
From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

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For Immediate Release

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"A MILLION MORE IN 2004" KICKS OFF
Bysiewicz backs WWE's "Smackdown Your Vote!" young voter drive

Connecticut Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz announced her support today for a nationwide voter registration drive aimed at increasing young voter turnout for the 2004 national and state elections by 1,000,000.

"A Million More in 2004" initiative was announced on February 3 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., by Connecticut-based World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), in partnership with the League of Women Voters, National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and other organizations as part of WWE's ongoing Smackdown Your Vote! program.

In addition to registering young people to vote, and ultimately getting them to vote on Election Day, 16 and 17 year olds will be encouraged to train and serve as poll workers. Other objectives of "A Million More in 2004" include holding a youth-oriented presidential debate as well as getting candidates to post their positions clearly and succinctly on various websites.

"When you consider that 20 percent of 20 year-olds vote and 80 percent of 80 year-olds vote, there is real cause for concern about the future of our democracy," said Bysiewicz. "This disturbing fact coupled with high levels of distrust and cynicism toward politics and government among young people represents a trend that must be challenged."

The Federal Elections Commission ranked Connecticut third in the nation in voter turnout during the 2000 presidential election with almost 78 percent of registered voters casting ballots. Connecticut has also been a national leader in reaching out to new young voters and "A Million More in 2004" fits well with this goal said Bysiewicz.

"One of the most patriotic things we can each do as citizens is to vote and encourage others to vote," said Bysiewicz. "By casting a ballot you not only show support for your candidate, but also for the veterans and troops who put their lives on the line to protect the freedoms we enjoy in this country."

Voter registration forms are available from local Registrars of Voters or designated state agencies such as Department of Motor Vehicles offices. Forms can also be downloaded

from the Secretary of the State's website at www.sots.state.ct.us