



Testimony of Abraham Scarr, Director

Connecticut Public Interest Research Group (ConnPIRG)

In support of

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 16, RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO GRANT INCREASED AUTHORITY TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REGARDING ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Chairperson Musto, Chairperson Jutila and Members of the Committee: My name is Abe Scarr and I am the Director of the Connecticut Public Interest Research Group (ConnPIRG). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Joint Resolution 16, Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution to Grant Increased Authority to the General Assembly Regarding Election Administration.

Democracy works best with the active participation of its citizens. Voting is the most basic way to participate in our democracy and serves as a building block to more active involvement in public life. We should make every effort to increase voter participation by making voter registration and the act of voting as simple and accessible to eligible voters as possible.

Along with the reforms we passed last year to allow for online and same day voter registration, House Joint Resolution 16 is an important step to modernize Connecticut's elections system. Most importantly, the Resolution gives the General Assembly the appropriate discretion to enact the type of absentee or early voting reform it thinks is best with the input of Connecticut's voters and local Registrars and Town Clerks. In our increasingly mobile society, these reforms are important to a modern elections system.

The states are the laboratories of democracy, and thirty five states have already experimented with early voting, vote by mail, and no excuse absentee voting. These reforms have increased voter participation and lessened Election Day workloads of elections officials.

It is time to bring Connecticut elections into the 21st century. No-excuse absentee voting will contribute to increased voter participation while modernizing our elections systems.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to continuing to work with you throughout the session in an effort to pass this resolution.

ConnPIRG is a non-partisan, non-profit consumer group that stands up to powerful interests whenever they threaten our health and safety, our financial security or our right to fully participate in our democratic society.

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