



# DEBRA BOWEN

## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

DB09:036

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 24, 2009

CONTACT: Nicole Winger  
(916) 653-6575

### Secretary of State Debra Bowen Announces Charges Filed Against Orange County Man for Los Angeles Election Fraud

**SACRAMENTO** – Felony charges were filed and an arrest warrant issued Monday for an Orange County man suspected of committing voter registration and election fraud, Secretary of State Debra Bowen announced today.

An investigation by the Secretary of State's Election Fraud Investigation Unit revealed that Nativo Lopez of Santa Ana leased office space in the Boyle Heights area of Los Angeles and allegedly registered to vote at that commercial address although he lived with his family in Orange County. Lopez also allegedly cast an illegal ballot from Los Angeles in the 2008 Presidential Primary Election.

"Election fraud is a serious crime which is why I vigorously investigate such allegations year-round. Where there is a case to be made, I forward my findings to law enforcement for criminal prosecution," said Secretary Bowen, California's chief elections officer. "I thank Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley's office for continuing to work with me to pursue cases of election fraud."

On June 22, the Public Integrity Unit of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office charged Lopez with four felonies: fraudulent voter registration, fraudulent document filing, perjury, and fraudulent voting. A warrant was issued for his arrest and bail was set at \$10,000.

Under state law, registering where you are not entitled to vote is a felony punishable by up to three years in prison; fraudulent voting is also a felony punishable by up to three years in prison.

The Secretary of State's Election Fraud Investigation Unit helps maintain the integrity of the electoral process by investigating allegations of election and voter fraud in California. Potential Elections Code violations brought to the unit's attention are thoroughly investigated and referred to law enforcement officials for prosecution when there is sufficient evidence of wrongdoing. The Secretary of State's office does not disclose information about the status of ongoing criminal investigations, but the information from a case that results in a criminal complaint filed by a county or state prosecutor may be a public record.

Anyone who has witnessed a violation of the California Elections Code is encouraged to contact the Secretary of State's Election Fraud Investigation Unit at (800) 345-VOTE or [http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_fraud.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_fraud.htm).

###