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STATE OF ALASKA Division of Elections Office of the Lieutenant Governor

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Division of Elections Certifies 2008 General Election

The bi-partisan State Ballot Review Board has completed a thorough review of the 2008 General election. With the review done, the Director of the Division of Elections, Gail Fenumiai, announced today that the Division of Elections has certified the 2008 General election. There were 327,341 ballots cast in the 2008 General election for a final turnout of 66.03%.

This election generated a record number of voters who voted early, absentee or questioned ballots; over 119,000, compared to 2004 in which there were approximately 85,000. Although the Division received a record number of these ballots for the 2008 General election, the statutorily mandated time to process the ballots was still the same. Under state law, the Division's regional offices must have ballots processed and counted within 15 days following the election. "It takes a tremendous effort from the regional office staff and bi-partisan review boards to complete the review and counting of early, absentee and questioned ballots. "I am very pleased that the Division was able to process and count 34,000 more early, absentee and questioned ballots than we did during the 2004 General election and we accomplished this ahead of the statutory deadline," said Fenumiai.

As part of the election certification process, the Division also performed a hand-count verification of 5% of the ballots cast at the polls in each of the state's 40 house districts. This verification is done to ensure the election results are accurate. Although not mandated by statute, the Division added absentee, questioned and early ballots to the hand-count verification process. "With a record number of voters casting a ballot outside of the normal process of going to their assigned polling place, the Division felt it was critical to perform hand-count verification on some of the absentee, questioned and early ballots rather than just the ballots voted at the polls," said Shelly Growden, the Division's Election System Manger. The hand-count of the 2008 General election ballots verified that the state's ballot tabulation system accurately counted and reported election results.

With all the processes and procedures that must be completed by the Division and the review boards following the election, Alaska's certification process is quite extensive and thorough. Fenumiai expressed gratitude and thanks for the thousands of election workers, review board members and Division staff who helped make the 2008 elections successful. "We could not have elections without the dedication and hard-work of our election workers and staff," said Fenumiai.