

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

I am testifying in support of HJ 161: RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING AND NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING. I believe early voting and greater flexibility in voting options will make us a more robust and inclusive democracy. Limiting voting to one weekday when many people have work or childcare or other obligations, and limiting absentee ballot access, serves no good purpose and can be disenfranchising. It has been distressing to see long lines, inadequate numbers of ballots and other issues that deter voters in recent elections. Having more than one day to vote and removing limitations on absentee ballots are common sense ways to make our elections more open and engage more voters so we have a truly representative democracy.

The following excerpt from “Early Voting: What Works” by Diana Kasdan, The Brennan Center for Justice sums up the benefits of the “Early In Person Voting” (“EIPV”) proposed HJ 161:

“There are five key ways, other than increasing turnout, EIPV can improve elections: 1) reducing stress on the voting system on Election Day; 2) alleviating long lines on Election Day; 3) improving poll worker performance; 4) allowing early identification and correction of registration errors and voting system glitches; and 5) providing greater access to voting and increased voter satisfaction. Election officials we interviewed overwhelmingly pointed to these benefits.”

https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/VotingReport_Web.pdf

Connecticut should join the 39 other states and the District of Columbia that allow early voting. Please vote yes on HJ 161. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Linnea McCaffrey
93 Highwood Drive
Manchester, CT