



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONNECTICUT, INC.

CGA Government Administration and Elections Committee

Public Hearing

Comments provided by: Susan Voris, Election Laws Specialist, League of Women Voters of Connecticut

Support for: HB5024 – AA Concerning Voting Rights

My name is Susan Voris. I am the Election Laws Specialist for the League of Women Voters of Connecticut. As a state-wide organization with over 1800 members, the League is dedicated to improving the electoral process.

HB5024 – AA Concerning Voting Rights.

The League is a long time proponent of Election Day registration for all federal, state, and local elections. States with Election Day registration have voter turnout rates that are significantly higher than the national average, with little voter fraud. In fact, Election Day registration encourages first time voters, young people and new residents to cast their votes.

The League very much supports **HB 5024** in that it calls for for the establishment and maintenance of an online voter registration system (Section 11) and the implementation of Election Day Registration (EDR), two of our key goals. The League supports the maintenance of an accurate, reliable, state-wide electronic, centralized voter registration system. Without a verifiable, working voter registration system that is accessible to all Registrars or their designees, EDR cannot work.

While the League supports full polling place EDR, Election Day registration as proposed would allow those electors who have not registered to vote to go to a centralized location and register and vote in much the same way as they would if they were using a Presidential Ballot. While this is not an ideal system, it is definitely a good first step for the initial years. Those who would accept and certify the Election Day registrations would be specially trained and assigned to work in the centralized location. Access to the State Voter Registration system can be more easily handled in a centralized location, compared to polling places, which may or may not have internet access. Also, there are protocols already in place that are used for Absentee Ballots counting that can be applied to EDR ballots. Also, Election Day ballots should be able to be read by the same machines as the Absentee Ballots and processed throughout the day so as to not cause a major delay at the end of the day.

While the League does acknowledge that a voter does not have an opportunity to correct an overvoted ballot unless they discover it prior to handing it in but this is the same as if the elector were using an absentee ballot. To minimize such occurrences, the elector would be

given instructions on filling out the ballot upon receipt of his or her ballot in the same way that they are given instructions when receiving an absentee ballot.

The League urges the Committee to support HB5024

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.