

20 February 2021

Dear Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee,

In order to have a democracy that is truly “of the people, by the people, and for the people”, citizens’ voices need to be heard. I regularly discuss with my social studies students their rights and responsibilities to their community and country. I reinforce the importance of actively participating in our democracy, even if my students are too young to vote.

That being said, voting is the most important right and responsibility that citizens have. I have often been disappointed with how few eligible voters participate in elections in the United States. This past November I was able to work at a local polling station, and was heartened to see a strong turnout. I was impressed by the processes in place to ensure that votes would not be double counted, and pleased to feel the excitement and pride amongst first-time voters. I firmly believe that some of the improved turnout is because we adjusted voting systems to make it easier and safe for citizens to vote during the pandemic.

We should build on this success and make some of the changes permanent. I strongly support House Joint Resolution No 58 and House Joint Resolution No 59 that would allow for no-excuse absentee and early voting, respectively. Although the raised bills are also reasonable, I do not feel voting procedural changes should be tied solely to COVID challenges.

Democracy is not a spectator sport. Local, state and federal governments should do everything in their power to help citizens be actively involved, especially voting. Please support these proposed bills.

Sincerely,  
Elyse Poller  
Mansfield, CT