

3-9-19

Dear Senator Mae Flexer, Representative Daniel J. Fox, and Distinguished Members of the GAE Committee,

I am testifying in support of Bill # HJ 161: Early Voting Amendment.

My name is Karen Edwards, MD MPH. I live in Stamford and am a member of Stamford's Women on Watch.

In America, the right to vote is a fundamental freedom. We need to uphold the freedom to vote for every eligible American citizen. I am a parent, a pediatrician, and the daughter of a disabled veteran (World War II). I support the Early Voting Amendment based on my sincere belief that voting should be easier for every eligible voter, especially those who may have additional challenges in getting to the polls, such as seniors; disabled veterans and other people with disabilities; and parents.

The benefits of early voting include:

- 1) Reduction of stress on the voting system on Election Day;
- 2) Avoiding long lines on Election Day because voters redistribute voting over several days;
- 3) Improvement of poll worker performance;
- 4) Early identification and correction of registration errors and voting system malfunction; and
- 5) Greater access to voting and increased voter satisfaction.

Connecticut is among the minority of states that do not allow early voting. Restricting voting to one particular Tuesday is not consistent with the complexity of modern day life. It costs very little to replace our outdated election day voting system with a modern system that benefits everyone, including those who we might expect have more difficulty arranging to get to the polls such as seniors, disabled veterans, and busy parents.

I am asking you to vote yes and support HJ 161 Early Voting Amendment.

I'd like to thank the Committee for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,
Karen Edwards MD MPH
Stamford, CT