

Grace Kane  
Madison, Connecticut

Testimony for HJ 161: Resolution proposing an amendment to the state constitution to allow for early voting and no-excuse absentee voting.

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

My name is Grace Kane and I am a resident of Madison, Connecticut. I am testifying to express my support for HJ 161: Resolution proposing an amendment to the state constitution to allow for early voting and no-excuse absentee voting. I worked and volunteered on several campaigns during the 2018 midterms, including contacting hundreds of college students to inform them about the election. The majority of the responses either included that they were unsure about how to obtain an absentee ballot, or it was too late for them to file for one by mail. It takes weeks for someone to receive an absentee ballot if they file by mail and many of the college students would have been able to go home to vote if they could have voted on the weekend. I am currently a student at UConn, however, before I attended Stonehill College in Massachusetts. There was only one weekend I was home during the fall 2016 election season and I had to file for my absentee ballot then and was restricted to the hours my town hall was open to file for my absentee ballot. Had there been the option to vote early, I could have come home to vote for the election rather than risk my absentee ballot not being received in time. For the 2016 election, I was sent 2 different absentee ballots, one that was supposed to go to my mom. I immediately caught the mistake and emailed someone from my town hall about it. This mistake would have never occurred if early voting was allowed because my mom would have been able to vote before she left the country. Early voting also makes voting on Election Day go much smoother. Lines will be shorter, Election Day volunteers and officials will have more experience with dealing with any issues that may arise on Election Day, less machines will break down due to lower volumes of votes being counted on the same day. Passing HJ 161 will also extend the right to vote to more people who may not have time on Election Day due to work who cannot get the day off to vote. Having the weekend before Election day available to voters to be allowed to vote will decrease the issue of voters not being able to vote due to work conflicts. As far as no-excuse absentee ballots go, this will also help people who may not be able to get to the polls even if they are in town.

Thank you for hearing my testimony

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