

Audrey Castell Watts  
58 Park Terrace Ave  
West Haven, CT 06516

CT Legislature  
State Capital  
Hartford, CT 06106

I am writing to express strong support of bill HJ-58 for Expanded Access to Absentee Ballots and HJ-59 for Early Voting. These two voting reforms are long overdue. Connecticut is currently one of the only states to not have these voting access provisions for its' constituents. Many other states have early voting and even statewide mail-in voting. Limiting voting to one single day in the middle of a work week reduces the amount of Connecticut residents who can participate in their right to the voting process regularly. Limiting the access to absentee ballots to very specific criteria removes another option for access for people who are disabled, who lack resources to travel to their polling location, or those who have work schedules that are not conducive to participating in the limited in person voting options. This access issue is also a racial justice issue as data shows significant percentages of people who identify as people of color are also those who are employed in large shift workers, single parents, and low-income people are most limited in ability to participate in voting when it is restricted to a one day, in person option. I am strongly encouraging the legislature to pass these much-needed voting reforms to support equity at the ballot box and encourage all Connecticut residents to have the ability to participate in exercising their right to vote in a way that is attainable in their lives without undue burden.