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TESTIMONY OF
REPRESENTATIVE ELISSA WRIGHT
STATE REPRESENTATIVE, 41ST DISTRICT

*COMMITTEE BILL No. 6006, AN ACT PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNED PRIMARY
IN THE EVENT OF A TIE*

*Government Administration and Elections Committee Public Hearing
February 28, 2007*

Senator Slossberg, Representative Caruso, Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee, for the record, my name is Elissa Wright, State Representative from the 41st District, within the Town of Groton.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify at this public hearing in support of *Committee Bill No. 6006, AN ACT PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNED PRIMARY IN THE EVENT OF A TIE*.

Last August, I was involved in a three-way primary to determine the Democratic nominee for State Representative from the 41st Assembly District.

When the polls closed and the votes were counted on August 8th, 2007, one vote separated the two candidates receiving the most votes. Upon a mandatory re-canvass pursuant to section 9-445 of the general statutes, a two-way tie was determined to exist. Out of the total of 1,322 votes cast, another candidate and I each received 457 votes. Current law governing primaries, at section 9-446 of the general statutes, requires that in the event of a tie vote, the winner of the primary shall be determined "by lot." In this instance, the registrar determined the nominee of the Democratic Party by a coin flip.

By contrast, the law governing the disposition of a tie vote in an election, at section 9-332 of the general statutes, provides that "such election shall stand adjourned for three weeks."

This bill would amend section 9-446 of the general statutes to provide that the statutory procedure used to dissolve a tie vote in an election be applied in determining the outcome of a tie vote in a primary. Passage of this bill will provide consistency of procedures used to resolve tie votes in both elections and primaries.

More importantly, adoption of this reform will minimize the role of chance in the selection of party nominees, thereby reaffirming the fundamental principle that each vote counts in our representative democracy.

Thank you very much for raising this bill and for the opportunity to be heard on this issue today. I welcome any questions and comments that you might have.