Re: Testimony in Support of S.B. 233

Dear Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, and distinguished members of the GAE Committee:

The Steering Committee of Voter Choice CT, the citizens’ movement to bring Ranked Choice Voting to Connecticut, is submitting this testimony in support of S.B. 233, *An Act Concerning Elections*, and urge you to favorably vote the bill out of your committee.

We believe our democracy is stronger when more citizens vote. Each of the provisions of S.B. 233 will make it easier for more citizens in Connecticut to participate in our elections, and deserve to be passed into law.

**Automatic Voter Registration**

We believe citizens should confront the fewest barriers possible in being eligible to vote. Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) accomplishes this by automatically registering eligible residents when they provide the information necessary for voting registration in the course of their other transactions with the state. It appropriately changes the paradigm to assume citizens want to register unless they opt-out, rather than assuming citizens don’t want to vote unless they opt-in. AVR has the additional benefits of making our registration process more accurate and efficient, thus saving taxpayer dollars. AVR has been passed in 16 states, often with bipartisan majorities. Connecticut residents deserve no less.

**Treat voters registered on election day the same as others**

Today, already-registered voters who are in line at the time polls close at 8pm are guaranteed the right to cast their ballot. There is no justifiable reason to treat those who register on election day any different. They should be allowed to register and vote if they are in line prior to the polls’ closing time.

**Restore electoral privileges to convicted felons on parole**

We believe it is in the interest of society-at-large to find positive ways to reintegrate back into their communities criminals who have served their time. Returning to them the ability to vote gives them a sense of belonging and a stake in the community’s well-being. Studies show that recidivism rates decline when voting rights are restored. We therefore support reinstating the right to vote for convicted felons who are on parole.

We urge you to vote in favor of S.B. 233 that include these measures that will strengthen our representative democracy by making it easier for citizens to participate in elections, and look forward to supporting your efforts to pass them into law.

Thank you for your consideration.

Allen Davis, New Haven
Maya Gomberg, Middletown
Jonathan Perloe, Cos Cob
Steven Winter, New Haven
Steering Committee, Voter Choice CT

ranked choice voting.
better elections for connecticut.