

Tina Gardner
Carole Young-Kleinfeld
Registrars of Voters
Telephone (203) 563-0111
Fax (203) 563-0130



Elections Department
Wilton Town Hall
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

Testimony—Carole Young-Kleinfeld (D), Tina Gardner(R), Registrars of Voters

SB 647—AAC VOTING BY MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY SERVING OVERSEAS—OPPOSE

Good afternoon, Senator Leone, Representative Hennessey, and members of the Veterans Affairs Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 647—AAC Voting by Members of the Military Serving Overseas. We oppose this bill for the following reasons.

Lack of security, privacy, safety for voters and elections— As registrars of voters from the Town of Wilton, committed to protecting the rights of all eligible citizens to participate in secure elections and to cast secure, safe, and private ballots, we must oppose this bill. In the past several years, we have been closely following the studies, the debates, and the conclusions of those computer scientists at our top universities, our federal agencies, and our top testing laboratories as they consider the pros and cons of online voting through websites, faxing, and e-mail. Their conclusions remain the same today as they were two years ago when the Secretary of the State convened a panel of these experts to explore the future role of online voting for our state: that voting through the Internet is not secure, non-private, and is wide open to manipulation by hackers. The Secretary's symposium drew an audience of registrars of voters, good government groups, computer scientists, and legislators.

No audit trail for recounting or verification— Currently Connecticut requires recounts of paper ballots in close elections and manual post-election audits of ballots in 10% of our voting districts. With online website voting, there is no actual ballot to verify. With e-mailed voting, there is no way to verify that a ballot was not lost or altered during the transmission.

Practical Implementation Problems—Beyond the lack of security in trusting our elections to the Internet, this bill would present several practical problems to implementation—problems that could serve to disenfranchise the very persons that we seek to help. Some towns in Connecticut still do not provide Internet access for their registrars in their offices. Frequently, e-mail sent to some towns is rejected, because mailboxes are full or addresses have changed. In our town, our fax machine is

located in a walk-through area between the registrars' and town clerk's offices, our main printer/scanner is in the main hallway of our town hall, open to public scrutiny. There is no privacy for an incoming fax or for printing out a voter's oversized ballot.

Current options sufficient—In the last election, registrars and town clerks worked with many overseas voters to get their ballots to them electronically in a timely manner, thanks to expansion of the MOVE ACT in 2011. We support the option for our military and overseas voters to request and receive a ballot electronically, but do not support trusting their returned votes to a technology that is not reliable and secure. In light of the recent hijacking of the Department of Justice's website by the group called Anonymous, the experimental and failed Internet voting pilot in Washington DC (<https://freedom-to-tinker.com/blog/jhalderm/hacking-dc-internet-voting-pilot/>), and national concerns over cyber-threats to our nation's security and communications infrastructure, we urge you to oppose this bill.

Certainly, those who put their lives on the line for our country deserve to be able to vote reliably, privately, and securely.

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Town of Wilton

Registrars of Voters