

My name is Rob Sutton 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.

With regards to early voting, the potential to rapidly increase both early voting and voter turnout will provide greater access to the ballot box and the direct removal of an unfair and obstructive barrier to voting. This is a common sense electoral reform, with wide support and clear evidence across the nation of its potential for successful implementation. It would be of tremendous benefit in terms of improving access for those who have difficulty voting on a single day, particularly the most vulnerable members of our community, including the elderly and disabled.

With regards to no-excuse absentee voting, current legislation needs to go further to increase voting amongst those who face significant challenges in getting to voting stations, but do not qualify under the unnecessarily restrictive current laws for absentee voting. At a time of falling turnout, we need to be doing everything we possibly can to make the voting process convenient for all. And given the tremendous pressure faced by our election officials on Election day, a move that would both make their jobs easier and increase voter turnout seems a necessary and sensible move.

The challenges faced by the electorate in making their voices heard are significant, but they are not insurmountable. Through common sense and popular reforms such as this, we can continue to widen access to the ballot box for everyone in our community.

Best,
Rob

-

Rob Sutton | **Postgraduate Fellow**
Yale University, Department of Radiology
University of Oxford, Magdalen College
E: robert.sutton@yale.edu
M: +1 (203) 836-6990