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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 8, 2010**

**FRANKLIN COUNTY REPORTS STRONG DEMAND FOR ABSENTEE BALLOTS**

**(Columbus)** Numbers released this morning by the Franklin County Board of Elections show 77,764 voters have requested absentee ballots by mail since applications to vote early for the May 4, 2010 primary election were mailed to the county's active registered voters over two weeks ago.

"This is a strong response for the first week of early voting," said board of elections Director Bill Anthony. "Voters clearly like the idea of casting ballots early and by mail, especially when the return postage on the voted ballot is prepaid by the county."

The county is providing return envelopes with pre-paid postage for voters to send their completed ballots back to the board of elections.

"The 3,300 absentee voters who received a red challenge of right to vote form with their ballot must complete the form and return it in their postage paid return envelope but not with their ballot inside the identification envelope," added Deputy Director Matt Damschroder. "Voters who are switching from Republican or Democrat in 2008 to the opposition party this year will need to complete the challenge statement whether voting by mail or at the polls on Election Day. "

Absentee applications to vote by mail are available online at <http://vote.franklincountyohio.gov> or by phoning the board of elections at 462-3100. Voters also have the option of casting absentee ballots in person at the board of elections weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through May 3 and on Saturday, May 1 from 8 a.m. to noon.

Voted ballots returned by mail are due at the board of elections by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day or by May 14 if postmarked by May 3.

Polls will be open on Election Day, May 4, from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. as party voters nominate candidates for federal, state and local offices to appear on the general election ballot in November. Two constitutional amendments, local tax levies, bond issues and liquor options will be on party and "issues only" ballots as well.

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