

Testimony by Christopher Healy
HB 5024 – An Act Concerning Voting Rights
Government, Administration and Enforcement Committee
Legislative Office Building
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I am Christopher Healy, and I live in Wethersfield, CT. I have been a registered voter since the age of 18 and am currently a member of the Wethersfield Republican Town Committee. I have also had the honor to serve on the GOP State Central Committee as well as serve as State GOP Party Chairman from 2007 to 2011. I have also worked and volunteered on more campaigns than I care to admit and been involved in two recounts on the Congressional and statewide levels.

I am very concerned with several components of **HB 5024 - An Act Concerning Voting Rights**

The proposed legislation would create uncertainty about the veracity of votes cast in Connecticut elections. The bill has one credible and useful provision – requiring the Secretary of the State Office to develop and maintain an on-line data system to track new voters and use it to ensure that a voter is not registered elsewhere. This is long overdue and will make great strides toward an accurate list of legitimate voters.

But the provision allowing Election Day registration of voters is an answer to a problem that doesn't exist. And the loosening of credible identification requirements is another recipe for fraud.

Voting is a right and a privilege, which countless Americans have fought and died to protect. Civil Rights activists, who marched through a gauntlet of nightsticks and police dogs, also gave their lives to make sure all Americans have the right to freely and safely exercise their choices on the one day that all our citizens share as a national experience.

Is it asking too much for citizens to take some responsibility to register to vote in advance of Election Day, given all the options available to them? Connecticut citizens may register by mail or in person with relative ease and with plenty of time to complete this task. We ask more of people who are trying to obtain a fishing license, public assistance or a membership in a health club than is required to register to vote. Where are the voices of people who have been

denied the right to register or feel the system is too cumbersome? The law has been flexible for anyone who wishes to be part of the voting public.

And it seems counter-intuitive to require the Secretary of the State's office to maintain an on-line registry of voters to protect against double-voting but allow a would-be voter to present themselves at a polling place on Election Day and automatically enjoy the rights of a voter.

Registrars and Election Day staff are saddled with tasks that put a strain on existing resources. If these Election Day teams are additionally required to process new voters, including a search of their status in an on-line system that may or may not be accurate, the polling area will be consumed with even longer lines, short tempers and mistakes.

If that proper identification isn't presented to the Registrar, then the damage is already done to the legitimacy of the Election.

The Judicial system is very reticent to take up Election matters and with good reason. This law would potentially allow illegal votes to be cast on Election Day with no option to challenge an outcome if it were revealed that someone who registered on Election Day was not entitled to vote for any number of reasons.

This approach to voter registration will only overburden Election Day operations and potentially cast doubt on the legitimacy of the vote.

If we are concerned about voter participation, then the focus should be through the education system. It is there where tomorrow's voters should be enlightened on the importance of voting and on the basic requirements to join the ranks of active legitimate voters.

This law trivializes and belittles the sanctity of the ballot box and dishonors those who have fought to preserve this right.