

To the members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee,

I am writing to you in support of both HJ58 and HJ59 to allow Connecticut residents greater access to the ballot through early voting opportunities and no-excuse absentee ballots. As we all learned this year, voting is a right, not a privilege. Limiting access to the vote is a form of voter suppression, so our state must do everything possible to make it easier for every registered voter in CT to cast a ballot.

Connecticut is one of the few states that has not expanded access beyond election day as 40 states allow early voting, 33 allow no-excuse absentee ballots, 5 states use mail-in ballots for all elections and 10 more allow them for special elections. Sadly, Connecticut is clearly in the minority regarding single-day election and excuse-only absentee ballots.

In 2020, Connecticut had a record turnout for the election with almost 80% of eligible voters casting a ballot. That is something we should all be proud of. We should also take these steps, and frankly more, to ensure that every voter has the ability to make their voice heard in our elections. This is the underpinning of our democracy. It is very clear in recent weeks that every lawmaker needs to be doing more to strengthen our voices and ensure that no one can cancel our vote. Enfranchising voters is a big step to strengthen confidence that our elected officials actually reflect the will of the population they serve.

Please support not only HJ 58 and 59, but all efforts to enfranchise voters, such as HB-5884 Ranked Choice Voting, and make our elected officials reflect the views of the electorate.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Wendy Anderson-Brachfeld
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