



STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

JESSE R. SMART
Chairman

WANDA L. REDNOUR
Vice Chairman

DANIEL W. WHITE
Executive Director

ELECTION NEWS

ELECTION NEWS

ELECTION NEWS

100 W. Randolph Street
Suite 14-100
Chicago, Illinois 60601
312/814-6440
312/814-6431 (TDD)

1020 S. Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois 62704
217/782-4141
217/782-1518 (TDD)
www.elections.il.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: DANIEL W. WHITE
(312)814-6440

HISTORY OF VOTER TURNOUT

SPRINGFIELD, IL, OCT. 30, 2006 – Approximately 7.3 million Illinois residents are registered to vote for the Nov. 7 general election, the State Board of Elections said today.

The total number of registered voters peaked at 7.5 million for the 2004 Presidential election, but the number registered this year is the highest for a gubernatorial election since the state constitution changed the election of the governor and other state officials to non-presidential election years. There were 7.0 million registered voters for the last gubernatorial election in 2002.

Beginning in 1978, there have been seven gubernatorial elections in non-presidential years.

“Voter turnout in the last three contests for governor has been stable at 52-53 percent,” said Daniel W. White, executive director of the State Board of Elections.

“In six of the seven elections, turnout has ranged from 3.2 to 3.6 million voters and from 52 percent to 58 percent of registered voters. The exception was 1982 when turnout peaked at 3.8 million and 65 percent of registered voters.”

- more -

White said the official number of registered voters in the state will be available prior to Election Day, but the final number has been delayed because a new state law extended voter registration by two weeks. In the seven previous gubernatorial elections, voter registration between the primary and general elections did not change significantly even though the number of people voting in the general election always increases dramatically from the primary. For the March 2006 primary, registration stood at 7,263,969.

Other election notes:

- This is the first election since 1982 in which Illinois will not elect a U.S. senator and governor at the same time. Senators are elected to a 6-year term and the governor to a 4-year term.
- A new state law allows Illinois voters to cast a ballot early without having to offer a reason or an excuse for wanting to vote early. (Early voting ends Nov. 2.) In the March primary election, the total number of people voting early (including absentee voters and “grace period voters” as well as those under the official “voted early” designation) amounted to about seven percent of the voters.
- Illinois is one of 35 states allowing some form of early voting. Other states with more experience in early voting report a significant increase from election to election in the number voting early. For example, in a recent election in Nevada, more than one-half of the votes were cast before the polls opened on Election Day.

The State Board of Elections is an independent state constitutional agency charged with the responsibility of having general supervision over the administration of election laws of the state. The Board works closely with election authorities in all regions of the State.

More information on voting history is available at

www.elections.il.gov/ElectionInformation/downloadturn.aspx. For more information on the Nov. 7 general election, contact the election authority in your county or visit www.elections.il.gov.

CHART

VOTER TURNOUT, GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS

Year	Turnout (in millions)	Percentage (of registered voters)
2002	3.6	52%
1998	3.5	52%
1994	3.2	53%
1990	3.4	57%
1986	3.3	55%
1982	3.8	65%
1978	3.3	58%

#