

March 10, 2019

Chairpersons Flexer, and Fox, and Committee Members
Government Administration and Elections Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2200
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Written Testimony in Support of the Early Voting Amendment Bill, HJR 161

Dear Chairpersons Flexer, and Fox, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of HJR 161, a **“Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow for Early Voting and No-Excuse Absentee Voting.”**

My name is Sally D. Turner, and I am submitting testimony in strong support of **HJR 161**.

--I am an Independent voter, and my husband is a registered Republican. We live in Greenwich, and usually it has been easy for us to vote. I recognize that we are privileged, and that this is not the case for many Connecticut citizens who are working long shifts, caring for young children or aging parents, and struggling, in our complicated world, to find enough hours in the day to accomplish what they need to.

--Last November’s mid-terms brought home to me personally for the first time just how important it is for Connecticut to make voting more convenient by allowing early voting. What happened is this: A week or two before Election Day, my husband and I found that we might need to be in NYC that day. Our son, who is a federal prosecutor for the S.D.N.Y, was going to be trying an important terrorist case, and it looked as though closing arguments could fall on Election Day. As proud parents, we wanted to be present. It would mean taking the train in and the subway downtown to be at the federal courthouse first thing. There would be the government’s (our son’s) closing (two plus hours) and then the defendant’s closing, and then rebuttal, jury instructions etc. I couldn’t be sure we would be back in Greenwich in time to vote or that I, at 70, would have the stamina to do so then or first thing, before leaving for NYC.

-- If Connecticut had early voting there would have been no issue. As it turned out, closings were on Monday. But the experience brought home to me the fact that in today’s world Connecticut’s voting laws are archaic. 39 states and the District of Columbia offer some form of early voting. And voting before Election Day is popular among all voters. According to a 2016 Gallup poll, 80% of Americans support early voting, including 74% of Republicans, 80% of Independents, and 85% of Democrats.

--It’s time for Connecticut to join those 39 states and to give its citizens greater access to voting by making it more convenient. Please consider my and all of your constituents’ wishes by voting in favor of HJR 161 and allowing us to have a say on early voting. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sally D. Turner
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