

Written Testimony
Monday, February 11, 2013
Government Administration and Elections Committee

Submitted by Karen Cortés, Registrar of Voters, Town of Simsbury

Oppose S.B. 4 An Act Concerning Early Voting:

While I support initiatives to increase voter participation in Connecticut, acting on early voting during this legislative session is premature. The constitutional amendment allowing no-excuse absentee voting will be on the ballot in November 2014. Should the Connecticut voters choose no-excuse absentee voting, "early" ballots will be cast through the already-established absentee voting process.

The costs associated with early voting, including but not limited to the creation of separate voting stations, hiring of personnel, and purchase of additional equipment are a burden to municipalities, which are solely responsible for the funding of elections.

Support H.B. 5289 An Act Concerning the Timing of Certain Special Municipal Elections

I support an amendment to 9-164(b) to allow a special municipal election to be held on the same day as a regular election, provided the special election falls within 30 days of a municipal election. In addition to the cost benefit for municipalities, combining a regular and special election would alleviate complications experienced by Registrars when two elections are held within a short period of time.

Registrars are required to sequester ballots and equipment for ten days following an election. This sequestration restricts a Registrar's ability to conduct necessary equipment testing and preparation for a second voting occurrence.

Additionally, I would suggest that this provision be extended to allow municipalities to conduct a special election in combination with a local referendum.