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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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17 YEAR OLDS MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE IN THE MARCH 18, 2014 GENERAL PRIMARY

CHICAGO, IL, January 2, 2014 - Public Act 98-051, effective January 1, 2014, allows a person who is 17 years old on the date of the general primary election to vote at that primary provided: (1) that person will be 18 years old on the date of the immediately following general election, and (2) the person is registered to vote. The 17 year old can participate in absentee, grace period or early voting with respect to the general primary election.

For the upcoming March 18, 2014, general primary election, United States citizens born on or before November 4, 1996, can register to vote and participate in that primary election because they will attain the age of 18 on or before the November 4, 2014, general election.

Additionally, a person who is 17 years of age and will be 18 years of age on the date of the general election shall be deemed competent to execute and attest to any voter registration forms. That 17 year old person, who will be 18 on the date of the general election, can sign a nominating petition but is not eligible to be a circulator for the petition.

It is anticipated the change in the Election Code, in addition to increasing the number of potential voters, will generate interest among young voters and lead to the development of consistent voting habits.

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.

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