



### Ballots Talled Over Time June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election

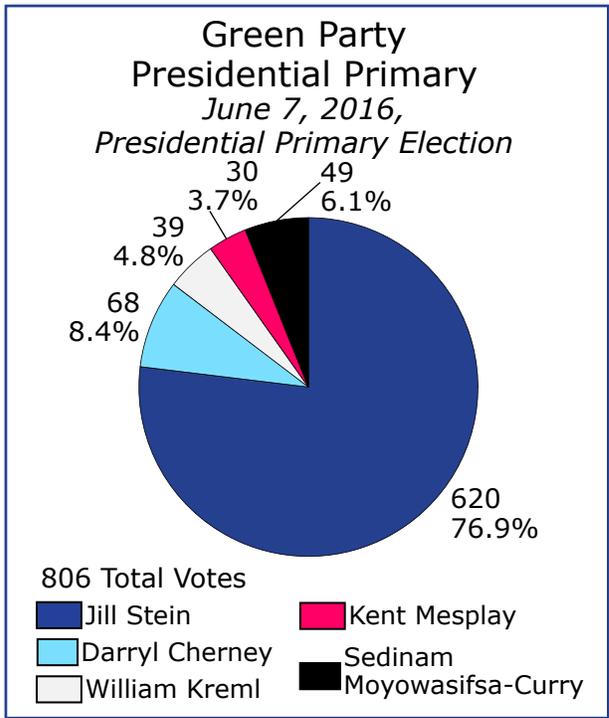
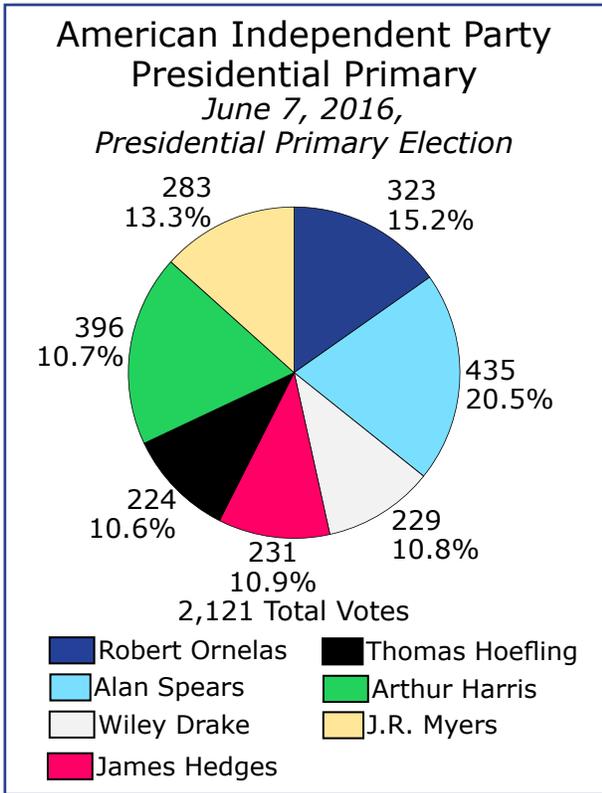
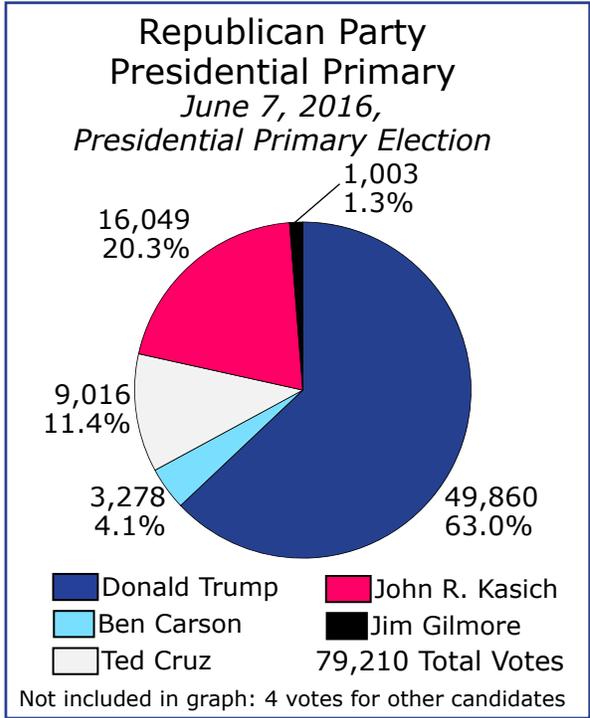
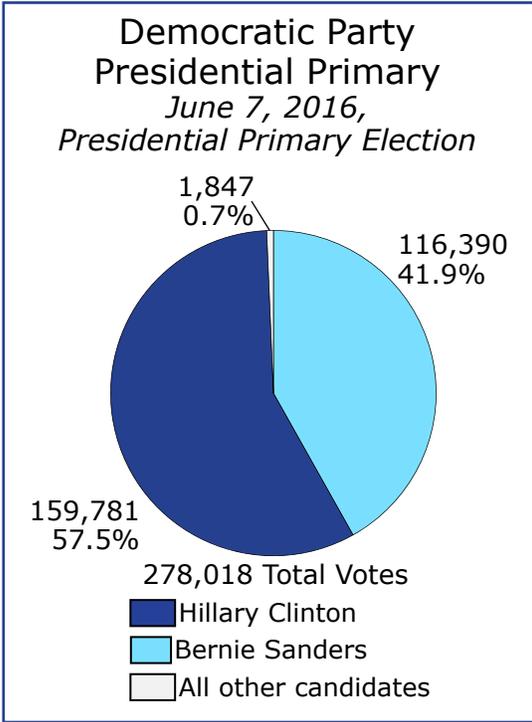


