

February 21, 2021

Dear Honorable GAE Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs,

Thank you for protecting our right to vote in Connecticut this past November.

I'm writing now to support early and/or no-excuse absentee ballot voting. The state's high participation rate in November reflected how passionately voters felt about the election. Early voting and absentee ballots in large part made this high participation rate possible.

Conversely, the absence of these alternatives to traditional in-person voting would have generated deep anger and frustration. We have quite enough of that in our political life at present. In the interests of equity and fairness, as well as a functioning democracy, we can't afford to engender any more distrust, ill-will or inequity.

Clearly there are forces out there that would like to do just that. We have only to look at the legislation pending in states such as Florida, South Carolina, and Georgia that is aimed at radically reducing access to the polls and would have a particularly devastating effect on disadvantaged and minority populations.

That is not the Connecticut way. As the Constitution State, Connecticut can and must demonstrate its commitment to fair, free, open, and equitable elections that truly represent the will of the voters. Legislation supporting early voting and no-excuse absentee ballots can help secure that commitment – and make Connecticut a model for what voting should look like, nation-wide.

I hope that in the near future, legislation to study ranked-choice voting (RCV) will also be introduced, in the interests of more representative elections that are less dominated by the manipulations of the major political parties.

Thank you for your consideration.

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