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## OLR Bill Analysis

sHJ 58

### ***RESOLUTION PROPOSING A STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ALLOW NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This resolution proposes a constitutional amendment to remove the constitution's current restrictions on absentee voting. Under these restrictions, the General Assembly may pass a law allowing electors to cast their vote by absentee ballot if they are unable to appear at their polling place because of absence from the town where they reside, because of sickness or physical disability, or because the tenets of their religion prohibit secular activity on election day (Article VI, § 7). The General Assembly exercised this authority and passed provisions codified at CGS § 9-135 (see BACKGROUND).

The ballot designation to be used when the amendment is presented at the general election is: "Shall the Constitution of the State be amended to permit the General Assembly to allow each voter to vote by absentee ballot?"

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** If the resolution passes by at least three-fourths of the membership of each house of the General Assembly, it will be placed on the 2022 general election ballot. If it passes by a majority of the membership of each house but less than three-fourths, it will be referred to the 2023 session of the legislature. If it passes in that session by a majority of each house, it will appear on the 2024 general election ballot. If a majority of those voting on the amendment in the general election approves it, the amendment will become part of the state constitution.

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### ***Absentee Voting***

CGS § 9-135 permits qualified electors to vote by absentee ballot if

they are unable to appear at their polling place because:

1. they are absent from the municipality in which they reside during all hours of voting;
2. they are ill or have a physical disability;
3. the tenets of their religion forbid secular activity on the day of the primary, election, or referendum;
4. they are in active service in the U.S. Armed Forces; or
5. they are primary, election, or referendum officials outside of their voting district, and their duties will keep them away during all hours of voting.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/05/2021)