2012 ELECTION CYCLE – BEGINS NOW

Be an active voter. Start thinking about your participation in the U.S. 2012 elections today!

The Consular Section staff at U.S. Embassy Singapore is ready to assist with completing your Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) -- the form you need to complete **this year** to participate in the 2012 elections as an overseas absentee voter. Our purpose is to inform and educate you about your voting rights, to ensure you are able to exercise your right to participate in elections for federal offices (President, Vice President, Senator, and Representative), and to assist you with voting in state or local elections, if allowed by your state.

New absentee voting laws are in effect for the 2012 elections. You will no longer automatically receive ballots based on a previous absentee ballot request. All U.S. citizens outside the United States who want to vote by absentee ballot in the 2012 primary and general elections must complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) every year if they wish to vote from abroad. States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before an election. No matter what state you vote in, you can now ask your local election officials to provide your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your state). You can now also confirm your registration and ballot delivery on-line. Be sure to include your email address on the form to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery option. This is the fastest and most reliable way to receive your ballot on time, and we strongly recommend every overseas voter take advantage of it. Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website www.FVAP.gov.

Beginning in January 2012, presidential primaries will be held in the states of New Hampshire (January 10), South Carolina (January 21), Florida (January 31), Missouri (February 7), Wisconsin (February 21), Arizona (February 28), and Michigan (February 28). Other states will follow throughout the spring and summer. Voter registration deadlines for primaries are as early as January 3, 2012. Note: Participation in party presidential caucuses by overseas voters is not protected by federal law and requires in-person attendance in most cases. If the party you are affiliated with selects presidential nominees by caucus in your state contact state party officials for further information.

You can obtain a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) at FVAP's website. The FPCA is accepted by all local election officials in all U.S. states and territories. It allows you to register to vote and request absentee ballots for all elections for federal offices (presidential and state primaries, run-off, special, and the November general elections) during the course of the year. An online wizard will help you complete the form. Depending on your state's voting requirements, you then either send in the FPCA electronically or mail it to your local election officials. To mail it, print out the completed FPCA and the (U.S.) postage-paid envelope containing the address of your local election officials. If you bring in your forms or ballots to us we will mail them back home for you without you having to pay for international mail. If it's easier for you to use Singapore's postal system, be sure to affix sufficient postage and allow sufficient time for international mail delivery.

Even if your state does not have a presidential primary in the early months of 2012, it is important that you submit a new Federal Post Card Application this and every January to receive all absentee ballots for which you are eligible. By applying early, you also allow enough time for election officials to contact you and resolve any questions or problems with your registration/ballot request.

Remember that your vote counts, and that many U.S. elections within the past ten years have been decided by a margin of victory of less than 0.1%. All states are required to count every absentee ballot as long as it's valid and reaches local election officials by the absentee ballot receipt deadline.

Be an Educated Voter. Check out the FVAP links page for helpful resources that will aid your research of candidates and issues. Non-partisan information about candidates, their voting records, and their positions on issues are widely available and easy to obtain via numerous websites such as Project Smart Voter. You can also read national and hometown newspapers on-line, or search the Internet to locate articles and information. For information about election dates and deadlines, subscribe to FVAP's Voting Alerts (vote@fvap.gov). FVAP also shares Voting Alerts via Facebook and Twitter.

If you have any questions about registering to vote overseas, please contact the U.S. Embassy Singapore's Voting Assistance Officer at +65 6476- 9251 or at votesingapore@state.gov .

END U.S. CITIZEN MESSAGE