



CGA Veterans' Affairs Committee

February 19, 2013 Public Hearing

Comments on SB 647

AAC VOTING BY MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY SERVING OVERSEAS

Submitted by Christine S. Horrigan, Government Director

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut is a non-partisan, statewide organization with over 1600 members committed to effective public policy and the active involvement of citizens in their government. On behalf of the League, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 647 *AAC Voting by Members of the Military Serving Overseas*.

The League believes that voting systems should be secure, accurate, recountable, accessible and transparent. *As a general matter, the League supports measures to ensure that military voters have sufficient time to vote. However, we are also concerned about issues related to privacy, voter fraud and undue influence in connection with transmission of a completed ballot from an overseas military voter to the town clerk's office.* For example, how many municipalities have fax machines in secure locations? What measures will be required to ensure that only designated officials have email access to completed ballots? What measures can be taken to ensure the secrecy of the ballot once it is printed on the receiving end? How will election officials verify that ballots were not altered, lost, or tossed in the garbage? What recourse will a voter have if his or her ballot is lost, altered or destroyed?

While this bill increases accessibility by allowing military voters and their families to return completed absentee ballots by fax or email, it contains no provisions to protect the privacy and security of those ballots. *We urge the Committee to look carefully and thoughtfully at measures which, while easing the transmission of a completed ballot, also preserve privacy and prevent fraud and undue influence and to incorporate those measures into the bill – if it decides to move forward with SB 647.*

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this bill.