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# CSEA

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## Testimony – HJR No. 16

Good afternoon. My name is Chet Morgan and I am the Connecticut State Employees Association Retirees Council 400 Legislative Action Committee Co-Chairman. I am unable to attend this Public Hearing so I am submitting written testimony. I was first elected to this Legislature in 1976 from House District No. 56 in Vernon. In that term I was assigned to the old standing Committee on Elections. After the 1978 elections the number of committees was reduced and the Elections Committee was combined with the Government Administration & Procedures Committee and became the present GAE Committee. As a member of that first GAE Committee, I was named the co-chair of the Elections subcommittee. At that time the provisions of HJR No. 16 would never even have made it to a public hearing as many, including myself, were much more narrow minded about changes to election laws. Absentee ballots were only issued if the voter was to be out of state. But my views have changed.

This Resolution removes restrictive language from the constitution that prevents our state from enacting early voting, changes to absentee balloting and other modernizations to election laws. The CSEA Retirees Council 400 supports this proposal as do I. As you know the framework for such a change is already underway as the legislature endorsed an amendment to the state constitution allowing for early voting during the 2012 legislative session. However it did not pass by the required margin. The General Assembly must approve the measure again in the upcoming session. I urge you to give this proposal a JF and send it to the floor of the House for approval. To quote Secretary of State Merrill:

***“Present language is archaic, overly restrictive, and does not even permit our lawmakers to adjust our election laws and make them more progressive as the majority of states have done. And this outdated language also contributes to Election Day bottlenecks that can frustrate voters just trying to cast a ballot. It is long past time for a change”.***

As Ella would say, “Do the people’s business and let’s move forward”.

*Chet*