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- NEWS RELEASE -

**MERRILL RELEASES UPDATED
INFORMATION ON READINESS OF POLLING
PLACES FOR NOVEMBER 6TH PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION**

SECRETARY OF THE STATE COORDINATING ELECTION PREPARATIONS WITH
LOCAL REGISTRARS AND TOWN CLERKS, STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
AND ELECTRIC UTILITIES

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today is reporting that as of today, some 65-70 polling locations in the service area covered by Connecticut Light & Power are still without electric power, down from approximately 100 polling locations yesterday. At the same time, Secretary Merrill is also reporting that approximately 25 polling locations in the service area of United Illuminating are still lacking electrical power. These figures are according to reports provided to Secretary Merrill directly from the utilities today. Secretary Merrill's office conducted another conference call this morning involving hundreds of municipal election officials to assess the latest state of election preparedness on the local level and the impact of Hurricane Sandy. In addition, Secretary Merrill's staff participated in a conference call with state emergency management officials and President Barack Obama to assess recovery from the storm.

“At this point, we are monitoring the situation very closely with our partners at the local level who must administer the presidential election on Tuesday November 6th,” said Secretary Merrill. “We still have some polling places that lack electricity, and both power utilities have assured us they are working very hard to restore power to these locations as soon as possible. At the local level, towns and cities are already executing their election preparation functions and backup plans where necessary for preparing voter lists and making sure the voting machines are ready to use next Tuesday. We will be ready to vote next Tuesday no matter what, and the preference would be not to move or consolidate any polling locations unless absolutely necessary. My message to our local officials continues to be to focus on the tasks at hand, to coordinate with local and state government to find alternate locations for voting if necessary, and most importantly to

inform voters of those changes with adequate time before the election so voters can know where to cast a ballot.”

One concern expressed by local election officials was that some school districts that have been closed this week due to storm damage have decided to open their doors on Election Day Tuesday November 6th – a change from previous plans to close school for Election Day so the school facilities could be used as polling precincts. This presents certain logistical challenges for access of voters to the polling place, traffic in the building, and available parking for voters on what is expected to be a high turnout Election Day. Secretary Merrill’s staff has both urged local election administrators to work out solutions to this logistical challenge with school administrators and also has sent a message to municipal officials and state emergency management officials to ask school superintendents to consider either not holding school on Election Day, going to a half day schedule or find other accommodations to share the space -- in the interest of conducting an orderly election on Tuesday November 6, 2012.