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For immediate release

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Students support Elections Alberta recommendation of Vote Anywhere polls for post-secondaries

Edmonton, Alberta – At a meeting of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices held last week in Edmonton, Glen Resler, Chief Electoral Officer for Elections Alberta, presented a number of proposed recommendations including the implementation of Vote Anywhere polls and deleting the requirement for a 6 month residency for Alberta electors. The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) has been pleased to work with Elections Alberta in the past on increasing voter accessibility for post-secondary students and applauds these new recommendations.

“During the 2012 provincial elections, CAUS ran an incredibly successful Get Out the Vote campaign that saw thousands of students register to vote,” said Navneet Khinda, chair of the Council of Alberta University Students and VP External at the University of Alberta Students' Union. “We know students are extremely passionate about the issues that affect them and their families, however it is often difficult for them to cast a ballot due to residency restrictions as well as the host of competing demands on their busy student schedules.”

The Vote Anywhere concept would allow students attending post-secondary institutions in Alberta to cast a ballot for their home riding at a station located on their campus. The proposed recommendations would be another step forward in increasing youth voter turnout and would help to further eliminate barriers for students wishing to cast a ballot for the riding in which they consider themselves residing in.

“Vote Anywhere advanced polls on post-secondary campuses across our province would allow students to have more flexibility in making time to vote, while the elimination of the 6 month Alberta residency requirement would ensure that students who have recently arrived in our province to live and study would be able to participate in the democratic process.” said Khinda.

While legislative changes are required in order for this system to be implemented, Elections Alberta is hoping to see several of the recommendations enacted before the next general election. CAUS believes these changes would assist Alberta in moving to an electoral system that ensures students are able to vote freely and conveniently all across the province.

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The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) represents the interests of students at MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, and the University of Lethbridge.

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