

TO: Honorable Co-Chairs Senator Mae Flexer and House Representative Daniel J. Fox and Distinguished Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee

DATE: February 19, 2021

FROM: Kimberley Megrath, Chester, CT 06412

RE: Government Administration and Elections Bills, as follows:

H.J. No. 58 (COMM) RESOLUTION PROPOSING A STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ALLOW NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING.

H.J. No. 59 (COMM) RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING.

S.B. No. 901 (RAISED) AN ACT EXTENDING TO JUNE 30, 2021, CHANGES IMPLEMENTED FOR THE 2020 STATE ELECTION AS A RESULT OF COVID-19.

H.B. No. 6464 (RAISED) AN ACT EXTENDING TO MAY 31, 2021, SEVERAL CHANGES IMPLEMENTED FOR THE 2020 STATE ELECTION AS A RESULT OF COVID-19.

In 29 states and Washington, D.C., any voter can request a mail-in ballot without providing an excuse. Five states successfully conduct elections entirely by mail (Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah and Washington). Thirty-eight states and Washington, D.C. allow for in-person early voting in some form. Only 7 states, including Connecticut, do not allow early voting.

I fully support voting reform in CT and believe it is long overdue. State and local officials across the country, including Connecticut, go to great lengths to ensure elections are secure and legitimate. We just experienced a secure and legitimate election in CT in 2020, including the use of absentee ballot voting by mail using the Covid-19 excuse. And we have on-going evidence of success from prior elections in states already utilizing no-excuse, mail-in voting and early voting. Two-thirds of Americans, including 43% of Republicans and 65% of Independents support allowing Election Day to take place over a time period of as much as two weeks to ensure that no one has to wait in long lines.

Every Connecticut voter deserves a choice on how they cast their ballot. No-excuse absentee voting, early voting, and extended voting hours improve ballot access, provide the opportunity for more citizens to exercise their right to vote, and therefore, ensure fully participatory elections, which is essential for a strong democracy! I support all four of the proposed bills, H.J. No. 58, H.J. No. 59, S.B. No. 901, and H.B. No. 6464 listed above.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberley L. Megrath
41 Liberty Street
Chester, CT 06412
727.599.9545