

Testimony in SUPPORT of: HJ 58: Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting HJ 59: Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for Early Voting

Dear GAE Committee Co-Chairs Sen. Flexer and Rep. Fox, Vice-Chairs Sen. Haskell and Rep. Thomas and Ranking Members Sen. Sampson and Rep. Mastrofrancesco and Members of the GAE Committee,

Please vote YES on HJ 58 in SUPPORT of a Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting which would allow all registered voters to choose to vote by absentee ballot; and in SUPPORT of HJ 59 Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for Early Voting which would allow voters to choose to vote early.

Voting is fundamental to a representative democracy. Connecticut is so behind the successful model set by other states. The recipe is simple:

1. People must be allowed to vote! Personal, business and family responsibilities overlap across the 24x7 schedule. To believe that time and physical presence must be bound to traditional views of "Election Day" and "polling places" is discriminatory to those in our society without the privilege of being to be able to "show up" in the ways we did more than a century ago!
2. The programs for early and no-excuse absentee ballots in other states WORK WELL. The facts prove this.
3. In this technology-driven age, many things we do today rely on verifying someone's identity when they are not physically present. We can bank, buy things, consult with doctors, and do other communications where identity is important. There is no reason we can not implement solid processes, trustworthy stewards of those processes and proven technologies to make this happen. We did a lot in the last election in this regard.

I am left to believe that anyone who doesn't support this bill is either intending to suppress the vote or ignorant of basic process and technology controls. The effect on Connecticut and on the citizens of the state has already been felt in terms of low turnout and disenfranchised people. People come and stay places they feel supported and wanted. This is a very important part of the equation.

The time is NOW.

Thank you for your attention.

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