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Written Testimony of MICHAEL P. RYAN, President, Connecticut Broadcasters Association

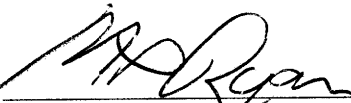
Before the Government Administration and Elections Committee concerning **H.B. 7392**, AN ACT CONCERNING VOTER PRIVACY

Dear Co-Chairs Flexer and Fox, Ranking Members Sampson and France, Vice Chairs Haskell and Winkler, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the television and radio stations of Connecticut that it represents, the Connecticut Broadcasters Association hereby opposes H.B. 7392. Broadcasters are members of the news media, providing critical information to the public on subjects such as politics, government, crime, and law enforcement. The history of our republic is founded and sustained by principles of open democracy, particular with regard to the election of our legislative representatives and other public officials. Secret electoral processes are anathema to these principles.

While the privacy of the individual's vote is an essential part of these principles, hiding the identities of the voters is not. The public, including the press in exercising its First Amendment rights, must be able examine the voter registration lists in order to assure the legitimacy of those lists, which requires sufficient information to accurately identify individual registered voters. At a minimum, this ability provides a powerful tool to detect voter fraud **and** voter suppression. We offer to meet with you at your convenience to further discuss H.B. 7392. If nothing else, please understand that the news media, including broadcasters, must have on-going access to public records in order to provide the transparency for elections that is intended by the Constitution. Thank you for your consideration.

CONNECTICUT BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY 

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