Ify Chikezie  
March 9, 2020  

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 233: AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTIONS  

Dear Senator Flexer, Senator Sampson, Representative Fox, Representative France, and the esteemed members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:  

My name is Ify Chikezie. I am a first-year student at Yale Law School and I reside in New Haven, CT. I am writing today in strong support of S.B. 233: An Act Concerning Elections.  

Connecticut should implement automatic voter registration and expand voting rights to individuals that are on parole.  

Voting is a fundamental political right, and S.B. 233 is an important step towards ensuring that many more people, particularly from marginalized communities, can exercise this right. Crucially, S.B. 233 would grant more people access to the ballot and remove barriers to political participation—barriers that a healthy democracy should not tolerate. Furthermore, evidence from other states shows that automatic voting registration systems increase voter turnout and democratic participation. I strongly believe that Connecticut should follow national trends towards automatic voter registration, and thereby increase democratic participation across the state.  

In addition, I believe that voting rights should extend to individuals on parole. Regardless of incarceration or parole status, individuals are still impacted by and beholden to the political and economic structures that surround them. Individuals on parole pay taxes, comprise the constituency of their political representatives, and are integral parts of their communities. As such, they should be allowed to vote and have a say in the governance of themselves, their families, and their communities.  

In summary, S.B. 233 is an important bill that would allow people across the state to better exercise their fundamental political rights. Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.  

Sincerely,  

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