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ELECTION NEWS

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APPROACHING A MILLION VOTES CAST; TURNOUT HISTORY

SPRINGFIELD, IL, October 30, 2008 -- Illinois citizens are participating in this Presidential election at a record pace, breaking records for voter registration and early voting.

"Given the huge turnout of people voting at early voting centers and other eligible voters requesting an absentee ballot, the total number of people casting a ballot prior to polls opening on Election Day could approach one million," said Daniel W. White, Executive Director of the State Board of Elections.

Early voting centers close today, October 30.

Absentee voting, which requires a reason for obtaining a ballot, such as being incapacitated or out of the county on Election Day, continues through Monday. Persons who desire an absentee ballot should contact their local election authority.

The number of registered voters in Illinois is a state record -- approximately 7.7 million.

White said that despite huge numbers of early voters and long lines in some jurisdictions, new electronic voting equipment has performed well.

"Punch-card voting is history, used for the last time in the 2004 Presidential election. Votes are now cast on paper ballots that are scanned by optical scanners or on touch-screen equipment. The touch screens all have a paper trail that can be reviewed for accuracy so Illinois has not had the problems encountered by some states whose equipment does not have a paper trail."

White says one of the most frequently asked questions as Election Day approaches is the regulation regarding political materials within the polling place. The Campaign Free Zone means no buttons, stickers, t-shirts, coats, or anything else containing a candidate's name can be displayed in or within 100 feet of any room used by voters. Thus, voters may be told by election judges to cover up or remove such material.

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Here are clarifications on four other common questions:

Counting the votes – Votes cast at early voting centers, absentee votes, etc., are not counted until Election Day.

Voter verification – Most people voting at their polling place on Election Day are verified by the signature on their request for a ballot. (For example, no driver's license or voting card is required.) However, some voters, primarily first-time voters who registered by mail, may be required to show identification.

Right to Vote – If challenged at the polling place, a voter has the right to cast a provisional ballot. Provisional ballots are segregated from other ballots, and election officials review each ballot later to determine if it meets the legal standard to be counted. Voting in the wrong precinct is a common problem causing a provisional ballot to be thrown out.

Foreclosures – People who are forced out of a house or apartment due to a foreclosure do not lose their right to vote. Registered voters who moved: within 27 days of the election in the same precinct can vote a full ballot by signing an affidavit; more than 30 days before the election within the same election jurisdiction, but outside the precinct, and did not transfer their registration can vote on a ballot for federal offices only – after completing an address correction form; within 30 days before the election outside of their precinct, but still live in the state, and did not transfer their registration, can vote a full ballot in their old polling place after completing an affidavit.

NEW ELECTION RECORDS

Voter registration – Illinois registration stands at 7,725,360, over 200,000 more than the previous record set four years ago.

Early voting – Voting at an early voting center in Illinois has smashed daily records again and again since it started Oct. 13, and is on a pace to at least triple the number of people who voted at an early voting center in the primary. After early voting centers close today, the final tally could be 700,000 or more. In the primary, 220,000 people voted at an early voting center.

Grace Period Registration – A total of 21,020 people registered to vote (or changed an address) after the traditional 30-day deadline before Election Day for registering, triple the number that registered during the two-week grace period during the primary.

TURNOUT HISTORY

Illinois State Board of Elections Voter Registration and Percentage Turnout Illinois Presidential Elections

<u>Year</u>	<u>Registered Voters</u>	<u>Total Vote</u>	<u>Percentage Turnout</u>
2004	7,499,488	5,350,493	71%
2000	7,129,026	4,932,192	69%
1996	6,663,301	4,418,270	66%
1992	6,600,358	5,164,357	78%
1988	6,356,940	4,697,192	74%
1984	6,470,438	4,969,330	77%
1980	6,230,332	4,868,890	78%

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