



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
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HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

Dear Senator Flexer, Representative Fox and all of the esteemed members of the Government Administration and Election Committee,

I am writing in support of bills:

- .S.J. No. 27 (COMM) RESOLUTION PROPOSING A STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ALLOWING FOR NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING. (GAE)
- .S.J. No. 28 (COMM) RESOLUTION ALLOWING INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ATTAINED THE AGE OF SIXTEEN TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION AS ELECTORS AND TO BE SO ADMITTED UPON ATTAINING THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN. (GAE)
- .H.J. No. 161 (COMM) RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING AND NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING. (GAE)

It is 2019 and our voting regulations are still in the 1960s; we need to update to meet the needs of society in the early 21st century. When we look at the rest of our nation, Connecticut stands out as an outlier.

In all states in our country citizens are allowed to vote absentee but only in 16 states an excuse is required but, unlike Connecticut, 7 of them do have some other form of early voting option. Six states and DC allow no-excuse permanent absentee voting, while three states (Oregon, Washington and Colorado) conduct all early voting by mail.

When I moved to California after living 11 years in Europe in 2005, I had 2 small children and soon I was expecting my 3rd. I have always seen voting as an important civic duty – the foundation of a healthy democracy - and I loved to play my part in the democratic process that way. When I was living abroad, thanks to Federal Law, I voted regularly by mail or turned in my ballot at the US Embassy: it was a habit. When I moved to California, thanks to their

election laws, I became a permanent absentee voter, which allowed me to participate in democracy without having to worry about getting to the polls while my children were small.

I believe that now is the time to make a change to Connecticut's election laws to allow more people to participate in the democratic process, to recognize how society has transformed over the decades and enable all eligible voters to have their voice heard in a way that fits into their lives.

In the spirit of bringing people into the democratic process, I also strongly believe that Connecticut should automatically register young citizens on their 16th birthday as they obtain their driver's permit. The DMV can easily add this verification into the permit process, and this will reinforce their sense of civic duty at this significant milestone in their young lives.

Thank you for hearing these bills and I look forward to the opportunity to work with you on these issues.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lucy Dathan".

Lucy Dathan
New Canaan
Representative District 142