

Gilbert C. Donovan

Fairfield, CT

Senator Flexer,

Representative Fox,

Ranking members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco , and

Distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections
Committee

All Connecticut citizens should want the broadest possible participation in our elections to ensure that representation in our government and government policy is most reflective of what the citizens of Connecticut desire. Connecticut is one of only 7 states that do not permit either early voting or no excuse absentee voting. There is no justification for this impediment to voting. When voting is restricted to only one voting day and in person voting is required (unless you meet a few, inflexible exceptions), and that one day is a work day, it can become very difficult or impossible for a voter to make it to the voting site during voting hours. All manner of things can come up on this one voting day, like a family emergency or unscheduled baby - sitting duty, sudden illness, unanticipated lack of transportation or transportation delays, or just plain exhaustion. The majority of states in our country have figured this out and now permit early voting and no excuse absentee voting. Expanded absentee voting during the last election in CT was very popular (1/3 of votes were on absentee ballots) and resulted in record breaking voter participation in Connecticut. Polls show majorities in all parties strongly support early voting and no excuse absentee voting.

It is time for CT to approve early voting and no excuse absentee voting. Making it easier to vote reflects our values as believers in democracy. It is also time to ensure that winning candidates better reflect the will of the majority. That is what Ranked Choice Voting offers, so I am also asking you to vote HB-5884, the Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Ranked Choice Voting., out of your committee. The respected and non partisan American Academy of Arts and Sciences recommended RVC in its report, Reinventing Democracy for the 21st Century.

Leading conservative voices like Norm Ornstein and the late Senator John McCain endorse Ranked Choice Voting.

Thank you for considering these important voting and election reforms.

Sincerely,

Gilbert C. Donovan

Fairfield, CT

2-22-21