

March 13, 2019

TESTIMONY SUPPORTING HJR-161: RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING AND NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING

Dear Chairpersons Flexer and Fox, and Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Kathleen Callahan and I live in Stratford, Connecticut. I am here to voice my strong support for *HJR-161: Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for Early Voting and No-Excuse Absentee Voting*.

National reports show that this is very popular among voters and when given the opportunity, more people are taking advantage of the convenience of early voting every election cycle. I have siblings living throughout the country who talk about how much they love the freedom it provides and express confusion about their home state's lack of progress in this area. I fall strongly in the camp of voting as inalienable right and believe that with the complexities and uncertainties in the schedules of many of the voters in our state, increasing access is the appropriate step forward.

Considering that we are one of only eleven states that does not allow early or no-absentee voting, I think placing a statewide constitutional amendment – as a ballot question – before the state's voters gives voters the right to have their voice heard... about having their voice heard! In times of such polarization, this is a bipartisan issue where you and I share an important role – that of voter. I would like my legislators to allow the voters, of which you are one, to decide whether Connecticut should join the majority of others states and expand access to their own right and responsibility... voting.

In closing, I urge you to vote in favor of *HJR-161: Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for Early Voting and No-Excuse Absentee Voting*.

With respect and gratitude for your service and consideration,

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