

To whom it may concern

My name is Henry Smith and I am a member of Yale College Democrats. I write to express my support for HB 161, a resolution to permit early voting and no-excuse absentee voting, because I believe that every Connecticut citizen should be able to vote without restriction. As of now, 39 states have either early voting, no-excuse absentee voting, or both. Connecticut is not one of them. I expect Connecticut to better support its citizens' voting rights.

Admittedly, taking time on election day to go out and vote is easier said than done for many. Whether it's work, family, or numerous other reasons, sometimes there are too many obstacles to make voting accessible. This is why I believe that early voting is a necessity in Connecticut. Not only would early voting help to remove these barriers to vote that are much too common in our state, but it would also help to increase voter turnout among the disabled and elderly, who face particular problems getting to the polls (according to 2017 research by Pennsylvania Senator Bob Casey and Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar). Moreover, as someone who worked hard to make sure that everyone had the opportunity to vote during the 2018 election, I was horrified by the lines in New Haven that required hours of waiting. Voting should not be an inconvenience to anybody, and early voting would significantly assist in remedying this problem.

Finally, no-excuse absentee voting is crucial in Connecticut to ensure that the electoral process runs smoothly and includes everybody. No-excuse absentee voting would alleviate the pressure of poll workers tasked with dealing with difficult ballot-counting machines on election day. Moreover, election officials would not have to be preoccupied with determining whether an excuse is valid or not. And, most importantly, no-excuse absentee voting would open up the door to a more fair and accessible electoral system in the state of Connecticut.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support the passage of HB 161 to establish early voting and no-excuse absentee voting in the state of Connecticut. Regardless of party, we should all recognize the fundamental importance of the right to vote. Passing this measure would ensure that Connecticut is not lagging behind in its electoral process.

With kind regards,

Henry Smith

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