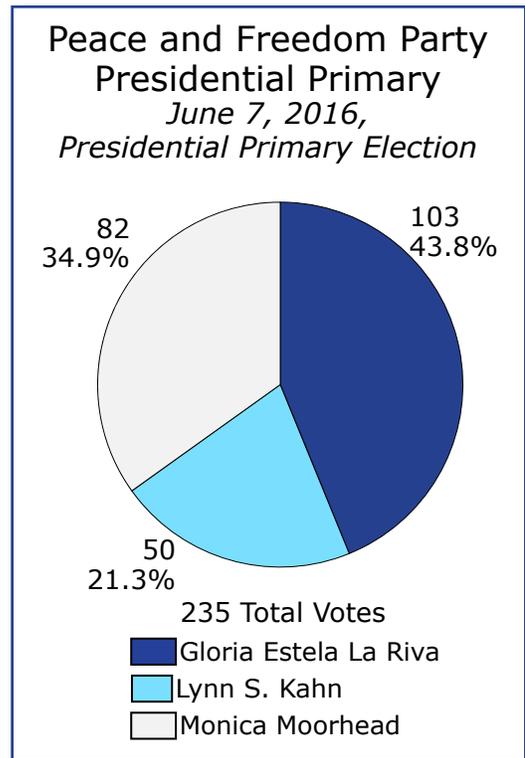
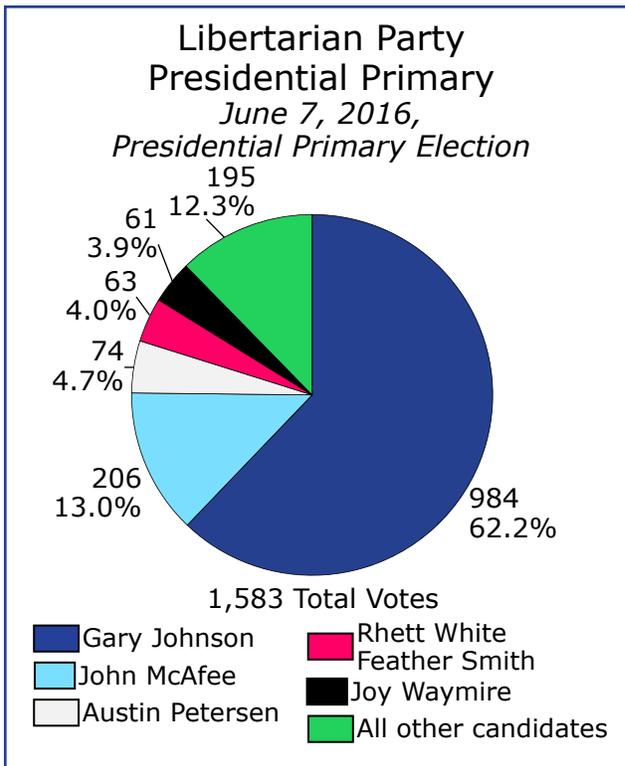
### % Ballots Talled Over Time June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election



