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- PRESS RELEASE -

SECRETARY MERRILL REMINDS 17 YEAR-OLDS THEY CAN VOTE IN APRIL 24TH REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY

FIRST TIME IN CONNECTICUT HISTORY 17 YEAR-OLDS CAN VOTE IN PRESIDENTIAL
PREFERENCE PRIMARY; SECRETARY OF THE STATE REPORTS MORE THAN 2,200 NEW 17
YEAR-OLD VOTERS

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today reminded 17 year-old Connecticut citizens that they are eligible to vote in the upcoming Republican Presidential Preference primary if they will turn 18 years old by Election Day on November 6, 2012. This is the first Presidential Preference Primary in Connecticut's history when 17 year-olds will be allowed to cast ballots, due to the passage of an amendment to Connecticut's state Constitution in 2008 that has enabled 17 year-old citizens to cast ballots in primaries if they will be of legal voting age by the day of the general election. In order to cast ballots in the primary, any eligible voter would need to enroll or register with the Republican party by Monday April 23rd at 12:00 p.m. noon. Unaffiliated voters also have that same deadline to enroll with the Republican party if they wish to participate in the primary. Secretary Merrill is also reporting that since the beginning of 2012, more than 2,200 17 year-olds have registered to vote in Connecticut, including 465 who have registered as Democrats, 543 new who have enrolled with the Republican party, and 1,123 new 17 year-old unaffiliated voters.

"It is encouraging to see that so many 17 year-olds are taking advantage of the opportunity to register to vote in advance of the Presidential Preference Primary," said Secretary Merrill, Connecticut's chief elections official. "Republican voters in Connecticut will be going to the polls in a regional primary on April 24th, along with voters in New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Rhode Island. It is important for young people to take ownership of the political process early, so they can turn into lifelong voters."

Polls will be open on April 24, 2012 from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. for registered Republicans in Connecticut for the Presidential Preference Primary. Voters can go online at www.sots.ct.gov to download voter registration forms, absentee ballot applications, and find out where their polling place is located. The four candidates to appear on the Republican Presidential Preference Primary ballot are: Newt Gingrich, Ron Paul, Mitt Romney, and Rick Santorum.