

**Testimony in SUPPORT of:**

**HJ 58: Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting**

**HJ 59: Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for Early Voting**

Dear GAE Committee Co-Chairs Sen. Flexer and Rep. Fox, Vice Chairs Sen. Haskell and Rep. Thomas, and Ranking Members Sen. Sampson and Rep. Mastrofrancesco and Members of the GAE Committee,

There were few ‘silver linings’ to this year of COVID. However, the pandemic did give Connecticut voters an opportunity to see the General Assembly and election officials across the state step up to meet the challenge of ensuring that ALL voters could make their electoral preferences known in the 2020 elections. Facilitating absentee voting was a true testament to the Legislature’s commitment to our representative government. It was also proof-in-action that no-excuse absentee voting is a practical option for Connecticut. The public’s appreciation of opening up no-excuse absentee voting as a choice is clear: Over one-third (35.43%) of votes cast in the November 2020 election were cast by absentee ballot, according to the Secretary of State’s office.

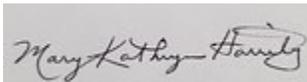
Now, it is time to enshrine no-excuse absentee balloting in Connecticut’s election laws – and to add early voting. I’m retired, so I had the flexibility to go to the polls on November 3<sup>rd</sup> without jeopardizing a job or struggling to find childcare or eldercare in order to exercise my American right to vote. But not so for my nieces and nephew who have to juggle working full-time at demanding jobs with raising families. Having the option in future elections to vote early in person would show respect for working people like them. The very working people politicians on the campaign trail constantly assert that they value.

The 2020 vote proved that Connecticut can now leave the 18th century and move into the 21st by continuing to facilitate the widest possible access to the vote for all registered voters.

In the words of Abraham Lincoln, “Elections belong to the people.” Please let the voters decide how they want to exercise their right to vote.

Please vote **YES** on **HJ 58** in **SUPPORT** of a **Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting** which would allow **all** registered voters to choose to **vote by absentee ballot** and in **SUPPORT** of **HJ 59 Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for Early Voting** which would allow all registered voters to choose to **vote early**.

Sincerely,



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