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For immediate release

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Secretary of State

***PRESS RELEASE***

**New Constitutional Amendment Allows 17-year-olds to Vote in 2012 Primaries**

Montpelier, VT – Secretary of State Jim Condos reminds Vermonters that in the General Election of 2010, Vermont voters overwhelmingly approved a Constitutional Amendment to allow seventeen year olds who will turn eighteen on or before the day of the November General Election to participate in the Presidential Primary and the August Primary for the year that the voter will be eighteen by the General Election.

Three young women, Ellie Beckett, Courtney Mattison and Katie Levasseur, proposed the change. They worked hard to encourage the legislature to pass the amendment that eventually was approved by 80% of the voters.

“Any person who turns 18 on or before November 6, 2012 can register to vote, cast a Presidential Primary ballot on March 6, 2012 (but not a town meeting ballot), and cast a ballot at the August 2012 Primary,” stated Secretary Condos.

However, 17 year olds cannot take the voter’s oath until they turn 18. Once they are 18, they can go to the Town Clerks office to take the oath, take the oath on Election Day at the polling place, or submit a copy of the original application to the voter registration checklist with the oath section completed. (*The Primary Elections are a political party nominating processes so a person can participate before taking the voter’s oath*).

In order to vote in the Presidential Primary at town meeting, eligible potential voters must have their registration forms submitted to their town clerk’s office by **5 pm on Wednesday, February 29th**. Any interested seventeen year olds can obtain an application to the checklist from their town clerk or download one from <http://vermont-elections.org/elections1/VTVoterApp.pdf>.

*Secretary of State Jim Condos has over 20 years of elected public service, including 18 years at the local level and 8 years as a Vermont State Senator, in addition to more than 30 years of private sector business experience.*

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