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DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

PRESS RELEASE

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For More Information:
Martin Mash 804.864.8941
Martin.Mash@Elections.Virginia.Gov

Virginia Recognized as National Leader in Election Administration

RICHMOND, VA – Virginia’s efforts to modernize election administration have boosted its’ national ranking to third place on The Pew Charitable Trusts’ most recent Election Performance Index (EPI). This substantial increase, from a prior ranking of 19th, reflects Virginia’s ongoing commitment to improve and simplify election administration in the Commonwealth. The EPI is an online interactive tool that allows users to assess state election administration performance across states and over time by evaluating indicators such as the effective use of technology and the rejection of absentee ballots.

“We are thrilled that our efforts to make voting easier for eligible Virginians, while reducing the administrative burden on local election officials, are being recognized,” said Edgardo Cortés, Virginia’s Commissioner of Elections. He added: “Leveraging technology to simplify the process for voters and local election officials is a common sense step that all states should take to ensure a positive voting experience for citizens.”

Virginia’s increase in the latest EPI ranking reflects the addition of online voter registration and other factors such as Virginia’s lower rates of rejected absentee ballots and undeliverable ballots to military and overseas voters, in comparison to other states. While the latest EPI rankings utilize national data through the 2014 election, Virginia continues to make incredible strides in modernizing election administration. These efforts include allowing eligible voters to securely request an absentee ballot online through the Department of Elections Citizen Portal and implementing paperless, electronic voter registration at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

The rise in the Commonwealth’s EPI rankings came as no surprise to the Voter Registrars Association of Virginia (VRAV). “This achievement is a direct result of the partnership between the Virginia Department of Elections under the capable leadership of Commissioner Cortés and local Directors of Election.” stated Tracy Howard, VRAV President. “This ongoing partnership results in a shared statewide mission for superior election services for all Virginians. The Department’s technological innovations offer an additional path for local offices to provide exemplary citizen services.”

For more information about the Department of Elections or to visit the Citizen Portal, please visit www.vote.virginia.gov. For more information about The Pew Charitable Trusts Election Performance Index, please visit <http://www.pewtrusts.org/epi>.

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