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For immediate release
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PRESS RELEASE

Secretary of State Jim Condos's Statement on Automatic Voter Registration Implementation

As Vermont's chief elections officer, I have long been a champion of increasing voter participation while at the same time ensuring the integrity of elections. Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) is an important step forward to increasing access to the ballot box by automatically registering all eligible voters when they first get or later renew their driver's licenses. AVR enjoyed nearly unanimous support in the 2016 Legislative Session, with only a single vote against. Implementation of AVR is being done in partnership with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the Secretary of State's office and the Town Clerks.

As we began rolling out AVR with our partners at DMV, we were prepared that there might be some early issues with the data capture and transfer. We became aware of errors in the DMV data early on in the process and have isolated them to January 3 to January 20, 2017. For those 18 days, the DMV files were over-inclusive, transferring more records to our system than should have been, including information for some individuals who are ineligible to vote.

We took immediate steps to halt the transfer of records from DMV to our office on January 20. The DMV has identified and addressed the underlying error and is now investigating the exact scope of the records sent in error. The DMV will identify all records sent in error and we will remove any ineligible voters from the rolls and ensure that those individuals are not able to cast a ballot.

No ineligible voters have been able to cast ballots as a result of these errors.

No person who has been automatically registered through AVR will have to complete any additional paperwork as a result. Eligible voters will remain registered to vote. Those who were mistakenly registered through this coding error have not violated the law and will be purged from the system.

Anyone with questions or concerns can review their registration information online at www.mvp.sec.state.vt.us or should feel free to contact the Secretary of State's office at 802-828-2363. We will provide an update on the exact scope of the issue next week.

We regret the error and look forward to resuming automatic voter registration soon.

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