



Luke A. Bronin
Mayor

February 21, 2021

Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, Senator Sampson, Representative Mastrofrancesco, and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **H.J. No. 58, Resolution Proposing A State Constitutional Amendment To Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting and H.J. No. 59, Resolution Approving An Amendment To The State Constitution To Allow For Early Voting.**

As you may know, Connecticut is one of only a handful of states that does not allow early voting or no-excuse absentee voting for its residents. These two resolutions represent significant and vital reforms to election administration in our state that would dramatically expand access to the ballot box. When it comes to election administration, no matter what political party we support, we should begin with the basic principle that when more people vote, our democracy is stronger. That's why we should make it as easy and convenient as possible.

Voting in-person on election day should be an option for all residents, but there's no good reason why it should be the only option – and in almost every other state, it's not. The percentage of voters voting on election day has been steadily declining over the last several decades, and in the 2016 presidential election, forty-one percent of all ballots were cast before election day.¹ In eight states, more than half the votes are cast by mail, and Oregon has operated elections exclusively using mailed ballots for two decades now, sending out more than 100 million ballots with only about a dozen cases of proven fraud.² Early voting is another option that's widely used in America, and Connecticut is one of just four states that does not allow any type of early voting.³

Implementing no-excuse absentee voting and early voting will lower the barrier to entry for our democracy and make election-day operations smoother – without jeopardizing the integrity of our elections. While some have concerns about no-excuse absentee voting in particular, we should respond to those concerns by looking at the data. No-excuse absentee voting has been studied extensively, and according to the Brennan Center, “the level of malfeasance related to mail balloting is infinitesimally small.”⁴

Overall, these two resolutions are strong, proven, pro-democracy reforms that deserve broad support. I strongly encourage the members of this Committee and the General Assembly to support these resolutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luke A. Bronin", written over a horizontal line.

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¹ U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Newly Released 2016 Election Administration and Voting Survey Provides Snapshot of Nation's Voter Turnout Registration Trends Voting Systems, [June 29, 2017](#).

² New York Times, Editorial, “The 2020 Election Won't Look Like Any Other We've Seen Before,” [March 21, 2020](#).

³ The Guardian, “Which U.S. States Make it Hardest to Vote,” [January 21, 2020](#).

⁴ The Brennan Center for Justice, “Mail Ballot Security Features: A Primer,” [October 16, 2020](#).

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