



DENISE MERRILL
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
CONNECTICUT

For Immediate Release:
April 11, 2014

For more information:
Av Harris: (860) 509-6255
Cell: (860) 463-5939

- PRESS RELEASE -

NATIONAL STUDY SHOWS CONNECTICUT AMONG 10 BEST STATES FOR ELECTION PERFORMANCE

SECRETARY OF THE STATE NOTES CONNECTICUT SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVES
NATIONAL RANKING FROM 2008 TO 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN
NATIONAL STUDY BY PEW CENTER

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today is noting that Connecticut greatly improved its performance in a study released this week by the The Pew Charitable Trusts called the “Election Performance Index” (EPI) that grades states on various indicators related to the administration of Elections. The report found that, among other things, Connecticut improved from 19th place overall in election performance during the 2008 Presidential election to 10th place in the nation for performance during the 2012 Presidential election, with higher rankings likely to follow. The study by the Pew Center evaluates election administration by looking at such indicators as wait times at polling locations, availability of voting information tools online, rejection of voter registrations, problems with registration or absentee ballots, rejection of military and overseas ballots, voter turnout, and accuracy of voting technology. Connecticut’s overall score improved from 67% in 2008 to 74% in 2012, an improvement of 7% and higher than the national average of 4.4% improvement. In particular, Connecticut had the lowest rate in the country of military and overseas absentee ballots that were not returned in time for Election Day. The Pew Center also credited Connecticut’s improved scores overall to the addition of new online tools for voters to look up whether they are registered to vote, where their polling place is located and how to get to their polling place.

“I am very pleased that the Pew Center on the states has recognized some of the improvements to our election process we have enacted in the last three years,” said Secretary Merrill, Connecticut’s chief elections official. “I think we will score even higher in following studies since we have expanded access to our democratic process by enacting Election Day Registration and most recently making voter registration available online. There are still areas where we could improve, such as enhancing access for voters with disabilities and the collection and reporting of election data from local election administrators. But overall I am very pleased with the improvement in our performance – it means we are very much moving in the right direction.”

An overall review of Connecticut's Election Performance Index numbers indicates that in 2012:

- Connecticut ranked 23rd in voter turnout as a percentage of eligible voters casting ballots at 61%
- Connecticut ranked 24th overall in the percentage of eligible voters being registered to vote at 84.49%
- Connecticut ranked 21st in the country for the average wait time for voters to cast ballots once they arrive at their polling place – with an average wait time of 8.5 minutes
- Connecticut also ranked 1st in the country for the lowest rate of military and overseas absentee ballots not returned by election day at 11.45%
- Connecticut ranked 6th in the country for the lowest number of military and overseas ballots rejected at 0.96%

Among Connecticut's lower scores:

- Nearly 19% of disabled voters in Connecticut reported encountering problems at the polls casting ballots on Election Day, ranking 40th in the country.
- Connecticut ranked 49th out of 51 jurisdictions (including the District of Columbia) for the rate of completeness of data submitted by cities and towns to the Federal Election Assistance Commission. Connecticut's completeness rate in this area was 78% in 2012. This reflects a challenge in reporting election data to the federal Elections Assistance Commission owing to the fact that elections in Connecticut and other New England States are administered entirely at the local level.

A full version of the Pew Charitable Trust Election Performance Index report can be found online at www.pewstates.org/epi.