



**MANUEL A. SANTOS**  
Mayor

## City of Meriden, Connecticut *Office of the Mayor*

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February 26, 2015

Ron Thomas  
Connecticut Conference of Municipalities  
900 Chapel Street  
New Haven, CT 06510

Dear Ron Thomas:

Secretary of State Denise Merrill's proposed legislation to eliminate the dual Registrars of Voters should be aggressively apposed, and I urge CCM to advocate this opposition.

Both of Meriden's registrar of voters, Republican Lillian (Toni) Soboleski and Democrat Maureen Flynn, believe keeping the current setup is the only way to ensure fair elections, through the traditional checks and balance system. As an example, two sets of eyes are used and must agree when preparing memory cards for and setting up the tabulators. Supervised absentee ballots need checks to ensure a non-partisan approach. A single appointed registrar could potentially be a loyal partisan to the person who appointed them. There would be less an incentive to conduct an election in a non-partisan manner, especially when a single registrar's job could depend on the victory of a candidate on the ballot.

The Secretary's desire to eliminate what has worked for hundreds of years, suggests this is nothing more than yet another knee jerk reaction to Hartford's election day problems. It may also be a distraction from her office's failure to effectively communicate expectations the voting public has on the offices of registrar of voters. Accountability is cited as reason to make this change; however, registrars are already accountable for carrying out their duties properly under the authority of the SOTS, as spelled out in Statutes 9-3 and 9-4, with SEEC as the enforcement.

One isolated laps, in one city, does not mean the whole system is broken. As long as Connecticut (and the United States) maintains the two-party system, it is reckless to eliminate the dual registrar of voters.

Sincerely,

Manuel A. Santos