

Connecticut Town Clerks Association, Inc.

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Written Testimony

Mark H. Bernacki, New Britain Town & City Clerk

Connecticut Town Clerks Association – Legislative Committee, Chair

HB 6325, AN ACT CONCERNING THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE, ABSENTEE BALLOTS AND ELECTION AUDITS

Government, Administration & Elections (GAE) Committee

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Good afternoon Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, Senator Sampson, Representative Mastrofrancesco, and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. My name is Mark H. Bernacki. I am the New Britain Town & City Clerk and chair of the Connecticut Town Clerks Association (CTCA) Legislative & Elections Committee. Thank you for affording me the opportunity to submit this testimony regarding **HB 6325, AN ACT CONCERNING THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE, ABSENTEE BALLOTS AND ELECTION AUDITS**.

The year 2020 was a trying time for all Connecticut residents. In addition to navigating through a deadly pandemic Connecticut was tasked with executing two Elections, one in August and the General Election in November.

CTCA supports Section 9 for the creation of a Legislative Task Force to reexamine absentee ballot statutes and determine the role of absentee ballots in future elections.

CTCA respectfully requests that two Town Clerks, one from a large town the other from a small town, be appointed to this Task Force. Small and large towns are confronted with their own unique challenges due to the complexities of their election infrastructure. If possible, CTCA respectfully recommends that an IT representative from either the state or a large town be asked to provide guidance as technology will be heavily relied upon for all future elections. Few have the expertise to weigh in on issues of cybersecurity, portals or block chain technology.

CTCA will continue to set a high standard in the integrity of our Connecticut elections. An open and transparent election system must be ensured to give the public the confidence in their elections, the proper handling and tabulation of absentee ballots and the final determined election results.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.