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## **FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM PARTNERS WITH TURBOVOTE TO EXPAND VOTER OUTREACH AT STATE COLLEGES**

Tallahassee, FL —The Florida College System (FCS) is proud to announce a new partnership with the non-partisan, non-profit organization TurboVote to increase voter engagement statewide. Through this partnership, state colleges throughout the state of Florida will use TurboVote’s innovative “one-stop-shop” voter engagement platform to institutionalize voter engagement and make sure that students have all the materials and information they need in order to vote in every election.

"TurboVote’s platform represents an important and innovative piece of the effort to increase civic literacy and engagement through digital technology,” said Dr. James Henningsen, Chairman of the FCS Council of Presidents . “In partnering with TurboVote, the Florida College System has access to a virtually effortless system to make voter registration and voter participation available to all 850,000 students enrolled in Florida’s state colleges. This project is an ideal fit for our Civics Education Initiative launched last fall to advance civics literacy and civic engagement on our campuses.”

TurboVote is an electronic system that helps colleges and universities meet federal mandates that require institutions provide students with voter registration information. When students sign up, TurboVote keeps track of all their elections—local, state and national. If students wish to register, update their addresses or request absentee ballots, TurboVote sends them all the forms and information they need with pre-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes. For every election, TurboVote sends text message and email reminders to all users with important election information, dates and deadlines, to ensure that they never miss another election.

Made possible by funding from the Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions at St. Petersburg College and the Knight Foundation, this statewide effort is the first system-wide project of the Florida College System Civic Literacy Initiative, which was launched at a forum hosted in October by the Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions at St. Petersburg College. The initiative aims to make civic engagement a part of the student experience of every student in the FCS system.

“This partnership sends an important message to institutional leaders that democratic engagement should be a part of every student’s college education,” said Dr. Dennis Gallon, president of Palm Beach State College and chair of the TurboVote Committee of the FCS Council of Presidents .

TurboVote's technology makes it possible for FCS institutions to integrate a voter engagement platform into established systems and student interactions. They will be able to conduct voter engagement without collecting or submitting a single form. Simply by sharing a link, schools can embed voter engagement into existing processes such as freshman orientation and class registration.

The effort builds upon a number of highly successful institutional TurboVote partnerships across the higher education sector in the Florida and across the nation. Since 2012, over 11,000 Florida students have used TurboVote to get engaged in elections through partnerships at 11 institutions including Miami Dade College and Tallahassee Community College. Since launching its college partnerships program at Harvard University and Miami Dade College in January 2012, TurboVote's partnerships program has grown to include over 125 institutions nationwide including 35 participating institutions in the state of Florida.

The Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions based at St. Petersburg College will coordinate roll-out of the TurboVote system through FCS. The Institute, designated by the Legislature as a statewide center, serves as the clearing house for the Civics Education Initiative, hosting its workshops and maintaining a website where best practices in civics education are shared throughout the system.

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*TurboVote is a project of Democracy Works, a nonpartisan 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Brooklyn, N.Y., that is passionate about building the democracy of the future. TurboVote is a service that makes voting easy. When students sign up, TurboVote keeps track of all their elections—local, state and national. If students wish to register, update their addresses or request absentee ballots, TurboVote sends them all the forms and information they need with pre-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes. For every election, TurboVote sends text message and email reminders to all users with important election information, dates and deadlines, to ensure that they never miss another election.*

*The Florida College System provides access to high-quality education and job training that responds to community and state needs. It is the primary point of access to higher education in Florida, with 65 percent of the state's high school graduates pursuing postsecondary education beginning at a Florida college, and 82 percent of freshman and sophomore minority students in public higher education attending one of Florida's 28 colleges.*

*The Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions at St. Petersburg is a resource for academic enrichment, a non-partisan venue for civil, objective debate of topical public issues, a center to promote better government, and a resource for sustainable economic development. Its mission is to support a broad array of research, training, educational and policy analysis and support activities at the local, state, regional and national levels.*

