

**PUBLIC HEARING ON MARCH 9, 2015**  
General Administration and Election Committee  
Testimony on Raised Bill SB 1051

Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila and Members of the GAE Committee

My name is Sue Burnham and I am Sue W. Larsen. We are the Registrars of Voters in South Windsor and here to oppose a large part of SB 1051. The removal of both Registrars of Voters will leave a vacuum in the electoral process that cannot be filled. We are definitely two individuals with different strengths and weaknesses. That is what makes it work. We each have our responsibilities but we check each other out in order to insure all tasks are covered. We take it very seriously that no matter which one is doing the task, the other is just as responsible if it isn't done or done incorrectly. That is the way most of the municipalities work and it is extremely upsetting that issues that can be resolved in other ways are being settled by removing a system that works.

Are there solutions that should be considered before the drastic step SOTS wants? Yes, there are. We believe the certification program will benefit the Registrars of Voters greatly. Currently, there is only a committee developing the program. We need the Secretary of the State to review and approve the program. The sooner the Registrars of Voters are able to become certified, the stronger the elections will become.

Election Night Reporting is frustrating to be polite about it. We have newspapers calling, candidate campaigns calling and local officials calling. With poll books, the moderators are coming back earlier than when we had paper check off lists but as we get rid of one problem, we get another. The Widget. Registrars of Voters are mandated to determine the intent of the voter by calculating on a percentage basis where the "unknown" votes will go. We have to do the calculation by district for the 5 polling locations, central counting of absentee ballots and election day registration. What was once a few candidates utilizing cross endorsements has now turned into most candidates and thus making the calculations cumbersome. Does anyone really care how the votes are allocated? No, they just want to know who won and by how much. These calculations and the % of the voter turnout can easily be done the next day when we have gotten some sleep. We are in our office at 4:00 am. By midnight, we have been awake at least 20 hours straight.

Why are we being forced to allocate the "unknowns" in the first place? It is like saying to the voter since you haven't got enough good sense to declare a party then we must do it for you. This is wrong. Change the programming to force an overvote and give the voter the ability to recast the ballot or leave it alone and just declare x amount of unknown votes. Our allegiance is to the voter and not the political parties maintaining ballot access.

Another issue with End of Night reporting is the method we must use to report. We want technology that already exists. Send us a head moderator return that is a fillable form instead of a PDF that we must download and manually fill in. Then we have to fax it which means our head moderator has to drive the results to the Police Station in order to fax. We don't have fax in our office. We have email! This is also crazy because in order to save it digitally, we have to scan it. Most of us have developed excel spreadsheets to record the results. Why can't something like a spreadsheet be developed?

All of these solutions are easy fixes. Registrars of Voters are problem solvers. We do it every election when poll workers get ill, when a tabulator malfunctions, when a moderator calls about voters waiting more than 20 minutes. We can solve problems given the opportunity to do so.

We urge you to support this bill.

Thank you for allowing this testimony.

Sue W. Larsen, Registrar of Voters South Windsor  
ROVAC Legislative Chair