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STATE OF ILLINOIS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SPRINGFIELD 62706

JIM EDGAR
GOVERNOR

December 30, 1994

Loretta King
Acting Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division
U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20035

Dear Ms. King:

Thank you for your inquiry of December 9. As you noted, the Illinois legislature has indeed adjourned for the year without having adopted legislation amending the Illinois Election Code to reconcile it with the conflicting provisions of National Voter Registration Act of 1993, 42 U.S.C. 1973gg (hereafter "NVRA").

Absent enabling state legislation, the State of Illinois will not be in a position to fully implement the procedures contemplated by the NVRA as of January 1st, 1995.

This does not, however, mean that Illinoisans will encounter difficulties in registering to vote for any election, whether federal, state, or local, as of January 1st. On the contrary, the State of Illinois has in the past and will continue to actively encourage all eligible citizens to register to vote, and to make access to registration as available as possible within the reasonable requirements of existing state law.

As you may know, Illinois has an aggressive voter registration system. There are over 2,700 civic groups in Illinois which have been certified as deputy registrars. In addition, the following persons are entitled to serve as deputy registrars: labor union designees, designated employees of corporations, high school and elementary principals, librarians, college presidents, municipal and township clerks and over 22,000 precinct committeemen. Illinois law authorizes the Departments of Public Aid and Employment Security and the Secretary of State (motor vehicles) to establish deputy registrars within the offices of these agencies that service the general public. The Illinois Department of Public Aid has instituted a pilot program incorporating voter registration activities into the application process for public assistance. The Secretary of State affords voter registration opportunities at each of its 111 Driver Services facilities using state employees who have volunteered to become Deputy Voter Registrars. This Driver Services facilities program, begun in 1991, has registered over 100,000 individuals to vote. In addition to the ongoing efforts of these State agencies, State officials allow local registration groups to independently set up voter registration tables at designated State facilities.

EXHIBIT A

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Among the additional measures the State of Illinois intends to take to help assure access to registration, within the confines of existing state law, include: directing additional state agencies to make space available in state facilities for voter registration drives and groups and dissemination of pamphlets and lists of regional directories of voter registration offices and sites.

Illinois has a well codified and smooth working process of conducting voter registration and voter canvassing. Over 6 million Illinoisans are currently registered to vote. Higher levels of voter registration are sustained by the media outreach efforts and periodic voter registration drives, launched by civic, political and governmental officials. Accurate voter registration lists are maintained through a codified and carefully developed system of voter canvassing and, as appropriate, de-registration or re-registration. Illinois' present procedures for notice to voters whose addresses cannot be confirmed and for placing those voters in suspense files, from which they may be easily restored to active voting status, are similar in purpose and design to the provisions of the NVRA.

In sum, Illinois provides its citizens with many opportunities for simple and convenient voter registration through an aggressive system of outreach, access and information and well codified processes designed to maintain election-related opportunity and integrity.

Sincerely,



William Ghesquiere
Deputy Counsel to the Governor

cc:
Honorable George Ryan
Dr. Ronald Michaelson