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**August 10, 2018**

**For immediate release**

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**Vermont Elections Ranked 1<sup>st</sup> Overall in National Index**

*MIT's Election Data & Science Lab Releases Its 2016 Elections Performance Index*

Montpelier, VT – Today Vermont Secretary of State Jim Condos announced that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Election Data & Science Lab has released its 2016 Elections Performance Index (EPI), ranking Vermont 1<sup>st</sup> overall in elections administration for the 2016 election.

The EPI is widely considered by state election administrators as the most reputable elections management index, and provides a non-partisan, data-driven measure of how well each state is performing in managing its national elections work, using a number of indicators ranging from voter turnout to the availability of online tools for voter accessibility.

"I'm very proud of the hard work our office and our Elections Division team have done to achieve a 1<sup>st</sup> overall ranking in the EPI" said Secretary of State Jim Condos. "What this ranking means is that across numerous measures we have increased accessibility, and decreased roadblocks, for Vermont voters, while ensuring that our elections process is functioning effectively as the bedrock of our democracy."

Since the 2012 ranking, Vermont has moved from 38<sup>th</sup> nationally, to 16<sup>th</sup> in the 2014 ranking, to a first-place overall score, rising from 74% to 86% performance across all indicators.

"It is always exciting for us to see scores improve for a state that has worked hard to better its election administration," said Charles Stewart III, founding director of the MIT Election Data & Science Lab and *Kenan Sahin* Distinguished Professor of Political Science at MIT. "Vermont is committed to making election processes more accessible, convenient, and secure for voters - in particular through its adoption of online tools - and we commend them for their efforts."

Almost all states improved their index scores in the 2016 election, compared to 2012. While comparative rankings may change each new index, the EPI provides objective measurements and data on state efforts to improve elections management practices, and can highlight key areas of improvement that may be needed.

"Our focus has been, and will continue to be, making our election systems as accessible and secure for Vermont voters as possible," said Condos. "Our #1 overall ranking and performance increase show that we're on the right path, and we will keep working daily to innovate and improve."

The Elections Performance Index and complete 2016 data can be viewed at <http://elections.mit.edu/>.

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