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- NEWS RELEASE -

**MERRILL URGES COLLEGE STUDENTS TO
SUBMIT VIDEOS FOR 2012 'SPEAK OUT
CONNECTICUT' ELECTION VIDEO CONTEST**

SECRETARY OF THE STATE PARTNERING WITH COMCAST CABLE; SEEKING ENTRIES
FROM STUDENTS ACROSS CONNECTICUT ANSWERING THE QUESTION: 'WHY SHOULD
I VOTE'? WINNING VIDEO TO AIR AS PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today urged college students across Connecticut to submit videos for the first-of-its-kind contest to produce a :30 second video that answers the question "Why Should I Vote?" as part of the "Speak Out Connecticut" series of events and public messages meant to increase voter participation for the 2012 elections. Secretary Merrill is partnering with Comcast Cable, Inc. in Connecticut and the winning video submission will air as a public service announcement for the more than 500,000 local customers who subscribe to the cable TV provider.

"2012 is going to be a major election year, and we clearly have a lot of work to do if we want to reach that younger generation of voters and get them to participate in elections," said Secretary Merrill, Connecticut's chief elections officer. "I want our students to get creative and tell all of us – and their peers – why it is important to show up and cast ballots. So much is at stake – from our economy to foreign policy, education and healthcare. It is incumbent upon those of us in government to reach out to the millennial generation. We must engage them in conversation about all of these issues, and talk to them about the huge impact they can make by experiencing Democracy firsthand and encouraging others to vote. I can't wait to see what our contestants come up with!"

Video submissions in DVD form are due to the Secretary of the State's office by 5:00 p.m. on April 16, 2012. The contest is open to any college student in Connecticut, including community colleges and traditional four-year institutions. Connecticut residents attending college in other states may also participate in the "Speak Out Connecticut" competition. Contest rules and guidelines can be found online as part of Secretary Merrill's [Civic Engagement Initiatives](#) at www.sots.ct.gov