

NICOLAS M PACELLA ARCHITECT

Date February 22, 2021

Re: Testimony in support of HJ58 (NEAV) & HJ59 (EV)

I am writing to you in support of HJ58 and HJ59, the resolutions proposing constitutional amendments to allow no-excuse absentee and early voting in Connecticut.

Connecticut is one of only seven states that does not allow early voting, no-excuse absentee voting or vote-by-mail, making it more difficult to vote here than in the vast majority of the nation. No-excuse absentee voting was wildly popular last year, with one-third of all ballots cast absentee, and no evidence of the widespread voter fraud that some were concerned about. Expanded access to absentee voting led to record-breaking voter participation rates across the state. Polls show that both EV and NEAV enjoy overwhelming public support from Connecticut voters of all affiliations, and not just during times of pandemic.

If we say that voting is a right, and not a privilege, we need to make it easier to vote, which is why I am asking you to vote both resolutions favorably out of the GAE Committee.

My wife and I are over 65 and we were both able to vote using absentee ballots last year, both locally and nationally. Due the health crisis, all three of our adult children have been living with us since last April. They were also able to use absentee ballots, which promoted health safety and minimized exposure for all of us. They felt good, knowing they were helping to protect us and exercise their constitutional right to vote. Allowing for early voting, no-excuse absentee voting or vote-by-mail does not prevent someone from voting in person but it does provide access to voting for far more citizens than have normally voted, which was amplified in the voter turnout numbers. That is something to be proud of.

However, I believe that strengthening our representative democracy requires more than making it easier to vote; it requires that winning candidates better reflect the will of the majority. That's the benefit of Ranked Choice Voting, and why I urge you to raise HB-5884, the Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Ranked Choice Voting. A similar bill was voted out of your Committee in 2019, passed the House, and was raised again last year, demonstrating the widespread support that exists among voters and the General Assembly.

Thank you for considering these important voting and election reforms.

Very truly yours,



Nicolas M. Pacella