



Advocacy and Action
for Connecticut's
Mental Health

**Testimony before Government Administration and Elections Committee
February 22, 2021**

**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.**

Maura Sheil-Hughes

Senator Flexer, Rep Fox and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee.

My name is Maura Sheil-Hughes and I am a registered voter in Portland.

I am testifying regarding **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** and ask that you pass both bills.

Both bills give people more options to exercise their civic duty. The elections this past year are a great example of why people need more options to vote. I was extremely grateful to be able to drop my absentee ballot in a secure drop box outside my town hall in November during COVID. Two and a half years ago I spent a full day trying to get my sister an absentee ballot to vote in the primary election. She was battling Parkinson's and was confined to a nursing home in another town (not her home town) for a number of weeks, making it impossible for her to get out and cast her vote. It was not an easy process to get her a ballot. I was on the phone with our town hall, the Secretary of State's office, the Middletown town hall. There was a lot of confusion about what to do. I finally got her a ballot and the Middletown registrar of voters came to the nursing home so she could vote. She passed away three weeks later but had the chance to exercise her right to vote which was always extremely important to her!

I understand that CT is one of seven states that currently does not offer in person early voting options. Many voters are elderly or work long hours or have more than one job to make ends meet. Having more voting options is an important way to allow more people to have a voice/choice when elections come up. I have read that about 80% of Connecticut voters support early voting.

Please pass these important bills (HJ 58 and HJ 59) which allow your constituents more opportunities exercise their civic duty--VOTING. Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony.

Maura Sheil-Hughes