

[S.B.1046](#), [S.B.1049](#), [H.B.6059](#)

**Government Administration and Elections Committee
Testimony – March 13, 2019**

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Chairs and members of the Committee, my name is Luther Weeks, Executive Director of CTVotersCount, a Certified Moderator, and a Computer Scientist. For two elections, I led the Election Day Registration team in Glastonbury.

These are three of five EDR bills heard so far this year. I testified on the other two, [H.B.6045](#) [H.B.5818](#), on February 15th. I will reference and extend that testimony today, it is at: <https://tinyurl.com/EDR2019a>

As I said on February 15th:

I thank the Committee for proposing these bills which would cure a serious civil rights violation that has in fact happened in 2014, 2016, and 2018! Voting Rights and Civil Rights demand that all citizens and voters be treated equally and have an equal right to vote!

The main objection to similar bills in the past has been from officials who are challenged by the difficulties in complying with the Cross-Check requirements in the law after 8:00pm. Those Cross-Check requirements are also the prime cause of the long, slow EDR lines.

I prefer H.B.6045 as it would extend Election Day Registration to primary elections. That would be an important component of increasing citizen participation in elections.

To be clear, I ultimately would prefer that Connecticut eliminate the Cross-Check altogether and join the vast majority of states that have EDR and which allow voters to register at their polling place.

S.B.1049 Sec 12. – Strongly Support – Needs just one small improvement

This bill would eliminate the cross-check requirement and thus make EDR much faster and easily able to serve all voters in line by 8:00pm on election day. It just needs to make it clear the voters in line at 8:00pm will be served such that the civil rights violations will not continue.

S.B.1046 – Oppose – Costly and difficult to implement

This bill would extend the current EDR with cross-check. It would require access to the Central Voter Registration Database from each polling place, a costly and difficult proposition to implement. It would require an expert in the CVRS at each polling place and many more calls from many more locations across the state –labor intensive and difficult to train and manage. It would not resolve the issue of applicants in line and not completed by 8:00pm.

H.B.6059 – No Comments

Extending my comments on H.B.6045 and H.B.5818

On February 15th there were three objections by some election officials to these bills and my proposed remedies. Here are my comments and cures to those objections, as I understand the objections:

- Extending EDR to primaries would be hugely expensive. First, it would not be that expensive since primaries do not attract as many voters as elections, so fewer officials would be necessary than are necessary on Election Day. Certainly, it would cost a bit more, but we should be willing to spend moderately to increase voter participation in primaries as well as elections.

- For primaries, citizens can register right up until the day before. True, yet that does not serve many voters who are turned away at the polls during primaries. Many assume EDR is available as it is in elections; Many, especially 1st time voters from other states do not understand our laws requiring party registration; Others registered unaffiliated years ago and think they are already registered in a party; And just like on Election Day, many think they are registered but for whatever reason they are not. None of these are helped by the fact that they could have registered earlier.
- The law requires that all scanner tape results be reported on election night, therefor the 48 hour delayed reporting deadline does not apply to most EDR votes. The solution is to change to law in 9-309 and 9-310, such that EDR ballots can be reported up to 48 hours after Election Day, just like hand counted ballots.

Thank you