



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONNECTICUT, INC.

**Written
3/25/13**

**CGA Government Administration and Elections Committee
March 25, 2013 Public Hearing**

**Comments provided by: Susan Voris, Election Laws Specialist,
League of Women Voters of Connecticut**

My name is Susan Voris. I am the Election Laws Specialist for the League of Women Voters of Connecticut, a statewide organization with over 1600 members. The League is dedicated to improving the electoral process.

SB 4 – An Act Concerning Early Voting.

Connecticut, at this time, has one form of early voting, absentee voting. The League believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote and is, therefore, a strong supporter of no-excuse absentee ballots. As a general matter, we support efforts to maximize voter participation and early voting. However, we are unable to support this bill.

SB 4 would require each municipality to provide an opportunity for electors to cast ballots in person starting eight days prior to Election Day at the town hall or another municipal building during all hours in which the building is open and at least one evening and weekend day. While this bill attempts to detail the early voting process, we are concerned that there is still more work to be done in order to create a full-fledged early voting system. For example, it is unclear to us whether voters would cast their ballots by depositing them into a locked receptacle to be counted later (see subsection (e)) or cast them on the tabulator (see subsection (g)). Also unknown are how many election officials would be required during the early voting period, how electors would be checked in, what measures would be taken to ensure the security of the vote and how municipalities would pay the additional costs associated with early voting.

We believe that all of these issues must be addressed before we adopt early voting in Connecticut. On a more fundamental level, we wonder whether an early voting statute is premature given the fact that the constitutional amendment necessary to vest the General Assembly with the authority to create an early voting system is not yet in place.

HB6669 – An Act Concerning The Appointment of Members to the State Elections Enforcement Commission

The League believes that the right to vote with confidence in the election process must be guaranteed to all. The State Elections Enforcement Commission was created to ensure the integrity of the state's electoral process. We support the change from a three (3) year term to a five (5) year term and believe the term beginning in April takes it outside the election calendar, except in the case of a Presidential Preference Primary. This is important, as the commission is the administrator of the Citizen's Election Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.