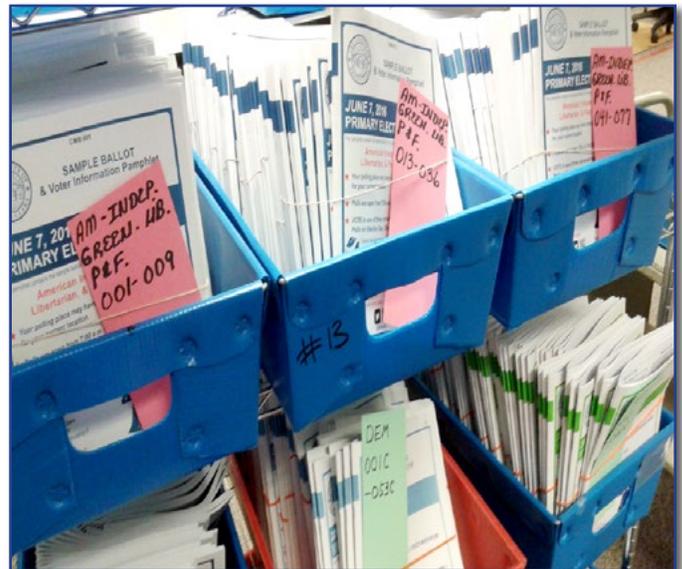
Starting 10 days before the election, all of the vote-by-mail ballots received prior to Election Day are processed and tallied before 8 p.m. State law, however, does not allow the Registrar of Voters to release the first results until the polls close. The first point on each of these graphs – showing the percentage tallied as of 8 p.m. on Election Day – represents the VBM ballots that were tallied in the days prior to Election Day. The second point at 8:45

p.m. on Election Day represents the tallied polling place ballots that were retrieved during Election Day as part of the midday pickup program. The polling place ballots tallied last in the graph are mostly provisional ballots, which need to be verified for voter and contest eligibility. In some cases, these ballots must be further processed to ensure that provisional voters only cast votes in contests for which they were eligible to vote.





