

Dear GAE Committee:

My name is Sunghi Frauen. My husband, a retired military officer, and I moved to CT over 20 years. As a naturalized citizen, I consider voting a sacred right that should be accessible to all legal citizens. As a CT resident, I oppose Joint Resolutions 58 and 59, and want to thank Senator Rob Sampson, Dominic Rapini, as well as others for articulating my concerns so clearly. The fact that “most other states are doing it” should NOT inform the way we vote. That’s not how we make decisions as parents, that’s not how we should make decisions as citizens.

When both my parents suffered strokes that left both partially paralyzed, within months of each other, I brought them into my home and was their primary caretaker for over 10 years. They received absentee votes and were able to vote in every election. And until COVID, my husband commuted into the city, had long work hours, yet managed to vote in every election. He got to the voting booth early OR he let his work know he would be late and explained why. He never got push back for taking the time to vote. And if it was a problem, he would have gotten an absentee ballot based on his absence “during all of the hours of the hours of voting”. I’m not making light of anyone else’s stories, I’m providing my personal experience to illustrate that everyone has an anecdote to fit their narrative.

As a first-generation immigrant from a low-income background, who lived for many years with her family (including my maternal grandmother) in a one-bedroom apartment in Delaware where Biden was senator, I fully understand what it means to be poor and disenfranchised, having faced racial prejudice from whites and blacks alike. And I will tell you these CT House resolutions will create disenfranchisement among CT residents who will increasingly feel that voter integrity is at risk.

I’ve heard Madame Secretary say that our CT records are as “accurate as they need to be” and – I’m paraphrasing – that the 2020 Election showed how well loosening absentee standards worked... That worries me because I saw a 2020 election that did show vulnerabilities. And I oppose the joint resolutions that propose changing our Constitution – the idea of discussing it after the fact defies logic. At the end of the day, depending on your agenda, you’ll opt for the opportunity to add certain voters at the expense of others. I am all for having every legitimate vote count and for maximum voter accessibility, but let’s do it the right way. And let’s start by cleaning up our voter rolls, and fixing other existing issues that Ms. Crouch and others have brought up, including having the Secretary focus on educating the public on the existing laws and accommodations. Let’s get that done before we’re asked to make fundamental changes to our Constitution – costly changes that we taxpayers will have to pay, and changes that may have negative, unintended consequences.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Sincerely,
Sunghi Pak Frauen

SUNGHI PAK FRAUEN – GAE TESTIMONY re: CT HJ58 and HJ59