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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EARLIEST START EVER FOR AN ILLINOIS ELECTION

SPRINGFIELD, IL, OCT. 16, 2007 – Hundreds of candidates seeking office in the 2008 election are scheduled to file official nominating petitions at the office of the State Board of Elections on Oct. 29, the earliest official start ever for an Illinois election.

For the first time, Democratic candidates for President (or their representatives) plus slates of candidates seeking election as delegates and alternate delegates to the Democratic National Nominating Convention will file at the same time as candidates for federal, state and county offices.

Republican Presidential candidates and delegate candidates file their nominating petitions a month later, beginning Nov. 28. The Green Party, now recognized as an established political party in Illinois, has indicated its delegates will be chosen at a caucus or convention.

The Illinois primary election will be held Feb. 5, 2008, six weeks earlier than the last statewide primary. Because of the change in the primary date, the filing period for most candidates has been moved up from December to October.

Also nominated in the Feb. 5 primary will be candidates for U.S. Senate, Representatives in Congress, State Senators and Representatives in the General Assembly, certain county offices and judges.

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Furthermore, political party officers will be elected. Precinct committeemen will be elected in all counties except Cook and in Chicago ward committeemen will be elected.

Candidates, or their representatives, traditionally line-up at the office of the State Board of Elections, 1020 S. Spring St., Springfield, prior to 8 a.m. on the first day of filing as they seek to become the first candidate listed on the ballot for their particular office. The last day for most candidates to file nominating petitions is Nov. 5.

In Illinois, most Presidential candidates have a two-tier campaign. They may file as a Presidential Preference candidate which places them on the ballot statewide, and they may also have delegate and alternate delegate candidates pledged to them seeking election in Congressional districts.

Individuals may also file nominating petitions for delegate and alternate delegate to the national nominating conventions without being aligned with a specific Presidential candidate.

Other important dates on the primary election calendar:

- Jan. 8, 2008 – last day to register to vote in the Illinois primary election
- Jan. 14, 2008 – first day to vote at early voting centers

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

For more information on the election, contact election authorities in each county or visit the Board's website www.elections.il.gov.

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