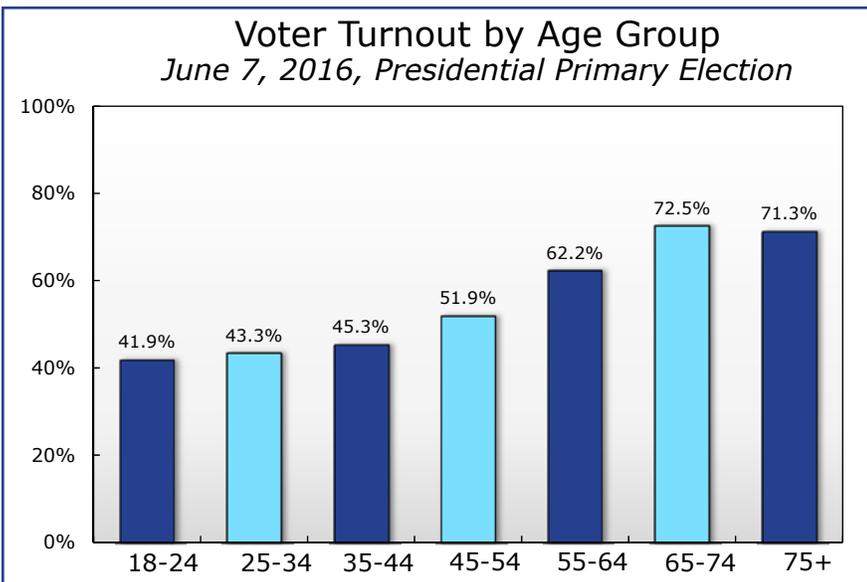
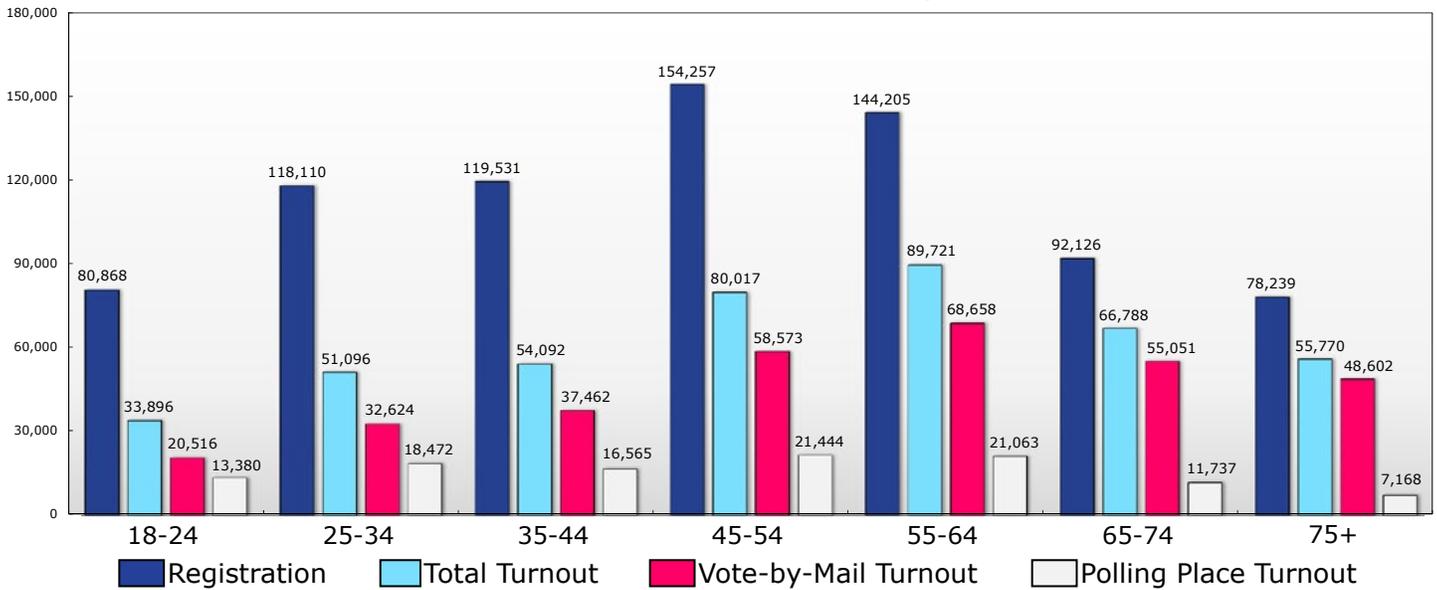
| PARTY-NOMINATED OFFICES<br>CARGOS NOMINADOS POR LOS PARTIDOS       |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES<br>PRESIDENTE DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS |                              |
| Presidential Preference<br>Preferencia Presidencial                |                              |
|  | Vote for One<br>Vote por Uno |
| JAMES HEDGES   | ← →                          |
| THOMAS HOEFLING  | ← →                          |
| ARTHUR HARRIS  | ← →                          |
| J.R. MYERS   | ← →                          |
| ROBERT ORNELAS   | ← →                          |
| ALAN SPEARS  | ← →                          |
| WILEY DRAKE  | ← →                          |
|  | ← →                          |



Sample Ballot and Voter Information Pamphlets (SBVIPs) are prepared for mailing to voters. For the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election, each voter received an SBVIP that correlated with the voter's party preference. This was the case because in a presidential primary election, the voter's party affiliation determines what kind of ballot the voter receives.

