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DIRECTIVE 2007-05

March 28, 2007

To: ALL COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS
Re: 17-year-old Voters in the May 8 Primary Election

This Directive addresses the voting eligibility of 17-year-old electors, and the ballot that 17-year-old electors are to use in the Tuesday, May 8, 2007 Primary Election.

I. Voting Eligibility

Ohio law allows 17-year-old electors who will be 18 years of age on or before the date of the general election in 2007 to vote *solely* on the *nomination* of candidates. This is because they will be eligible to vote for the nominees for this office at the November general election. Seventeen-year-old voters are *not* permitted to vote on any question or issue on the May primary election ballot as these questions and issues are specific to the election held on the date of the primary election. (R.C. 3503.01, 3503.011, 3503.07) In addition, 17-year-old electors must satisfy Ohio's voter identification requirements in accordance with R.C. 3505.18.

If your county is holding a Special Election on questions or issues only, no 17-year-old elector is permitted to cast a ballot, and it is not necessary to observe the "Form of the Ballot" instructions outlined in Section II of this directive.

Every board of elections must train its pollworkers on these points.

II. Form of the Ballot for 17-year-old Voters

Please review the following options and select one that fits your county's voting system. This directive applies to both absentee and in-person voting:

A. Optical Scan:

1. Provide an optical scan ballot that contains only candidacies and no issues, or
2. Provide 17-year-old electors with a regular optical scan ballot, along with the instructions provided as a separate attachment to this Directive. Under this option, the voter places his or her voted ballot in a sealed envelope. When received, ballots from 17-year-old voters must be segregated. When voted in person at the polling place on Election Day, those sealed envelopes must be returned to the board of elections on election night. Before counting a ballot cast by a 17-year-old, board officials must determine if the ballot was properly cast for only eligible offices. If the ballot contained marks for questions or issues, the team designated by the board must remake the ballot to reflect votes cast only for those eligible offices.

Election officials may **not** give to a 17-year-old elector any ballot that has been previously voted, for example, a ballot that has been marked or overvoted on questions or issues only, even though the 17-year-old is ineligible to vote on such questions or issues.

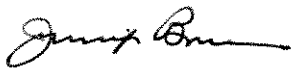
B. DRE Voting Systems:

Boards that use DRE voting systems may allow 17-year-old electors to vote on a DRE using one of the following options:

1. Provide a ballot that contains only the eligible offices, or
2. Provide an optical scan ballot and follow the instructions outlined in one of the Optical Scan options above.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the Elections Division legal staff assigned to your office at (614) 466-2585.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Brunner
Secretary of State

17-YEAR-OLD VOTERS: How to Vote Using an Optical Scan Ballot

As a 17-year-old voter who will be 18 years of age on or before the November general election, you may vote only on the nominations of candidates. This is because you will be eligible to vote for the candidate(s) nominated for these offices at the November general election.

You may NOT vote on any "question" or "issue" on the May primary election ballot, such as a school tax levy, charter amendment or local liquor option, because these questions and issues relate only to this primary election, and you must be at least 18 years of age to vote on them.

Please read the following instructions on how to mark your ballot:

1. Before marking your ballot, make sure that there are not any marks already on it.
2. If there are marks on the ballot, please return the ballot to the election officials for a clean ballot with no marks on it.
3. Read the directions on the unmarked ballot carefully before you vote:
 - ✓ If the ballot allows you to cast **one** vote for a particular office, you may fill in only **one** oval or box on your ballot.
 - ✓ If the ballot allows you to cast more than **one** vote for the same office, you may fill in the maximum amount of ovals or boxes allowed by the directions.
4. Use the marking pen or pencil provided to mark your vote on the optical scan ballot.
5. Completely fill in the oval or box to the **left** of the candidate's name you want to vote for.
6. To cast a vote for a person who has filed to be a **write-in** candidate:
 - ✓ Find the blank line provided on the ballot under the names of candidates listed for a particular office.
 - ✓ Fill in the oval or box to the left of that blank line.
 - ✓ Clearly write the name of the write-in candidate on the blank line. Only votes for person who previously filed with the board of election to become a write-in candidate will be counted.
7. If you have questions, please feel free to ask the election officials for assistance.
8. If you make an error while marking your ballot, please take your ballot to the election officials. The election officials will void that ballot and give you a new one. You may request a new ballot up to three times.
9. Once you have completed marking your ballot and have completely reviewed your ballot to make sure it reflects your wishes, please again make sure you have not marked a question or issue that you are not permitted to vote for, please place your ballot in the envelope given to you and return the envelope with your ballot in it to the election officials.
10. Once you place your ballot in the envelope given to you and return it to the election officials, you may not request another ballot.
11. Your ballot will be sent to the county board of elections with all the other ballots after the polls close. Your ballot does not identify you; your vote is secret. It is placed in the envelope so that election officials at the board of elections can make sure that no 17-year-old accidentally voted on a question or issue.
12. **CONGRATULATIONS!** You have voted for the first time and taken an important first step toward being a lifelong voter and a regular participant in your government. **THANK YOU** for showing good citizenship and voting as soon as you were able.