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DIRECTIVE 2011-09

February 16, 2011

To: ALL COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS
Re: 17-year-old Voters in the May 3 Primary Election

This Directive addresses the voting eligibility of 17-year-old electors, and the ballot that a 17-year-old elector is to be issued in the Tuesday, May 3, 2011 primary election.

Each board of elections must train its poll workers on the information contained in this Directive.

I. Voting Eligibility

Ohio law allows a 17-year-old elector who will be 18 years of age on or before the date of the next general election to vote in the primary election *solely* on the *nomination* of candidates. (See R.C. 3503.01, 3503.011, 3503.07) This is because the 17-year-old elector will be eligible to vote for the nominees at the November general election. As with every voter, a 17-year-old voter must satisfy Ohio's voter identification requirements.

A 17-year-old voter is *not* permitted to vote on any question or issue on the primary ballot, because these questions and issues are specific to the election held on the date of the primary election.

Please note: If your county is holding only a special election for questions or issues on the day of the primary election, no 17-year-old elector shall be 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.

II. Form of the Ballot

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

A. Optical Scan Voting Systems:

1. Provide an optical scan ballot that contains only the candidacies and no issues, *or*
2. Provide a 17-year-old elector with a regular optical scan ballot, along with the instructions provided as a separate attachment to this Directive. Under this option, the voter will place his or her voted ballot in a sealed envelope. When received, ballots from 17-year-old voters must be segregated. Before counting a ballot cast by a 17-year-old, board officials must determine if the ballot was

properly marked only for eligible offices. If the ballot contains marks for questions or issues, the bipartisan team designated by the board must remake the ballot as a part of the unofficial canvass to reflect votes cast only for those eligible offices.

Election officials may **not** give a 17-year-old elector any ballot that has been pre-marked or overvoted on questions or issues for which the 17-year-old is ineligible to vote.

B. DRE Voting Systems:

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

1. Provide an electronic ballot that contains only the eligible offices, or
2. Provide an optical scan ballot and follow the instructions outlined for Optical Scan ballots above.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact your county's assigned elections counsel at (614) 466-2585.

Sincerely,



Jon Husted

17-YEAR-OLD VOTERS: 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 number of ovals or boxes allowed by the directions.
 - ✓ If you vote for fewer candidates than the maximum number allowed by the directions for a particular office, you have under voted that contest and your vote will be counted.
 - ✓ If you vote for more candidates than the maximum number allowed by the directions for a particular office, you have over voted that contest and your vote for that contest only will NOT be counted.
4. Use the 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 that 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 a person who previously filed with the board of election to become a write-in candidate will be counted.
7. If you have questions, 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 up to two replacement ballots.
9. Once you have completed marking your ballot, review it to make sure it reflects your votes.
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.
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.