

From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

March 5, 2003

For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Larry Perosino Beth Perfetto

860/509-6259 860/509-6228

MARCH DESIGNATED NATIONAL YOUNG VOTERS MONTH

Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz announced that March has been designated National Young Voters Month (NYVM). The National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) established NYVM in an effort to highlight young voter issues and existing outreach programs. The campaign seeks to encourage 18-24 year olds to register, vote and volunteer their time on Election Day.

“Encouraging young people to become more involved in their democracy is one of the most important responsibilities I have as Secretary of the State,” said Bysiewicz. “The growing cynicism and distrust by young people toward government and politics is a trend that must be reversed.”

First established in May 2001 as “National High School Voter Registration Month”, NASS decided to broaden the appeal to college students and add a variety of activities to traditional registration drives.

National Young Voters Month will also give Bysiewicz an opportunity to inform the public about some of the provisions of the “Help America Vote Act” (HAVA) which was authored by Connecticut Senator Christopher Dodd and signed into law by President Bush. Bysiewicz plans specifically, to take advantage of HAVA incentives for states to recruit and train high school and college students to become poll workers.

Secretary Bysiewicz kicked off National Young Voters Month on March 4 with a visit to Bridgeport Central High School in conjunction with the Connecticut-based World Wrestling Entertainment’s (WWE) “Smackdown Your Vote!” campaign. WWE is partnering with NASS to promote NYVM.