

## Director's Office

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### STATE OF ALASKA Division of Elections Office of the Lieutenant Governor

## Media Advisory

August 29, 2008

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The Division of Elections now has 100% of the precincts reporting election results. Updated election results have been posted to the Division of Elections web site.

Due to the closeness of the election results in the Republican race for United States Representative, the Division has received numerous inquiries from the media and public about the number of absentee and questioned ballots still to be counted, when the results will be updated and the process for a recount. In an effort to answer these questions, the Division provides the below information:

### Absentee Ballots

The Division sent out approximately 9,120 Republican absentee ballots. As of Election Day, approximately 4,900 of those sent out have been returned. For the remaining ballots, if they were postmarked on or before Election Day, the Division has up to 10 days, if mailed within the United States, or up to 15 days if mailed from overseas, to receive and count those ballots.

In addition to the ballots sent to voters, the Division had absentee voting officials located throughout the state who issued absentee in-person ballots to voters August 11<sup>th</sup> through Election Day. The Division will not know how many additional absentee in-person ballots were voted until they are returned by the officials. Of the in-person ballots issued by the officials, since we do not keep track of the type of political party ballots issued to voters, we will not know the number of Republican ballots until we open and count the ballots.

### Questioned Ballots

On Election Day, if a voter's name was not on the precinct register, the voter was issued a questioned ballot. The Division will not know how many questioned ballots there are until the materials are received from the precincts. We are estimating anywhere between 5,000 – 10,000 questioned ballots and should have an approximate number by early next week. As with the absentee in-person ballots, the Division will not know how many Republican questioned ballots were issued until those ballots are opened and counted.

### Updated Election Results

The Division has, by state law, up to 15 days after Election Day to review, open and count absentee and questioned ballots. Due to the short time-frame between the Primary and General elections and the potential for a recount, it is the Division's goal to have the absentee and

questioned ballots counted by September 5, 2008 which is 10 days after Election Day. After we count on September 5<sup>th</sup>, there may still be absentee ballots that were mailed from overseas to be counted. The overseas ballots will be counted on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **Recount**

After all absentee and questioned ballots are counted, the bi-partisan State Ballot Review Board reviews all materials prior to the election being certified. The Division's goal is to certify the election September 16 – 18. There is not an automatic recount unless there is a tie vote.

Once the election is certified, a defeated candidate or 10 qualified voters may apply for a recount. The application must be made within 5 days after certification and must include a cash deposit of \$15,000 for a statewide recount. If the difference between the number of votes cast was 20 or less or was less than .5 percent of the total number of votes cast for the two candidates, the fee is waived and the state bears the cost of the recount.

A statewide recount would take 3-5 days and would be conducted in Juneau.

### **Touch Screen Results**

The Division is still waiting to receive the touch screen memory card from the following precincts to upload any touch screen results. At this point, we are uncertain if some of the following precincts had voters using the touch screen and will not know until we receive the memory card. If there were voters, the results will be uploaded and included in the September 5<sup>th</sup> release of results:

05-540 Metlakatla

35-080 Kachemak City/Fritz Creek

32-995 Whittier

08-136 Healy

12-010 Big Delta, Delta Junction and Deltana (reported zero touch screen voters)

12-030 Farm Loop (reported zero touch screen voters)

12-047 Sutton (reported zero touch screen voters)

12-050 Valdez #1 (reported zero touch screen voters)

12-055 Valdez #2 (reported zero touch screen voters)

06-607 Marshall (reported 27 touch screen voters)

06-688 Tok (reported zero touch screen voters)

37-706 Aleutians #2 (reported 1 touch screen voter)