

RE: Testimony **IN SUPPORT** of **HJ58**, “RESOLUTION PROPOSING A STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ALLOW NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING.”, **HJ59**, “RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING.” and **HB5884**, “AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY RANKED-CHOICE VOTING.”

Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, ranking members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco and distinguished Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

I am writing **IN SUPPORT** of **HJ58**, “RESOLUTION PROPOSING A STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ALLOW NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING.”, **HJ59**, “RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING.” and **HB5884**, “AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY RANKED-CHOICE VOTING.”

It is unfair to Connecticut voters that we are one of only seven states that does not allow either early voting or no-excuse absentee voting. We should be making it easier, not more difficult, to vote. I'd like to see Election Day be a National Holiday!

The extreme circumstances of covid and the political atmosphere aside, no-excuse absentee voting was wildly popular last year, with one-third of all ballots cast absentee. Despite the logistical challenges, state and local election officials did an amazing job. Expanded access to absentee voting led to record-breaking voter participation rates across the state, in fact across the country! That is particularly of interest with the great influx of people that have moved to our fair state in the past several months. Polls show that both early voting and no excuse absentee voting enjoy overwhelming public support from Connecticut voters, regardless of party affiliation.

To strengthen our democracy, we need to do more than make it easier to vote; we need to ensure that winning candidates better reflect the will of the majority. That's what Ranked Choice Voting offers, and it's why I'm also asking you to vote HB-5884, the Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Ranked Choice Voting, out of your committee. I believe Rank Choice Voting helps give weight to the importance of people's vote that they feel it no longer has and perhaps more people will vote. I believe instead of voting party line people will start to vote for substance and issues and we might learn what the voters really want versus the rhetoric and hype that has been driving politics for far too long and into this very dark place where we have arrived – I'm thinking of January 6, 2021.

Thank you for considering these important voting and election reforms.

Sincerely,

Mary Hogue  
Fairfield, CT