

Dear Senator Mae Flexer, Representative Daniel J. Fox, and Distinguished Members of the GAE Committee, I am writing in support of HJ 161: RESOLUTION PROPOSING AND AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING AND NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING. This is an issue which Connecticut lags behind the country in, with most states in the country allowing early voting and no-excuse absentee voting. This is not the main reason to support the amendment, but it is one which offers us some insight into how it effects other states in several areas. States with early voting generally have an easier time on election day thanks to the fact that less people are attempting to vote in such a small time period. There have been some studies done which show that early voting reduces the time you have to wait to vote on election day and that it also increases turnout. A good example of this is Ohio in 2004, where people were often waiting 3-4 hours to vote. Since Ohio has implemented early voting these wait times have reduced significantly. In addition to this, poll workers would be better equipped to deal with issues on election day thanks to the experience they would gain during the early voting period. During the 2018 elections in Connecticut we had several issues which I witnessed first hand volunteering during the election. A large portion of these issues were simple issues that could've been fixed had they had prior experience. There are many people who would benefit from this, especially those who don't usually vote due to issues with work or other responsibilities. The proposed amendment would make the early voting period during the weekend, which would help not only those who usually can't vote but those who do vote and often have to try and fit it into their schedule on Tuesday. I believe that the addition of early voting and no-excuse absentee voting would increase turnout overall, allow for easier voting, and would reduce the amount of issues that happen on election day. For these reasons I support the passage of HJ 161.

Zachary Hoyt

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