The sequence of contests on the ballot is determined by state law, with the presidential contest always appearing first. The sequence of candidates for a given contest, on the other hand, is determined by a randomized alphabet drawing overseen by the California Secretary of State 82 days before the election. In conducting the randomized alphabet drawing for the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election, the Secretary of State drew the letter "H" before the letter "D" and drew "E" before "A," as illustrated above by the image of the American Independent presidential contest as appearing on the Sample Ballot and Voter Information Pamphlet for that party. The letter sequence applies not only to the first letters of the candidates' surnames, but to each additional letter in their names, which is why James Hedges appears above Arthur Harris.

## Voter Turnout by Age Group June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election



Generally, no matter the voting method, the higher the age group, the higher the turnout in the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election. The rate of turnout by age group rises and crests at 72.5% among voters between 65 and 74, before decreasing slightly among voters at least 75.

Voters complete their ballots at a polling place in Santa Clara County.



# Challenges Resolved

Due to a combination of factors ranging from the size and scope of the election to legally mandated deadlines, the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election presented several unanticipated challenges that the Registrar of Voters (ROV) resolved throughout the election preparation process. Below are some of the issues that were solved by the ROV's dedicated staff behind the scenes to prevent these issues from affecting voters' experiences at the polls.

## State Initiative Petitions

### *What happened?*

In addition to conducting elections, the ROV reviews the signatures on petitions for state initiatives to ensure that all signors are registered voters from the county. According to state law, these signatures must be checked within a certain timeframe after being received.

### *Why was this challenging?*

This year, the state has received an extraordinarily high number of petitions. Additionally, the deadlines and workload involved fell right in the middle of the ROV's preparations for the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election. As a result, the ROV was required to review about 1 million signatures in addition to this workload.

### *How was this solved?*

Team members from less-impacted ROV divisions worked overtime to meet the state deadlines, and the State Legislature also approved one-time funding to cover these additional costs.

## Widely Contested U.S. Senate Seat

### *What happened?*

The contest to replace a retiring U.S. senator drew 34 candidates, an unusually large number of candidates for a contest.

### *Why was this challenging?*

The U.S. senate contest usually appears on the front of the first ballot card along with information about the election and the presidential race. However, the large number of candidates running for U.S. senator would have required the ROV to place all the candidates in two columns. This could cause voter confusion if voters mistook the two columns for two separate races and accidentally voted for too many candidates.

### *How was this solved?*

The ROV moved the U.S. senate contest to the back of the first ballot card, where it could be designed using a single column to prevent voter confusion. Although this caused some ballots to have no contests appear on the front of the first ballot card, it likely prevented many voter mistakes.

## Midday Ballot Pickup

### *What happened?*

A new law now allows voted ballots to be retrieved from polling places before the polls close in order to relieve the burden of a high volume of returns on Election Night.

### *Why was this challenging?*

The law requires specific procedures to ensure ballot security and uniform processing of ballots.

### *How was this solved?*

The ROV drafted new procedures, created a video to inform the public of the midday pickup process, and trained all election officers and ballot couriers in the proper procedures. See page 49 for more about the midday pickup program.

## Automatic Recount for City of San Jose Contest

### *What happened?*

As part of a pilot program approved by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, the ROV conducted an automatic recount for the City of San Jose District 4 Councilmember contest, a close race with a margin of victory within 0.5%.

### *Why was this challenging?*

Due to the high voter turnout, the ROV could not begin the recount until after the election results were finalized and sent to the Secretary of State. The ROV counted every vote in the open, where each candidate could verify the count's accuracy. After the ROV completed its manual tally, a voter requested a second recount on behalf of one candidate. The second recount concluded on August 2.

### *How was this solved?*

The ROV closely monitored all contests that could trigger an automatic recount and alerted the candidates for City of San Jose District 4 Councilmember of the upcoming recount as early as possible. The ROV also mobilized a team of dedicated workers to focus solely on the recount efforts in order to complete it as efficiently and accurately as possible.

