

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SJ-14

RESOLUTION PROPOSING A STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO

Title: PERMIT EARLY VOTING.

Vote Date: 3/29/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/25/2019

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The resolution intends to amend the general statutes to allow in-person voting prior to an election. The bill expands on this by amending the general statutes . The amendments allow for early in-person voting, and make adjustments to the vote counting process.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Denise Merrill, Secretary of the State supports SJ 14. The Secretary believes that the resolution is "...a popular, voter-centric reform that is long overdue".

Senator Bob Duff, Senate Democrat Leader, 12th District: supports SJ 14, and believes that all eligible voters have the right to vote, even if they are unable to make it to polls on Election Day. He states that the adapted early voting process will still use voter verified paper ballots, in-person voting, and optical scanners as methods to prevent voter fraud.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Stephen Wanczyk-Karp, Executive Director, National Association of Social Workers: supports the resolution, and believes it will be a great benefit to the voters of this state. Wanczyk states that this will lead to shorted lines on Election Day, it will give parents the opportunity to take their children with them and show them the importance of voting, and it will help voters with transportation and health issues.

Yvonne Senturia, Election Law Specialist, CT League of Women Voters: supports SJ 14, and believes that it will encourage voter participation and early voting. Senturia supports amending the state constitution to allow the General Assembly to create an early voting system.

Nora Duncan, State Director, CT AARP: supports the resolution. Duncan believes that SJ 14 will encourage voting by improving access to early voting for all voters. She also states that Connecticut is one of the few states that do not already have an early voting system in place.

Mark Bernacki, Legislative Chair, CT Town Clerks Association: supports SJ 14. His organization believes that "...in-person early voting by tabulator provides for the most secure method of voting and ensures the fewest number of voters will be disenfranchised."

David McGuire, Executive Director, ACLU-CT: supports the resolution. McGuire believes that it will decrease crowds on Election Day and increase overall voter turnout. He also feels that this will be crucial to voters with circumstantial limitations such as physical disabilities, lack of transportation, inconsistent work schedules, and a lack of childcare.

Sarah Ganong, Political Director, CT Working Families: supports the SJ 14. Ganong feels that this will increase voter turnout in the state and give more citizen the opportunity to participate in our democracy

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Luther Weeks, CT Voters Count: opposes the resolution, and feels that it will encourage voting fraud. In his testimony he also clarifies the difference between "voter" fraud (accomplished by an individual) and "voting" fraud (accomplished by "political insiders and officials). CT Voters Count supported a previous version of HJ 161, and would like to see changes made to bill that would address this issue such as polling-place early voting and in-person absentee voting.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

**Reported by: Wesaneit, Tsegai
Assistant Clerk**

Date: 4/15/19