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- NEWS RELEASE -

MERRILL: MORE THAN 176,000 REGISTERED HISPANIC VOTERS IN CONNECTICUT

SECRETARY OF THE STATE USES CENSUS DATA TO ESTIMATE SIGNIFICANT
POPULATION OF HISPANIC VOTERS IN MULTIPLE CONNECTICUT
MUNICIPALITIES

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today is reporting that there are more than 176,000 registered voters of Hispanic origin in Connecticut – representing nearly 9% of all registered voters in the state. Secretary Merrill is also reporting that the first eight months of 2012 saw more than 7,500 new Hispanic voters register in Connecticut. The communities with the highest numbers of registered Hispanic voters are Bridgeport with more than 25,519 Hispanic registered voters and Hartford with 24,911 Hispanic citizens registered to vote. Among those registered voters of Hispanic origin, some 90,012 are registered as Democrats, while 71,488 are registered as unaffiliated voters, and 14,449 are registered Republicans. To estimate and report the figures, Secretary Merrill relied on registration data from the Connecticut Centralized Voter Registration System combined with Spanish surname information from the U.S. Census bureau. A breakdown of key data points follows at the bottom of this news release.

“These numbers clearly show us that Connecticut is becoming more diverse every day, and nearly one in ten citizens registered to vote in our state is Hispanic American,” said Secretary Merrill, Connecticut’s chief election official. “I think those of us in public service should learn very quickly that it would be wise to listen to the voices of our Hispanic voters in Connecticut. At the same time, we also know that a significant gap exists between our Hispanic citizens who are registered to vote and those who actually cast ballots. This is a gap I am committed to closing by making our elections more accessible to all voters in Connecticut, and I will continue to reach out to all communities in our state with the message of why it is important to vote.”

In an earlier study, the Secretary of the State’s [2011 Civic Health Index Report](#) found that although 46% of Hispanic citizens in Connecticut are registered to vote, just 23% actually cast ballots.

Werner Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director of the Connecticut Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, said, “I am delighted to learn that the majority of Hispanic U.S. Citizens that are within the voting age in our state are registered to vote. I remain confident that more than half of the Hispanic registered voters in Connecticut will exercise their right to vote in the next elections and in turn help our community increase our voice for equal rights in the halls of power.”

Secretary Merrill estimates that party affiliation for registered Hispanic voters in Connecticut is as follows:

Party	Count
Concerned Citizens	40
Connecticut for Lieberman	7
Democratic	90,012
Green	76
Independence	64
Independent	519
Libertarian	40
Republican	14,449
Realistic Balance	2
Reform	8
Unaffiliated	71,488
Working Families	21
We the People	9
TOTAL	176,735

The 20 municipalities in Connecticut with the highest estimated number of registered Hispanic voters in Connecticut are, listed in descending order:

1. Bridgeport	25,519	11. Willimantic/Windham	3,053
2. Hartford	24,911	12. West Haven	2,720
3. Waterbury	15,072	13. Stratford	2,687
4. New Haven	12,541	14. Manchester	2,413
5. New Britain	10,139	15. New London	2,355
6. Meriden	6,365	16. West Hartford	2,227
7. East Hartford	4,799	17. Bristol	1,947
8. Stamford	4,728	18. Middletown	1,416
9. Norwalk	4,596	19. Naugatuck	1,371
10. Danbury	3,696	20. Windsor	1,337

Pursuant to the federal Voting Rights Act, the following Connecticut communities are required to provide Spanish language ballots and other voting materials: **Bridgeport, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Waterbury and Windham.** The Federal Voting Rights Act mandates that a state or political subdivision must provide language assistance to voters if more than five (5) percent of voting age citizens are members of a single-language minority group and do not speak or understand English adequately enough to participate in the electoral process. The U.S. Census Bureau selects the communities subject to this provision of the statute. If a city or town falls into the group selected by the U.S. Census bureau, municipal officials are required to provide information regarding voter registration, elections, voting, including information provided in the polling places and the voting booths, in English and Spanish. It also requires a town to provide Spanish voter registration forms and offer voting assistance in Spanish at the polls.