

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

I strongly support HJ-58 (NEAV) and HJ-59 (EV), the resolutions proposing constitutional amendments to allow no-excuse absentee and early voting in Connecticut. I have been a resident of CT for 44 years, and was extremely fortunate to be able to vote in all primaries, general elections and for referendums in person. In various presidential elections through the years I waited for up until an hour. Many eligible, healthy voters do not have the time to wait in long lines in order to vote. Connecticut is in the minority of states that has not changed to early voting or non-excuse absentee voting in modern times. This is unacceptable. Fortunately, and thankfully, with tremendous effort by our lawmakers, during COVID my husband and I were able to apply online for absentee ballots and then use the Drop Box outside Town Hall for the presidential primary, the general election, and the recent referendum in Orange. We are both over age 75, and were grateful to be able to stay safe. However, we also know that many voters have legitimate reasons for needing alternative voting opportunities beyond spending hours during one day of the work week each time there is a local or federal voting for candidates or local, regional, or state issues.

I am also asking you to vote HB-5884, the Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Ranked Choice Voting, out of your committee. The respected and non-partisan American Academy of Arts and Sciences recommended RCV in its report, Reinventing Democracy for the 21st Century. Leading conservative voices like Norm Ornstein and the late Senator John McCain endorse Ranked Choice Voting.

Thank you for considering these important voting and election reforms.

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