

February 20, 2021

Dear Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

I am opposed to the bills listed on the February 22, 2021 agenda. I am referring to:

H.J. No. 58 -Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No- Excuse Absentee voting

H.J. No. 59- Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for early voting.

I believe the No-Excuse option encourages and values convenience over security and confidence in elections. It is a simple fact that mail-in ballots are more vulnerable to being altered, stolen or forged. Election integrity is the very foundation of our democracy. Simply because other states allow No-Excuse voting does not mean that it is the best method. I believe that in-person voting is infinitely more secure and should be the rule with the request for absentee ballots the exception.

Expanding early voting, which goes hand in hand with No-Excuse mail in voting, is pointless and creates an opportunity for ballots to never arrive or to be hanging around or potentially disappear.

Furthermore, the voter registry is not up to date as I received ballots is the last election for two people who have not lived at my home for several years.

Voting should be done in each individual municipality under appropriate supervision and record keeping. In the case of national elections results should be recorded and submitted individually by each town to be tallied. Under no circumstances should mail-in votes simply be mailed to a central location

The risks of H.J. NO. 58 & H.J. NO. 59 outweigh the benefits especially over the long term. Already many political candidates run unopposed and weakening confidence in elections is sure to exacerbate the problem as well as more voters simply being discouraged to vote at all. The goal should be to promote an engaged citizenry not a disenfranchised, apathetic one. Please do not weaken the election process that is in place.

<https://www.heritage.org/election-integrity/commentary/americas-hidden-voting-epidemic-mail-ballot-failures>

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kathryn Farnsworth

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