- PRESS RELEASE -

SECRETARY MERRILL REMINDS CONNECTICUT VOTERS THAT ABSENTEE BALLOTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR AUGUST 14TH PRIMARIES

SECRETARY OF THE STATE ALSO REMINDS UNAFFILIATED VOTERS THEY CAN ENROLL WITH DEMOCRATS OR REPUBLICANS BY AUGUST 13TH IN ORDER TO CAST BALLOT IN PRIMARY

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today announced that absentee ballots are now available for any Connecticut voter who will be out of town or otherwise unavailable to go to their polling place and cast a ballot in statewide primaries on August 14, 2012. At the same time, Secretary Merrill is also reminding unaffiliated voters across the state who wish to cast a ballot in the primary they must enroll with the Democratic or Republican Parties by August 13th at 12:00 p.m., since only registered Republicans or Democrats can vote in the primary Tuesday August 14th.

"Some of the most closely watched Congressional primaries in the country are taking place in Connecticut on August 14th," said Secretary Merrill, Connecticut's chief elections official. "I urge all registered Democrats and Republicans to take part in choosing who you believe will best represent you in Hartford and Washington D.C. Anyone who wants to cast a ballot but may be on vacation or cannot be present at their polling place on Primary Day can apply for an absentee ballot as of today. You can apply for an absentee ballot by going to your town clerk's office or by visiting www.sots.ct.gov and I want to remind eligible voters that the deadline to register to vote for the primary is August 13th at 12:00 at noon at your Registrar of Voters office. Unaffiliated voters wishing to cast a primary ballot face the same deadline to enroll with a major party."

To receive an absentee ballot, registered Connecticut voters can fill out a simple application at their town clerk's office or download the application on their town's website. Applications for absentee ballots are also available on the Secretary of the State's website www.sots.ct.gov. Once an application is completed and turned in, the ballot will be sent to the voter in the mail within days. Absentee ballots can be returned

by mail or in-person to town offices up until 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday August 14, 2012 and still be counted in the statewide primary.

Secretary Merrill is also reminding Connecticut's more than 800,000 unaffiliated voters – the largest group of the state's nearly 2,000,000 active registered voters – that if they wish to cast a ballot on Primary Day they must enroll with either the Democratic or Republican Party. To be eligible to cast a ballot in the August 14th, 2012 Connecticut Primary Elections, an unaffiliated voter must enroll as a Democrat or Republican in person at his or her local Registrar of Voters office by Monday, August 13th at 12:00 p.m. Since the beginning of the year, more than 6,100 unaffiliated Connecticut voters have enrolled with a major party, making them eligible to vote in the August 14th primary (3,407 have enrolled as Republicans while 2,705 have enrolled as Democrats). Mail-in registration forms must be postmarked no later than August 9th. New voters face those same deadlines if they wish to register with a party and vote in the primaries. Connecticut law also allows 17-year-olds to register and vote in the primary if they will turn 18 by the general election on November 6, 2012.

On Primary Day August 14, 2012 polls will be open statewide from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. for registered Republicans and Democrats. Secretary Merrill encourages everyone to visit www.sots.ct.gov to see if they are registered to vote, find their polling place, view candidate lists, and download absentee ballot forms.

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