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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 5

SPRINGFIELD, IL, Dec. 18, 2009 – The traditional deadline for registering to vote in the Feb. 2, 2010 primary election is Jan. 5.

A record 7.8 million Illinois residents were registered for the Presidential election in 2008, but registration totals almost always drop in non-Presidential election years.

Voters in this election will nominate candidates for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state, comptroller, U.S. Senate, representatives in Congress, state senators and representatives in the General Assembly, certain county offices and judges. Also, some political party officials will be elected.

The registration requirements to be eligible to vote are: be a citizen of the United States; be at least 18 years old by Election Day; and have been a resident of the precinct at least 30 days prior to Election Day.

When registering to vote, two forms of identification are required – one must show the current address of the applicant. A new state law adds identification that is acceptable for registration. A lease or contract for a residence is now an acceptable form of proof of a voter's residence. Also, a photo identification card issued by a university or college and mail addressed to the voter at the address of residence is acceptable proof.

Illinois residents may check their registration online by going to www.elections.il.gov and clicking "Voting and Elections" and then clicking "Am I Registered" at the top of the page.

Eligible voters who miss the Jan. 5 deadline may register during Grace Period Registration that runs until Jan. 26.

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However, the law requires that during the grace period people must register at the office of their election authority and – if they desire to vote in the primary - must vote at the same office or by mail at the discretion of the election authority. Those people are not allowed to vote at an Early Voting Center or at a polling place on Election Day.

In a primary election, an Illinois resident can vote for candidates of one party only. There are three established political parties in Illinois – Republican, Democratic and Green.

In some cases, nonpartisan candidates or referenda may be voted upon 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.

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