



Election Division
Election Administrators
Registrars of Voters

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*Chairman Senator Slosseberg, Representative Morin, members of G A & E Committee
My name is Judith Beaudreau, Registrar of Voters from Vernon. I am here today to testify in favor
of HJ 2, HB 5022, & HB 5024.*

HJ 2

Resolution proposing an amendment to the state constitution to allow no-excuse absentee voting.

This is truly the only way that some of my electors in town will vote. At this time when they want to do an absentee ballot especially in a presidential election, when they do not want to go to the polling place, they have a hard time filling out the application. These electors do not believe that they are handicapped, disabled, have an illness, and they are not out of town. They will however sign the application if I help them make it out. They do not want to lie. Voting is very important to them and they always vote. Taking this out of the constitution will assist these Electors and they will be very happy I am sure.

HB 5022

AA Increasing Penalties For Voter Intimidation & Interference

Totally agree with these increases. No one should have to have anyone force them into any voting that the Elector does not want to do. A vote is secret & personal to each elector.

HB 5024

AAC Voting Rights

Thank you - Thank you - Thank you for having this bill drafted. I am sure by now you are all aware that I am defiantly for EDR. I believe that registration and not knowing our laws causes people not to vote. They seem to miss the cut off's all the time. It has been a long time coming. EDR passed both houses in 2003 only to have our Governor at that time veto it. It seems to have been on this committee's agenda forever. Hopefully this is the year for passage. It is important that Electors get to cast a ballot. Some Electors actually get up on Election morning and decide that they want to vote. For years I have interviewed Electors who have shown up for Presidential Ballots. Just wanting to know why they waited till the last minute. Their reasons are all over the place but generally they just missed the cut off. They were too busy!!! I believe that EDR will increase voter participation. States that have done this for years have shown this to be true. These states did not have a centralized voter list. We are lucky at this time to have this resource available to us to use. But I want to say that it is only a tool. It should not be a mandate of using the centralized system for the voter to actually register on Election Day. The process that has been laid out in this bill seems to be cumbersome. Somewhere in here it should be stated that the

process should not be held up on a phone call. The language seems to imply that these electors will be waiting a long time. I also hope that you will allow in some municipalities that can handle this that the Registrars of Voters could set up a tabulator and process the ballots immediately. With the staff that the larger cities will have to hire they can certainly turn this into a polling place.

I have heard statements to the fact that a majority of Registrars Of Voters are against EDR. I know that ROVAC took a vote at an annual meeting in 2010 of the 341 Registrars of voters there were 123 present. This is only a little over a third of the registrars of voters in the state. Of this 123, 76 were against EDR in any form, 43 voted for it and 4 abstained. When I went to school, 76 was not a majority of 341.

I know that the Town Clerks will be happy to get rid of the Presidential Ballots as former Secretary of State Miles Rapport and myself were instrumental in developing what we have today as the Presidential ballots. These were supposed to be done by Registrars Of Voters but when the bill was finally passed in 1995, I believe, it gave the job to the Town Clerks. If it had gone to the Registrars of Voters they today would be ready for the change to EDR for all elections.

In Vernon for years my office has been doing the Presidential ballots on Election Day with my Town Clerks office overseeing the process and I can tell you that it runs very smoothly. We manage to process 400 to 500 ballots on Election Day. As you might know I hire a lot of 16 & 17 year olds and usually for a Ppresidential election I will have 8 students. Each of them are assigned a specific job to do. We have routinely looked up everyone on the state-wide centralized list. We also tried to get each individual to register in the process.

This will not be a hardship on Vernon. And I am strongly going to ask & recommend that all Registrars Of Voters get involved with the Presidential Ballots this year so that they can learn what works and does not work.

Some language that might be of help here.

After Line # 74 a new section (C) might read as:

After the prospective elector has submitted a completed affirmation application, the elector shall be permitted to fill out the Election Day ballot. The elector should not have to be held waiting for any length of time for confirmation from the previous town. This process shall be done in a timely manner. The affirmation should be just cause to doing a ballot.

Line # 112 after the word location. If such Registrars of Voters agree that a tabulator is available, it shall be used to process the ballots immediately on site where the Election Day ballots are being done.

The rest of this bill referring to on line Voter Registration, I fully endorse it is about time we moved forward as other states are so doing.