



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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GENERAL BONDING SUBCOMMITTEE

Testimony

In Support of S.B. No 253 An Act Concerning Polling Places for Primaries

Government Administration and Elections

February 29th, 2016

Dear Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila Senator McLachlan, Representative Smith, and all other distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee: Thank you all for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 253, "An Act Concerning Polling Places for Primaries."

We are living in challenging financial times in Connecticut. Business and families are tightening their belts and finding savings wherever and however possible. As Connecticut citizens search for ways to save, so must government. Consolidating polling locations for primary elections is one of many ways we can save our municipalities money.

Everything government does, whether it is municipal, state, or federal, costs money. Elections are no an exception to this rule. Statistics from the Secretary of State's website show that for primary elections, average turnout statewide barely breaks twenty percent. With current law it is no less expensive to hold an election for twenty percent of the electorate as it is for one-hundred percent. By allowing the consolidation of polling places, the cost of running election could be cut significantly, without inconveniencing voters.

Summertime primaries make it difficult find poll workers. Between people on their summer vacations or their jobs, finding poll workers is an increasingly difficult task. Every polling location needs people to check identification, hand out ballots, and enforce policies like the seventy-five foot rule. All of this needs to happen for fourteen hours while the polls are open plus time to set up and break down. Consolidation of polling places would reduce the burden and expense put on our municipalities to find poll workers.

I would like to suggest that the current language of this bill be amended to only affect towns of 15,000 voters or less.

I urge that this bill pass committee and be voted on by the full assembly. I would be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Terrie Wood
State Representative
142st District
Darien & Rowayton