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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grace Period Registration Begins February 22, 2012

Springfield, IL, February 22, 2012 - Although the traditional deadline for registering to vote has passed, a Grace Period that allows Illinois residents to register or change their voting address begins Wednesday February 22, 2012.

Grace Period Registration runs until Tuesday March 13, 2012. Grace Period Registration is conducted at the office of each of the state's 110 election authorities.

The law requires that a person participating in the Grace Period Registration who wants to cast a ballot in the upcoming election to vote at the same office (at the discretion of the election authority, voting by mail may also be an option). Those who take advantage of Grace Period Registration are not allowed to vote at an Early Voting Center or at a polling place on Election Day.

Election Day is March 20, 2012.

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. Public Act 96-0317 adds identification that is acceptable for voter 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 is acceptable only if accompanied by a copy of the voter's lease or mail postmarked to the voter's address.

Illinois residents may check their registration online by going to www.elections.il.gov and clicking "Voters" tab and then clicking "Am I Registered to Vote in Illinois" in the center of the page. The new service is made available through the Illinois Voter Registration System database, a requirement of the federal Help America Vote Act.

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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