(Insert Letter Head)

 (Date)

Dear Field Instructor:

I am writing to request your participation in voter registration efforts supported by the School of Social Work and the Field Education office.

We believe that social workers play an important role in the political empowerment of clients through voter registration, mobilization and education. There are many benefits to our clients and communities when citizens are registered and encouraged to vote. The attached fact sheet from the University of Connecticut highlight these gains, including higher levels of civic engagement, stronger connections to communities and better outcomes in the areas of individual well-being, such as health, and employment. Additionally, a Florida study reported significantly lower recidivism rates for ex-offenders whose voting rights were restored demonstrating the importance of this basic civil right.

Most social service agencies have access to populations that are disproportionately underrepresented in elections, including young people, minority and low-income groups. Registering and encouraging clients to vote is a tangible form of empowerment. It represents a critical aspect of our NASW Code of Ethics: “to engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to resources, employment, services and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully.”

Students (note which here) will be trained in nonpartisan voter registration, education and outreach as part of the curriculum, including:

* The benefits of voting and the connection to empowerment, as emphasized in the Code of Ethics;
* The relevance of voting to social work, including voting as a human right and the profession’s history in voter engagement;
* The meaning of nonpartisan voter engagement and difference from partisan political activity; and
* Methods of incorporating nonpartisan voter registration, education and outreach in field settings, including the rules that apply to nonprofits and public organizations.

Students will have an assignment to discuss with you ways in which your organization might support voting. There is no mandate to implement these activities, although we strongly encourage students to do so when they can.

For more information or resources on voting, please visit www.VotingIsSocialWork.org. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at (phone number) or (email).

Sincerely,

(Name)

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cc: (name), Dean

(Name), Director of Field Education