



Advancing the rights of Californians with disabilities

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### **PAI Provides Election Day Voter Hotline for People with Disabilities**

Californians with disabilities who plan to vote in the primary on February 5, 2008 have an ally in assuring full and equal access to the voting process. With funding from the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), Protection and Advocacy, Inc. (PAI) is sponsoring a toll-free hotline for voters with disabilities who have difficulty accessing polling places, casting ballots or general questions about the voting process. PAI has operated the hotline since 2004.

PAI's hotline is equipped to receive voice and TDD calls. The toll-free number for voice calls is: **800-776-5746**. The toll-free number for TDD calls is: **800-781-4546**. Individuals who speak languages other than English should state their language and an interpreter will be connected to the call. Callers who wish to use the California Relay Service may call **800-735-2929 (English)**, **800-855-3000 (Spanish)** or **866-327-8877 (Video Relay)**.

In addition to assisting voters in this election, hotline workers will use information collected from callers to document discrimination and access problems at polling places throughout California. "We encourage voters with disabilities who encounter voting issues to contact the hotline so that we as a community can prioritize the issues that voters with disabilities are facing," says Hillary Sklar, Coordinator of PAI's HAVA program. "We have known for years that people with disabilities often face numerous barriers when trying to exercise their right to vote. The Hotline will give us an opportunity to document and then address those barriers."

In addition to operating its own hotline, PAI staff will be working in collaboration with the Election Protection Coalition to ensure that individuals with disabilities calling the Election Protection Hotline can get answers to their disability related questions. The Election Protection Hotline number is: 1-866-OUR-VOTE, and is equipped to handle English and Spanish speaking callers.

**About Protection & Advocacy, Inc.**

*PAI is a non-profit advocacy agency that provides free legal services to advance the human and legal rights of persons who have disabilities. Under HAVA, PAI is charged with ensuring “the full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote and accessing polling places.” Since receiving HAVA funds, PAI has engaged in a range of voting-related activities, including registering Californians with disabilities to vote, developing nonpartisan educational materials, providing education and outreach, working with the Secretary of State and county election officials and helping voters with their individual voting issues.*