

February 22nd, 2021

Dear members of the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee,

My name is Dominique Johnson and I am a voter from Norwalk. Passing both HJ 58, a Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Permit No-Excuse Absentee Voting; and HJ 59, a Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Permit Early Voting are extremely important to me so we can strengthen our democracy for future generations.

Folks I know from across the political spectrum in states with mail-in voting like Oregon all agree that mail-in voting is a value add for their civic participation and their ability to safely and securely cast their votes without unnecessary barriers, including not having to take time off of work to exercise their right to vote. 43 states offer in person early voting options, including 6 states with all-mail elections. Connecticut should lead other states, not lag behind them. Sadly, we are lagging behind most of the nation in early access to the ballot. Recent polling says nearly 80% of Connecticut voters support early voting. This is an undeniable coalition of Connecticut voters—please listen to this supermajority of us who believe that our democracy is strengthened when everyone who has the right to vote can do so safely and securely.

More than 650,000 voters voted securely by absentee ballot in the 2020 CT General Election, meaning we could vote early on their own schedules. Connecticut's record breaking 80% voter turnout in the 2020 General Election was absolutely related to absentee ballot voting. Furthermore, 73% of Connecticut voters support giving all voters the option to vote by absentee ballot without needing an excuse, another impressive mandate from the people. While HJ 59 (Early Voting) only needs a 50% majority vote in favor, both the House and Senate must pass HJ 58 (No-Excuse Absentee Voting) with

at least a 75% supermajority this legislative session so this proposal would also appear before voters as a ballot question in the 2022 statewide election.

Let's get this done this session. The choice is clear for this long overdue remedy for voting rights in our state. Please choose democracy and pass HJ 58 and HJ 59.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Dominique Johnson
Norwalk, CT