



CGA Government Administration and Elections Committee

March 13, 2019 Public Hearing

Testimony Submitted by Yvonne Senturia, Election Law Specialist

Support for:

SB1036 AAC Regionalism for Elections

SB1046 AAC Election Day Registration in Polling Places

SB1049 AAC Modern Elections

SB1050 AAC Ranked-Choice Voting for Elections

HB6059 AAC Organizational Changes to Election Day Registration

HJ161 Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow
for Early Voting and No-Excuse Absentee Voting

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut is a nonpartisan, statewide organization committed to effective public policy, the active involvement of citizens in their government and improving the electoral process. We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on bills before you today.

SB1036 AAC Regionalism for Elections

The League of Women Voters of CT supports careful study before taking a position on an issue, as well as efficiency and effectiveness in the administration of elections at all levels of government in Connecticut, both for the best interests of our Connecticut voters and of Connecticut municipalities. To this end, we support studying whether there might be improved services to Connecticut voters and municipal cost-savings through regionalization of election administration in Connecticut. The proposed membership of such a study group appears fair, balanced, knowledgeable, and capable to explore the items outlined in the proposal. *The League supports SB1036.*

SB1046 AAC Election Day Registration in Polling Places

SB1049 AAC Modern Elections

HB6059 AAC Organizational Changes to Election Day Registration

The League of Women Voters is dedicated to improving the electoral process and maximizing voter participation. The number of voters wishing to use election day registration can be highly unpredictable, opening the opportunity for long lines and many citizens denied the opportunity to register and vote, when only one location can be used. We support giving registrars some discretion to add additional EDR locations, as in HB6059. We also support eliminating the requirement for call-backs to a former town where a person was previously registered, as in SB1049, which also requires that registrars submit staffing plans for election day registration and locations, and directs the Secretary of State to develop a system to capture electronic signatures for online submission of absentee ballot applications (similar to the very successful online voter registration system). With CVRS usually available only in the registrar's office or at

their Town Hall, there may be logistical issues with SB1046 unless registrars were given discretion to complete the processing of election day registrations from additional polling locations into CVRS the morning after the election.

The League supports expansion of election day registration to additional polling places, with appropriate discretion for registrars and the development of a system to capture electronic signatures for online submission of absentee ballot applications.

SB1050 AAC Ranked-Choice Voting for Elections

The League of Women Voters has a long history of careful study prior to taking a position on an issue. While the League does not have a position on alternative voting methods like ranked choice or proportional voting, enough interest has been expressed that *the League would support careful study of this issue.*

HJ161 Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for Early Voting and No-Excuse Absentee Voting

Currently absentee balloting is the only form of early voting allowed in Connecticut. The League believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote and therefore encourage efforts to maximize voter participation and early voting. The League also supports measures which assure that absentee ballot privileges are available to all electors – for any reason or no reason at all. *The League supports HJ161 that would amend the state constitution, to vest the General Assembly with the authority to loosen the standards for obtaining an absentee ballot and the authority to create an early voting system.*