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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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7.5 MILLION VOTERS REGISTERED FOR PRIMARY

SPRINGFIELD, IL, Jan. 21, 2010 – Nearly 300,000 more Illinois residents are registered to vote in the upcoming primary election than were registered for the gubernatorial primary four years ago.

The unofficial number of Illinois registered voters as of Jan. 19 is 7,559,541, according to the Illinois Voter Registration System database. Four years ago there were 7,263,969 registered voters.

Although the traditional deadline for registering has passed, a few people are still participating under Grace Period Registration, which expires Jan. 26. The Illinois primary election is Tuesday, Feb. 2.

Registration figures typically spike for November general elections in which a President is elected. The number of registered voters for the 2008 Presidential election was a record 7,789,500 and the turnout in raw numbers was a record 5.5 million.

The turnout for the 2006 gubernatorial primary was a record low in terms of percentage of registered voters, 25%. Since the gubernatorial elections were switched to non-Presidential election years in 1978, voter turnout in primaries has ranged from 25% to 33%.

As expected, the early voting option so popular for the Presidential election is not being utilized nearly as often in this gubernatorial primary. Only about 40,000 people have voted in-person at an Early Voting Center as of Jan. 19, according to the IVRS database.

A no-excuse absentee voting law in effect for the first time now allows registered voters to vote by mail without having to give a reason for wanting to vote early.

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More information on absentee voting, Grace Period Registration and early voting is available at the offices of county clerks and boards of election commissioners and at www.elections.il.gov.

Candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Comptroller, Treasurer, U.S. Senate, Representatives in Congress, State Senators and Representatives in the General Assembly, certain county offices and judges will be nominated in the primary.

Also, certain political party leaders will be elected in the primary. Some members of state central committees are elected, as are township committeemen in Cook County and precinct committeemen in the other 101 counties.

The primary election system is established by state law. A voter can vote for candidates of one party only. The established political parties are Republican, Democratic and Green.

In some cases, nonpartisan candidates or referenda may be voted on in a primary and if a voter does not want to declare a party affiliation, he or she may request a nonpartisan ballot only.

The State Board of Elections is an independent state agency charged with the responsibility of having general supervision over the administration of election laws of the State.

Elections are administered locally by the State's 110 election authorities.

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

VOTER REGISTRATION AND PERCENTAGE TURNOUT

ILLINOIS GUBERNATORIAL PRIMARIES

<u>Year</u>	<u>Registered Voters</u>	<u>Turnout</u>	<u>Percentage Total Vote</u>
2006	7,263,969	1,804,624	25%
2002	7,069,886	2,321,875	33%
1998	6,747,376	1,824,806	27%
1994	6,153,532	1,963,606	32%
1990	6,014,961	1,962,284	33%
1986	6,109,398	1,602,156	26%
1982	5,925,046	1,622,410	27%
1978	5,894,175	1,482,034	25%

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