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ALLISON G. JONES


Assistant Vice Chancellor

Academic Affairs – Student Academic Support

Code: AA-2003-31

October 14, 2003

To: CSU Provosts/Vice Presidents, Academic Affairs
CSU Vice Presidents, Administration
CSU Vice Presidents, Student Affairs

From: Allison G. Jones 

Subject: **Campus Responsibility for Distribution of Voter Registration Forms**

On September 20, 1999, I sent a memorandum to campuses alerting them that The Higher Education Amendments of 1998, P.L. 105-244, added a provision to the Higher Education Act (HEA) requiring that institutions of higher education participating in federal Title IV financial aid programs make a good faith effort to distribute mail voter registration forms to each student enrolled in a degree or certificate program and to make these forms widely available to students at the institution. The statute requires institutions to request voter registration forms from the state 120 days prior to the deadline for registering to vote within the state. If the campus does not receive a sufficient quantity of forms from the state within 60 days prior to the deadline for registering to vote, the campus will not be held liable for failing to meet the requirements during that election year.

Since the date of that memorandum, California revised the deadline for registering to vote from 29 to 15 days prior to the election. The Office of the Secretary of State also modified the form to be used by institutions and organizations requesting more than 50 copies of voter registration cards. A copy of the *Voter Registration Card Statement of Distribution* is attached for your information and use and is also available at http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections_vr.htm. This site provides for the downloading of a Voter Registration Form as well as for on-line completion of the Form.

As indicated in 1999, campuses are encouraged to designate an official on campus with responsibility for ensuring that voter registration forms are requested in advance of elections, maintaining a copy of the requests made for voter registration forms, and planning for making the forms widely available to students at the campus. **For the March 2, 2004 California primary election, the 120 day advance period for ordering forms is October 20, 2003.**

If you have questions about this requirement, please feel free to contact Ms. Mary L. Robinson, Associate Director, Academic Affairs, Student Academic Support, at (562) 951-4737 or mlrobinson@calstate.edu.

AGJ:MLR
Attachment (1)

cc: CSU Presidents
CSU Deans/Directors, Admissions and Records
CSU Directors, Financial Aid
Dr. David S. Spence

**VOTER REGISTRATION CARD
STATEMENT OF DISTRIBUTION**

| | | | | |
|---------|--|--|--|--|
| Order # | | | | |
|---------|--|--|--|--|

(Office Use Only)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name: _____ Date: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Street Address (NO P O BOX): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ Fax: (_____) _____

Number of Cards Requested: _____ Language: _____

II. PROPOSED METHOD OF DISTRIBUTION (CHECK)

- Fixed Location Mail (Blanket) Petition
- Door-to-Door Mail (Targeted)
- Other _____

Briefly explain your distribution plan (where will forms be distributed, by whom will they be distributed, etc.).

III. DECLARATION

I declare under penalty of perjury that I have read and understand the legal requirements on the reverse side of this form and that I will take reasonable steps to ensure that:

- 1) The person or persons distributing registration cards will give a registration card to any elector requesting one; and
- 2) The voter registration cards issued will not be defaced or changed in any way, other than by the insertion of a mailing address and the affixing of postage; and
- 3) Prior to distribution, the affidavit portion of the registration cards will not be marked, stamped, or partially or fully completed by anyone other than an elector or by another person assisting the elector; and
- 4) Persons entrusted with distribution or subsequent collection of completed forms, will be fully advised of the legal requirements outlined on the reverse side of this statement.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(IMPORTANT: SEE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS ON REVERSE SIDE OF THIS STATEMENT)

Serial Numbers: _____ (Office Use Only) _____

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FAX THIS COMPLETED FORM TO: (916) 653-3214

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- IMPORTANT -

The following requirements must be complied with by all persons and/or organizations to whom registration cards are issued. Non-compliance may result in referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

RECEIPT – A person who assumes responsibility for returning another person’s completed registration card to the elections official, must complete the receipt affixed to the bottom of the Voter Information portion of all registration cards issued subsequent to January 1, 1978, sign it and give it to the registrar. The completed receipt is not proof of registration, but may be used to ensure compliance with the requirements on return of completed cards. (§2158 of the Elections Code)

RETURN OF CARDS – Persons distributing voter registration cards must return all completed cards in their possession within 3 working days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and state holidays. Retaining completed cards for more than 3 days, or denying the voter’s right to return his or her completed card is a misdemeanor. All blank cards must be returned to the elections official immediately after the 15th day preceding a statewide primary or general election, and whenever instructed to do so by the elections official. (§2183, §2139, and §18103 of the Elections Code)

UNSOLICITED MAILING – Any mailing of a registration card to a person who did not request one must be accompanied by a cover letter or other notice with each card, instructing the recipient to disregard the card if he or she is currently registered to vote and does not wish to change name, address, political party affiliation or other registration information. This notice may be stamped on the card. (§2158 of the Elections Code)

NOTE: Organizations receiving completed cards for delivery to the elections official must ensure that all cards completed in whole or in part by prospective registrants are promptly forwarded to the elections official. This includes cards containing irregularities or minimal information, i.e. a name and address.

The elections officials will determine the validity of the registration and not the organization distributing or receiving cards.