



**DENISE W. MERRILL**  
SECRETARY OF THE STATE  
CONNECTICUT

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For more information:  
Patrick Gallahue: (860) 509-6255  
Cell: (860) 463-5939

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## **CONNECTICUT IMPROVES ACCESS TO VOTING**

NEW SURVEY REVEALS MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO STATE'S VOTING ACCESS  
OVER PAST FOUR YEARS

**HARTFORD:** A new report reveals Connecticut has made major strides in promoting access to voting over the last four years. The review updates a Rock the Vote scorecard that was released in 2011 and found that Connecticut ranked 48<sup>th</sup> out of 51 jurisdictions (or a score of 4.2 out of a possible 21). However, implementing reforms such as Election Day Registration and Online Voter Registration, among others, raised the score to an impressive 11.2.

The updated review was carried out by DataHaven, a Connecticut-based non-profit that collects, interprets and shares public data. It was produced for the forthcoming 2016 Connecticut Civic Health Index report, which will be released next week.

Secretary of the State Denise W. Merrill said, "Progress is good but only if it gives us the momentum to do more. Online and Election Day Registration have been huge successes but there's more we must do. Connecticut can and will be a model to the nation for ease of voting and civic participation."

Mary Buchanan, Project Manager at DataHaven, said, "We estimate that Connecticut would be much more highly ranked in a national assessment than it was in 2011, if the same method were used to compare all states."

Rock the Vote's President Ashley Spillane said, "In 2011, Rock the Vote identified a number of areas related to voting access that were crying out for improvement in Connecticut. However by

introducing online voter registration, same day registration and other programs, the past four years has been time well spent. There's obviously more to do, but we're pleased that Connecticut has come such a long way."

The score was carried out for the 2016 Connecticut Civic Health Index. This report is a unique evaluation of the depth of citizen engagement through a variety of indicators like voting, volunteering and other forms of community involvement, based on an analysis of the Census Current Population Survey and other locally-available data sources.

It will be released on January 19 by a coalition of groups including the Secretary of the State, Everyday Democracy, the National Conference on Citizenship and DataHaven.