



**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING FEBRUARY 29, 2016**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 255  
AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICABILITY AND PROVISION OF TRAINING FOR REGISTRARS OF VOTERS**

Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila, and members of the GAE committee, my name is Melissa Russell, and I am a registrar of voters in Bethlehem, as well as the president of the Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut (ROVAC) and I am here today to speak in favor of SB 255.

As you all know, in 2015, the legislature passed a comprehensive and historic election reform bill, which included, in part, a requirement for registrars of voters to become certified in their profession. The members of ROVAC have embraced this new requirement, and many of them are already well on their way toward becoming certified in the next few months.

Part of the requirement of this legislation is for registrars to maintain their certification by participating in at least eight hours of additional training each year, which will keep registrars up to date with the latest laws, best practices, and newest technology.

In light of these new requirements, we respectfully recommend some "clean-up" of old statute, and some streamlining of procedures to eliminate duplicative efforts. For example:

- In Section 192a(3), the proposed language eliminates a third party selected by the Secretary of the State to conduct the eight hours of continuing training. We believe that ROVAC should continue to work in partnership with the Secretary in order to conduct this additional training, and would like to see the language reflect such a partnership. This would allow ROVAC to provide support and insight to the Secretary (as we currently do through our conferences) in selecting and developing additional training, and for registrars to receive training from current or former registrars, or other agencies such as the State Elections Enforcement Agency, the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Disabled Persons, and others, that would serve as fulfilling the eight hour requirement.
- Also, in Section 192a(d)(2), we would recommend eliminating the requirement that the training program developed under subdivision (2) be conducted by "trained registrars or former registrars hired for such purpose by the Secretary of the State". We believe that, while "registrars and former registrars" are instrumental in any training program, we should be inclusive of other agencies and experts in conducting training for registrars.
- We also support the repeal of 9-192b, as this statute requires registrars or their designees to receive ten hours of education that is not included in the above mentioned training. In light of the new 2015 certification requirements, this statute has become redundant.

I thank you for your consideration of these changes, and your continued efforts to support the goals of better education and training for our election administrators, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.