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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VOTER REGISTRATION CLOSES OCT. 24

SPRINGFIELD, IL, OCT. 18, 2006 – Although regular voter registration has closed for the Nov. 7 general election, a new state law allows people to register through Oct. 24.

Individuals may register in-person at the office of their election authority. There are 110 election authorities in Illinois, most of them county clerks and boards established by larger cities.

People who take advantage of this new “grace period registration” are limited in the way they can vote – they must vote in the office of the election authority or vote absentee by mail. Thus, they are not eligible to vote at their normal polling place on Election Day, nor are they allowed to vote under the new Illinois law that establishes early voting centers.

Under the new early voting law, Illinois voters can cast a ballot prior to Election Day without having to provide a reason or an excuse for wanting to vote early. Election authorities across the state have announced where registered voters can vote early. The Chicago Board of Elections and the Cook County Clerk have a total of 58 early voting locations while voting early in smaller counties often is limited to the county clerk’s office.

The deadline for voting under the new early voting law is Nov. 2. Persons voting early must show valid photo identification to an election official, a stricter identification requirement than for persons casting a ballot at their polling place on Election Day.

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

For more information on “grace period” registration or early voting, contact the election authority in your county or visit www.elections.il.gov.

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