

Dear Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee,

My name is Mary Doherty, I live in Southbury, CT, and I am in strong support of HJ 58, A RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO PERMIT NO EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING.

It is well beyond time that Connecticut updates its elections laws and offers CT voters options as to when and how they vote. I recently heard Carol Reimers, President of the League of Women Voters in CT, state that every CT voter should have the following 3 options when voting: 1) vote in person at their polling place on Election Day; 2) vote in person at a polling place during an Early Voting period; or 3) vote by absentee ballot and return their completed ballot to the secure ballot drop box in their town or by US mail. I wholeheartedly agree with Ms. Reimers.

The voting experience in CT leaves much to be desired, and it does not fare well when compared to voters' experience in other states. 68% of US states allow voters to vote by absentee ballot without an excuse, but CT requires an excuse. The acceptable excuses are very limited and prevent people from truly having an option outside of voting at the polls on Election Day.

I am a constituent of House District (HD) 69. Six thousand, seven hundred fifty-six (6,756) absentee votes were counted in HD 69 in November 2020. That is 43.7% of the total votes cast! The breakdown of absentee votes cast according to party affiliation are as follows: 2,676 Democrats; 1,548 Republicans; 2,414 Unaffiliated voters; and 118 voters enrolled in other political parties. This is evidence that CT voters across the political spectrum want the option to vote absentee ***without the burden of meeting a severely limiting set of criteria to do so.***

American voters in all 50 states are experiencing anti-democratic fallout from The Big Lie about the Presidential Election of 2020. The truth is President Joe Biden won the 2020 election by more than seven million votes. Many Americans and elected officials cannot accept this truth. Consequently, some state legislators are simultaneously fighting against common sense ways to make voting more accessible (e.g. HJ-58, No Excuse Absentee Voting) while actively working to introduce legislation to suppress our vote. They are spreading disinformation and misinformation to accomplish their goal. We cannot let these anti-democratic actors prevail. Vote "yes" on HJ 58.

Thank you.
Mary Doherty
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HD 69 & SD 32