## Postal Service Upgrades

### *What happened?*

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) upgraded its software, causing some vote-by-mail ballots in other counties to be returned to the voters rather than delivered to the elections office.

### *Why was this challenging?*

Ballots not received by the elections office within a specified deadline cannot be counted, pursuant to state law.

### *How was this solved?*

The ROV worked with the local USPS to ensure all ballots were delivered to the ROV. As a result, there were no reports of ballots returned to voters in Santa Clara County.

## Temporary Worker Regulations

### *What happened?*

New rules for hiring temporary workers created challenges in recruiting sufficient election workers due to changes resulting from the Affordable Care Act, IRS regulations, and County collective bargaining agreements.

### *Why was this challenging?*

The ROV heavily relies on thousands of short-term temporary workers and paid volunteers to process all ballots and election materials on Election Night.

### *How was this solved?*

The County adopted a new volunteer policy for election volunteers, and the ROV found creative solutions for recruitment, including the use of social media.

# Takeaways

For an election encompassing nearly 800,000 voters, more than 800 polling places, and more than 430,000 ballots cast, the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election went as smoothly as could have been hoped. Thousands of Registrar of Voters (ROV) staff members, election officers, and Election Day volunteers worked tirelessly to prepare for, conduct, and verify the election.

This experience has provided numerous key facts and lessons to keep in mind for future elections:

- Despite several prominent candidates dropping out of the running early on, and one major party arriving at a presumptive nominee the day before Election Day, **turnout in Santa Clara County was higher than in many peer counties, the statewide average, and the national average.** Extensive voter outreach through advertising and the wealth of voting opportunities – including early voting sites, drive-thru locations, drop-off boxes, and postage paid envelopes – likely contributed to this higher turnout.
- While the ROV has increased early voting opportunities, **approximately 70,000 vote-by-mail (VBM) voters, or about 22% of participating VBM voters, dropped off their completed VBM ballots on Election Day** rather than mailing them in early. Additionally, a higher than average number of VBM voters voted provisionally at the polls.
- Although **more than 60% of No Party Preference voters voted a nonpartisan ballot**, more than **25,000 such voters crossed over to vote party ballots**, including just over 24,000 votes cast on limited Democratic ballots.
- New laws extending the time during which the ROV can accept VBM ballots likely have contributed to a late influx of VBM ballots as voters become increasingly aware of the later deadlines. **Nearly 17,000 valid VBM ballots were received after Election Day**, more than triple the amount of ballots received after Election Day in the most recent high-turnout presidential election.
- A new law allowing **midday pickups** of voted ballots at polling places **enabled the ROV to retrieve about 15% of the polling place ballots cast and tally them early**, which reduced the burden of tallying more than 100,000 polling place ballots after the polls close.
- Although the ROV augmented its vote-tallying operations by purchasing additional vote-tallying machines, conducting 24-hour processing of VBM ballots, and conducting midday pickups – all of which ultimately led to faster ballot counting than in past elections – **Santa Clara County still trails similarly sized counties with respect to reporting times.** Santa Clara County is currently in the process of replacing its aging voting system with a modern one, which would significantly increase tallying efficiency.
- A **county-initiated automatic recount of a San Jose City Council contest confirmed the outcome** reported by the ROV. A voter-initiated recount conducted after the automatic recount also confirmed the contest's outcome.
- Voters registering to vote and updating their registration information online now exceed those using paper forms, with **more than 60% of registration documents submitted over the internet.**
- Party turnout varies depending on the election, with **only voters registered without a party preference turning out to vote in increasingly higher numbers** since the 2008 Presidential Primary Election.
- The **turnout among polling place voters was more than double the rate in the 2012 presidential primary**, and was the closest to the overall countywide turnout in any presidential-year election since prior to 2008.
- The rate of voters voting provisionally was similar to that of the 2008 presidential primary, which also saw high turnout numbers. Of the **provisional voters** in the June 7, 2016, Presidential Primary Election, **70% were VBM voters who could not produce the original VBM ballot** mailed to them.



Orange ballot bags and precinct supplies await shipment to polling places.