

## H.J. 16

Government Administration and Elections Committee  
Testimony – January 28, 2012

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Chairs and members of the Committee, my name is Luther Weeks, Executive Director of CTVotersCount, a retired computer scientist, and a Certified Moderator.

This is my written testimony to follow-up on my ad-hoc testimony today, including references requested by the Committee.

I was not planning on testifying on H.J. 16, yet several issues addressed by others today deserve responses and amplifications.

- **Not contradicting the Secretary of the State's comment, that Early Voting and Election Day Registration (EDR) combined have increased turnout in other states – according to the best analysis available:**
  - Early voting alone (either no-excuse AB or in-person) decrease turnout.
  - Polling-place EDR alone increases turnout
  - Polling-place EDR combined with early voting benefit turnout approximately the same as EDR alone.
  - The EDR passed by Connecticut last year is not polling-place EDR, we can expect significantly less increase in turnout than with polling-place EDR.

I base these conclusions on the most statistically valid analysis of which I am aware:

<http://www.ctvoterscount.org/researchers-early-voting-alone-decreases-turnout/>

<http://www.ctvoterscount.org/no-excuse-voting-and-three-interesting-bills/>

These conclusions are also supported by Professor Doug Chapin who was invited by the Secretary to speak to her Elections Performance Task Force in 2011:

<http://ctvoterscount.org/elections-performance-task-force-technology-fair-and-doug-chapin/#chapin>

- **In-person early voting can be a safe way to provide increased convenience, if we are willing to pay for it.** For it to be fair, especially to voters in small towns, it could be very expensive without regionalization. (e.g. For a town the size of Glastonbury with six polling places, seven days of in-person early voting in one location would approximately double election day costs. For a single polling place town it would increase election day costs by a factor of four to seven, depending on the size of the town)
  - When a storm hits in the week before election day, in-person or absentee voting would not help voters during that period, and might hurt them if resources were allocated to early voting and reduced for election day. If a storm hits on election day, many voters might not have planned and voted early.
  - Done well, with good security in-person early voting can be safe and enfranchising.
- **I have concerns with expanded absentee or mail-in voting.** There are stories and successful prosecutions of absentee ballot fraud in Connecticut and across the nation after almost every election. Voters are disenfranchised without their knowledge by their own errors or loss of ballots in transmission by absentee voting. Nationwide in 2012 14% of absentee ballots requested were not received to be counted.
- **The state with the best record of serving Military and all Overseas voters does not employ Internet voting.** That state is Minnesota. It has an exemplary record of implementing the MOVE Act, with the assistance of the Overseas Vote Foundation. Here is Minnesota Secretary of State, Mark Ritchie's talk from last week's OVF forum for more information. See the OVF for more information on how Military and Overseas voters would like to be served:  
Video: <http://tinyurl.com/b7cxu78> OVF: <https://www.overseasvotefoundation.org/>  
**Connecticut should follow Minnesota's example, avoiding the risky, expensive, and ineffective route take by some states using online, fax, or email voting.**

Thank you