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SECRETARY OF THE STATE  
30 TRINITY STREET  
HARTFORD, CT 06106

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Office of the Secretary of the State: **Information Bulletin**  
April 16, 2018

Important! This Information Bulletin is not issued pursuant to our authority in Connecticut General Statutes §9-3 and the information contained herein is not intended to be an opinion of this office.

## **From Denise Merrill Secretary of the State**

Dear Colleagues:

It has been a busy year for all of us, with preparation for 2018 now in full swing. I look forward to seeing all of you at the conference later this month. I know many of you have welcomed Deputy Secretary Scott Bates at your offices on the listening tour he made of Registrars' offices around the state. It was very informative and I thank you for bringing our attention to issues as you see them. I plan to address a number of them at the conference.

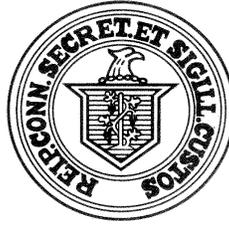
The big news is the \$5.1 million that we have received from the federal government to bolster the cybersecurity of our voter registry and other systems. This will enable us to enhance training and help towns secure the CVR at the local level, as well as make some upgrades at the state level.

We continue to have one of the most impressive and secure election systems in the country, ranked by the Pew Foundation Election Index as #5 in the country, due in large part to our efforts to make voting both more accessible and more transparent. Despite significant budgetary cutbacks over the last few years, we are literally doing more with less in my office. I know that many of you are under the same constraints.

Funding of elections should be a top priority at every level of government. The cost to the local towns is a tiny fraction of most town budgets, and well worth investment to assure the public that their votes are secure and accurately counted. I thank all of you for the role you play to make this a reality.

See you at the conference!

Denise W. Merrill



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### **New Personnel Announcement in LEAD**

We are pleased to introduce Blanca Otero who has recently joined the Elections Division as a processing technician. Blanca comes to us from the Office of the Healthcare Advocate and is eager to learn about elections and to support the local election officials. She is fluent in Spanish which is very helpful to our office, especially with reference to the authentication of documents (Authentications and Apostilles). She is a resident of East Hartford.

### **New Endorsement Forms**

New generic endorsement form can be used for all offices (congressional, senatorial, multi and single town state representation and registrar of voters). Colored copies (yellow for Democratic Party; green for Republican Party) have been provided to State Central. If you see a box or line check it, sign it or fill in the blank as appropriate. Remember to submit all endorsement forms, including forms for Registrar of Voters to our

office!!! Failure to file with Secretary of the State creates a vacancy in endorsement.

### **EMS**

We have been working diligently to fix the prior year's issues in the Election Management System in order to get ready for this year's mandatory use of EMS in the state election. Some of the changes you will see are: the form numbers by each report, for example ED-102, List of Offices to be Filled, have been added; when assigning the parties, the 'Write-In' option will be included by default in the list. Another issue that we were able to work out was the separate offices for Governor and Lt. Governor in the primary, which would default to one office or team at the November election. The Registrar of Voters/Head Moderators will see column heading changes in View/Stats, for example "Total Absentee Ballots Received from Town Clerk for Counting", "Total Absentee Ballots Rejected at Counting" and "Total Absentee Ballots Counted". However, we had to prioritize some of the recommended enhancements from the



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Registrar of Voters and Town Clerks, due to budgetary restraints.

As this is a state election year, the SOTS will be entering all the state offices and candidates' names into the Election Management System (EMS). The Town Clerks will only need to add their respective local offices and candidates into EMS; for example, Registrars of Voters, Board of Education. If the towns have questions to be placed on the ballot, the Town Clerks will need to enter their question into EMS for approval. Any supported documentation for the questions on the ballot will need to be sent by regular mail to the attention of Pearl Williams.

The Registrars of Voters process of assigning their respective polling place to the election and maintaining the Head Moderators password remains the same.

We will again be offering EMS training in June and October. The location and dates will be announced closer to those months.

### **Russian Meddling in US Elections**

Connecticut was one of 21 states targeted by the Russian Government in 2016. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) confirmed that the attempted Russian intrusion into our centralized voter registration database was stopped by our intrusion detection system. The Secretary of the State's Office is working with the State's Bureau of Enterprise Systems and Technology (DAS/BEST) and the Department of Homeland Security to strengthen our defenses to ensure that we continue to stay ahead of foreign actors who seek to disrupt our elections. Secretary Merrill recently spoke with Judy Woodruff of the PBS News Hour about the threats to our voting systems and the resources we need to protect our free and fair elections:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/russias-sights-are-set-on-u-s-elections-can-states-secure-their-voting-systems-in-time>.

We were recently informed by the US Elections Assistance Commission (EAC) that



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our office will be receiving \$5.12 million in new HAVA grant funds to improve the administration of elections for Federal office, including to enhance technology and make election security improvements.

### **Nominating Petitions and Primary Petitions**

Local election officials need to be aware that people may begin to inquire about petitions. There are two kinds of petitions that they will need to concern themselves with, the Primary Petition and the Nominating Petition. Prospective candidates may not be aware of the proper name for the petition that they are seeking; you will probably have to guide them. Nominating Petitions will allow access to the November ballot. They are used by people who want to run for office without a party, start their own party, and sometimes (but not always!) even to run under the name of an existing minor party. Nominating petitions always are issued by our office, and you may refer them to us, telling them to ask for a Nominating Petition when they call. Primary Petitions are issued

when someone wants to run as a Republican or Democrat, but did not gain the party endorsement. If someone wants to run as a Democrat or Republican, but did not get the party endorsement, you will need to find out what office they are seeking. If the office represents the members of more than one town, you should refer them to us. However, if the office represents only the constituents in one town, then you should refer them to the registrar of that town.

### **Ordering Election Supplies/Absentee Ballot Forms/Voter Registration Cards**

When placing an order for election related supplies/forms please be sure to list the form number and/or name of the form and the amount of each form you are requesting. This will help to expedite the mailing out of your supplies. Orders can be faxed to (860) 509-6127 or (860) 509-6230 or emailed to [SOTS.Towns@ct.gov](mailto:SOTS.Towns@ct.gov). If you need to check on your order you may call the office at (860) 509-6100 and ask to speak with Santasha Pena.



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**REMINDER!**

As you may all be aware, the new IVS accessible voting equipment currently in use no longer requires a telephone line. As such, if you have not already done so, you may terminate any existing "HAVA" phone lines that were installed in your polling places for use with the old "phone/fax" system.

**Notification of Changes**

In order to keep our records up to date we need your help to notify us about any changes. Registrars and Town Clerks may leave their office before the end of their terms and it is important to let us know the new person's name, telephone number and email address. You must fill out the forms for either appointed or elected officials and forward to the attention of Heather Augeri in our office. If you need the appropriate form please contact our office. If there are any telephone or email changes email the changes to [SOTS.Towns@ct.gov](mailto:SOTS.Towns@ct.gov).