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# SECRETARY MERRILL PRAISES GOVERNOR MALLOY'S SIGNING OF HISTORIC LAW STRENGTHENING CONNECTICUT ELECTIONS

SECRETARY OF THE STATE AND CONNECTICUT REGISTRARS OF VOTERS  
ASSOCIATION PLEDGE TO WORK TOGETHER TO IMPLEMENT NEW REFORMS TO  
IMPROVE ADMINISTRATION OF LOCAL ELECTIONS

**HARTFORD:** Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today joined the Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut (ROVAC) in praising Governor Dannel P. Malloy's signing into law Senate Bill 1051 "*An Act Strengthening Connecticut Elections.*" Passed with an overwhelming, bipartisan majority in the Connecticut General Assembly, the law establishes qualification standards and certification for Registrars of Voters in charge of local election administration, requires yearly training and also provides for removal from office for Registrars in extreme cases of negligence or dereliction of duty. The bill also improves the speed of collecting election results and permits local election officials to use the online voter registration system to enroll new voters through Election Day Registration. It also authorizes an automated system to reduce the expense and time spent on post-election audits.

"This is a very good day for Connecticut voters, because now our elections can be managed even better at the local level," said Secretary Merrill, Connecticut's chief elections official. "I thank Governor Malloy for having the vision to enact this new law that will greatly improve elections for Connecticut voters. We now have established key benchmarks for registrars of voters that will increase accountability in our entire election system and will help both voters and local election officials. It also advances long overdue technological enhancements that will modernize and streamline election management. Now that the bill has become law, we begin a new chapter working together with Registrars of Voters to implement these significant changes. Our goal is to

offer the best possible service to the voters of our state and this bill addresses the training, support and accountability to do just that. I am also grateful for the leadership and members of the General Assembly for their bi-partisan votes for the bill. The partnership of ROVAC and Connecticut's town clerks was also critical in forging this meaningful reform."

Melissa Russell, president of ROVAC, said, "Registrars of Voters across the state welcome this legislation as a leap forward in giving elections administrators the tools and technology needed to improve and enhance Connecticut's elections. ROVAC has long worked for technological improvements in reporting results and conducting post-election audits, and further educational and training opportunities are a core principal of our organization. The creation of this law is an example of true bipartisanship, where all parties involved worked together to come up with solutions that will have lasting benefits for Connecticut's voters."

In addition to introducing new accountability measures, the new law also quickens election results reporting by separating results from other statistics that often take longer to gather and report. It unifies voter registration deadlines to one week prior to Election Day, and permits local election officials to use the online voter registration system to enroll residents who are participating in Election Day Registration (EDR), which should help reduce EDR waiting times on Election Day. The mandated training and certification for registrars of voters has been a collaborative effort between the SOTS, SEEC and ROVAC based on the work of a taskforce. The final design and implementation will be completed by the Secretary of the State's office, in partnership with the University of Connecticut Information Technology Institute and ROVAC.