



**DENISE MERRILL
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
CONNECTICUT**

**GAE Committee
Public Hearing Testimony
January 28, 2013**

Good Afternoon Morning Chairman Musto, Chairman Jutila and members of the committee. For the record my name is Denise Merrill and I am Secretary of the State of Connecticut. I would like to briefly testify in support of two bills before the committee this morning, and one House Joint Resolution proposed by the Governor.

S.B. No. 432 AN ACT CONCERNING AN AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATES TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE.

Passage of this bill would make Connecticut the next state to adopt an interstate compact providing for the election of the president by a national popular vote. I support the concept of moving away from the current Electoral College system of electing our president.

Four times in our history the person elected president did not receive the most votes. This resulted in constitutional crises and long-term effects on policy, including the abandonment of Reconstruction after the 1876 election.

This plan is consistent with the Constitution, which provides for both interstate compacts and the right of each state to decide how to select and allocate presidential electors. I actually think that this compact will lead to Connecticut having a more relevant role in our presidential elections – particularly in the general election.

In the 2008 Presidential cycle, we had visits from major presidential candidates before the primary in February. But on the rare occasion that a Presidential candidate comes to Connecticut they are here for one purpose: fundraising. I dare say that engaging a few select people to open their checkbooks is not the same as engaging the general public about the issues facing our nation.

Electing our president by popular vote would mean candidates and parties would focus on turning out voters – particularly in densely populated areas like the Northeast. Some of the states that have already passed this bill include Massachusetts, Vermont, New

Jersey and Maryland, just to name a few. So I support this compact as a sensible way to improve our presidential elections.

H.B. No. 6362 AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF THE REGULATIONS OF CONNECTICUT STATE AGENCIES.

Last year this committee and the General Assembly passed a bill to require that the regulations of state agencies be put online and that the Secretary of the State be the administrator of this service. At that time I expressed my support of this bill and asked that when the implementation of this project came to pass that I be given the additional resources necessary to take on this new responsibility.

Over the past year, I served on a task force appointed by Governor Malloy to prepare a report on how to implement last year's legislative. The report included a draft version of this bill. This initiative is important because it is about making government more "user friendly" to businesses trying to navigate bureaucracy and promotes transparency for the general public.

Putting regulations, and documents related to the regulations-making process, online is an idea that is long overdue. In fact, I think we are dead last to finally get this done. Having said that, I feel very good about the bill being heard today and the collaborative process that was used over the last year to create this plan.

Now we are at a critical point. As the person to be charged with managing this responsibility, my top concern is that it be done well. To do that, my agency will require 1 or more additional positions at the Secretary of the State's office. This is what I said last year, and this year I have reinforced this request to the Appropriations Committee, OPM and the Governor's office.

Lastly, I would express my support for H.J. No. 36 RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO GRANT INCREASED AUTHORITY TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REGARDING ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

This resolution is duplicative of HJR 16 of the same title, I testified on HJR 16 at your January 28th public hearing and submitted written testimony at that time.