

Dear Senator Mae Flexer, Representative Daniel J. Fox, and Distinguished Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee;

I am a registered and regular voter in the town of Granby. Here is my testimony in support of the Early Voting Amendment, *Bill# HJ 161, RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING AND NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING.*

This legislation is important to me and others who value the right to vote. I have voted at every opportunity, but not without fail. Whenever I am not able to cast that vote which represents my stance on an issue or candidate I am both sad and angry. I know that many others in this country, like my adult children or professional colleagues, are able to vote consistently because they have the option of early or absentee ballot voting. I want that option also.

When I was a professional in higher education I stressed to students and staff that their votes are their voices. Everyone who is eligible should vote; but I saw first-hand that if there are intervening circumstances on the one day assigned for voting in Connecticut, that critical action of casting a ballot is not always possible. More flexibility is needed. On campuses, workplaces, and in lives schedules, transportation, bad weather, or health issues can interfere with someone being able to exercise his or her right to vote. It has happened to me, but it need not happen again to anyone if citizens are allowed to vote in 2020 on the no excuse absentee ballot and three day voting window proposed in Bill# HJ 161.

I urge you to support this Early Voting Amendment to the State Constitution. Vote YES on Bill# HJ 161 so that all eligible voters in Connecticut can exercise their right to vote on the Amendment. If it passes in the November 3, 2020 election, then ultimately there will be optimum opportunity for all voters to enjoy this valuable flexibility to cast a vote either in person or in absentia.

Thank you for reading my testimony. I respectfully urge the Committee to carefully consider all the points raised and agree by voting YES to the proposed Early Voting Amendment.

Sincerely,

Patricia T. Owen, Ed.D
Granby, CT