



Good afternoon Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila and members of the GAE Committee. My name is Melissa Russell, and I am a registrar of voters in Bethlehem and the president of the Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut (ROVAC). I'm here on behalf of ROVAC to speak in support of SB 1083, An Act Concerning Ways to Regionalize, Professionalize and Enhance the Efficiency of Election Administration.

ROVAC is in favor of the creation of a balanced task force to take on the very important issue of election administration. The issues surrounding our elections are complicated and definitely need careful and deliberative thought before making wholesale changes.

We do, however, have some reservations about the deadline for this task force's completed report, which is January 1, 2016. If the task force recommends major legislative changes in its report, and the legislature acts upon those recommendations in the following session, the changes will be occurring just as municipalities gear up for the Presidential Preference Primary, statewide primaries, and the Presidential Election. A Presidential election year is not an ideal time to institute large changes in election administration. We would prefer that the deadline of this task force be pushed back a year to January 1, 2017.

ROVAC also feels that there is no need to wait for the completion of this task force's work for this committee and the legislature to go forward with the enhancements to election technology that we've recommended and the implementation of a certification program for registrars. These are improvements to election administration that can be made now with beneficial results for elections this year and in years to come, no matter how those elections eventually are administered.

We once again thank this committee for your consideration, and thoughtful approach to these very important issues, and look forward to continuing to work with you to find better ways to run our elections.