



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

**Testimony of Daniel P. Malloy,
Governor of the State of Connecticut
to the Government Affairs & Elections Committee on
HJ 2 – Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution
to Allow for No-Excuse Absentee Voting;
HB 5022 – An Act Increasing the Penalties for Voter Intimidation and Interference; and
HB 5024 – An Act Concerning Voting Rights
March 2, 2012**

Senator Slossberg and Representative Morin, Senator McLachlan and Representative Hwang, and Members of the Committee, thank you for hearing **H.J. No. 2, H.B. 5022** and **H.B. 5024** today.

While states around the nation are engaged in ways to suppress voter turnout and restrict access to polls, together we can lead the charge to fairer, more robust electoral turnout for the citizens of Connecticut. These three pieces of legislation will improve access to elections for Connecticut citizens. The right to vote, and access to elections is a paramount right and responsibility of all citizens.

The legislative package I proposed that you are hearing today expands access to the polls, reduces the barriers to voting and makes sure all citizens have a voice in their government.

HJ Resolution No. 2 will allow us to govern absentee ballots through statute, which would give legislators the ability to adopt laws that address voters who cannot get to polling locations on Election Day. HB 5022 would also increase penalties on any effort to block or impede voter access ensuring the voters' voice is heard. Voting is a great responsibility, and an enormous opportunity, we have an obligation to make every effort to preserve citizens' access to the polls.

HB 5024 will bring our electoral process into the 21st century by enabling the use of technology to make voter registration more efficient and easier. To make registration more efficient and create a more accurate voter file, the proposed legislation would create web-based voter registration for Connecticut citizens who have a valid and current driver's license and allow for Election Day registration to improve voter turnout.

While some states are suppressing voter turnout, you have the opportunity to move in the opposite direction and improve access to elections and align our electoral system with 21st century technology.

These reforms will give more Connecticut a voice in a place where it truly matters – the voting booth. That means more of our residents will have a voice in how their tax dollars are spent, what kind of health care system we have, how their children are educated, and so many other aspects of their lives.

Together, we have the duty, and this legislative session, the opportunity to ensure the right of every voter to get to the polls.