

My name is Karin Stenberg Layton.

I am testifying in support of both resolutions

HJ 58 : Resolution proposing a state constitutional amendment to allow No Excuse Absentee Voting

HJ59: Resolution on approving an amendment to the state constitution to allow Early Voting.

As of January 28, 2021, CT was one of only seven states that didn't allow voters to cast a ballot prior to Election Day without an excuse. Those other states are Alabama, Kentucky, South Carolina, Missouri, Mississippi and New Hampshire. Washington offered early voting by mail 10-20 years ago – and has reported no voter fraud and no complaints with the system. If CT was one of the first seven states to vaccinate 10% of their residents, along with Alaska, West Virginia, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota and Oklahoma, why cannot we take action on allowing No Excuse Absentee Voting and Early Voting?

I am a retired public school teacher, as well as former parent and current grandparent of students in the Fairfield Public School system. Every single day of the school year counts in classrooms, now more than ever, and to close school to allow for in-person voting is not necessary.

My husband and I requested and received absentee ballots for this past election. This allowed us to vote several weeks early, choose a day and time at our convenience and socially distance at the Collection Box in front of our Town Hall. It was an easier and more pleasant experience to complete our forms at home.

The benefits of Early and No Excuse Absentee Voting have proven successful in 43 other states. Even here in CT this year, when given the option, residents were able to socially distance, not have to take time off from work and drop their ballot in a convenient location. We have the Collection Boxes – the transition – has begun – prompted by a pandemic – but proven practical.

Thank you Cristen McCarthy Vahey, State Rep serving 133rd district of Fairfield, and the other 6 sponsors of the bill. I am in strong support of your resolutions HJ 58-59. Feb. 22, 2021