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**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS LAUNCHES THE “JOIN THE PARTY”  
CAMPAIGN FOR THE MARCH 15, 2016 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION**

(Cleveland) The Board of Elections and its community partners have launched the “Join the Party” voter education campaign. The goal of the campaign is to make sure voters do not miss this opportunity to join the political party of their choice or to be a nonpartisan voter. In Ohio, the only method voters may utilize to establish or change their party affiliation is by voting in a partisan primary election. People may also choose to vote an issues-only ballot if they prefer to be considered a nonpartisan voter.



Last year over 150,000 Democrats and nearly 27,000 Republicans lost their party affiliation because they did not vote in a primary election for more than two years. “This makes voting in the March 15th election extremely important for people who want to be affiliated with a political party,” said Pat McDonald the Director of the Board of Elections. “People who don’t vote in March may not get another chance for two years to establish or to change their party affiliation. I encourage everyone to join the party and vote,” said McDonald.

The ballot choices for voters are: Democrat, Republican, Green, Issues Only, and other.

The Board of Elections’ community partners will help spread the word that it is important for people to exercise their right to vote, and it is required to maintain or re-establish a voter’s political party affiliation. The Board of Elections will provide pre-produced voter education materials for the partners to share on their communications platforms. This includes e-mail, social media, newsletters and distribution of printed materials in high-traffic public buildings and offices.

**VoterNotify is part of the Campaign**

The Board and the community partners will also encourage voters to Join the Party by visiting the Board’s website: [www.443VOTE.com](http://www.443VOTE.com) to sign-up to receive Board of Elections e-mails and/or text messages through the VoterNotify program.



The VoterNotify messages will include: reminding voters of important deadlines, confirming the Board has mailed and then received their ballots, and reminding them to vote early or on Election Day.

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