

## **Testimony in support of HJ-58**

February 19, 2021

Dear Government Administration and Elections Committee,

I am writing in support of HJ-58, Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting. My name is Wende Feller; I am a resident of New Haven and a registered voter in the state of Connecticut.

Since moving to Connecticut from Arizona in 2018, I can honestly say that I haven't missed 70-degree winters, suburban sprawl, or southwestern food. The one thing I have missed is no-excuse absentee voting. When Arizona implemented no-excuse absentee voting, I signed up immediately, as my urban neighborhood had been underserved by in-person polling places, and I looked forward to skipping the lines. For the six years until I moved here, my ballots arrived in a timely manner, I was able to research issues as I filled out the ballot, and I never had problems with lost or uncounted ballots.

A well-run no-excuse absentee voting system is a huge boon for situations when a voter faces unexpected barriers, whether illness, business travel, family responsibilities, work deadlines, or weather. No-excuse absentee voting allowed me to treat voting as the vital civic responsibility that it is, *every* election, no matter what.

While I frankly enjoy walking to my neighborhood polling place here in New Haven and stopping for coffee on the way home, I would switch to permanent no-excuse absentee in a heartbeat, as it means no repeats of the time I had to miss a vital mayoral election for a last-minute work meeting in New York. I used the official drop box for my ballot during the two pandemic elections and can say that it works fine.

Sincerely,

Wende Feller  
New Haven, CT