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MERRILL: 2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION A HISTORIC SUCCESS FOR ELECTION MODERNIZATION AND REFORM

SECRETARY OF THE STATE PRAISES WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND
GOVERNOR MALLOY TO EXPAND VOTING ACCESS, MAKE ELECTIONS MORE
EFFICIENT, AND MODERNIZE OUTDATED LAWS

Hartford: Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today declared the 2012 legislative session a historic success in terms of passing reforms to modernize elections, expand access to the ballot, and make voting a more efficient process for both eligible residents and town governments that administer elections on the local level. In sum, Secretary Merrill was able to work with legislative leaders and Governor Malloy to pass a number of key measures that will have positive impacts for the voters and taxpayers of Connecticut.

“I am very proud of the historic accomplishments that we achieved together in the 2012 legislative session,” said Secretary Merrill, Connecticut’s chief elections official. “After years of debate and political turmoil, we finally passed Election Day Registration with a governor who is fully behind the proposal. And by 2014 voters in Connecticut will be able to register to vote securely by using any computer or mobile device. That is real progress and modernization, and, because of the hard work by our legislators and leadership in the House and Senate, we will see higher voter participation as a result.”

Secretary Merrill continued, “This session we also took the first major step towards changing our constitution to usher in a new era of voting in Connecticut that will cut costs for municipalities and make it easier for our busy, mobile voters to exercise their right to vote. We also took steps to give local election administrators the flexibility to reduce some of their costs and make primaries more manageable, which should save taxpayers a significant amount of money. These measures will shore up the integrity of our elections and some of these reforms were long overdue. I look forward to Governor Malloy signing these bills into law, and working together with our partners at the local level to implement these modernizations.”

The following bills were supported by Secretary Merrill and passed in the 2012 legislative session:

- HB 5024 “*An Act Concerning Voting Rights*” – institutes Election Day Registration in 2013, provides for an online voter registration system by 2014. Connecticut becomes 10th state to adopt Election Day Registration, 10th state to provide online voter registration option.
- *House Joint Resolution 2* – proposes amending the Connecticut Constitution to allow General Assembly to enact non-precinct voting options such as early voting, mail-in voting, no excuse absentee ballots. Must pass in the General Assembly again in 2013 in order to be placed on the ballot for voters to ratify in 2014.
- Senate Bill 218 “*An Act Concerning Polling Places for Primaries*” – permits Registrars of Voters to reduce the number of polling places in a municipality for a primary, will save money in lower turnout election.