General Assembly

House Joint
Resolution No. 59

January Session, 2021

LCO No. 3599

Referred to Committee on GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by:
(GAE)

RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR EARLY VOTING.

Resolved by this Assembly:

Section 1. WHEREAS, at the 2019 regular session of the General Assembly of the state of Connecticut, said General Assembly did approve, by at least a majority, but by less than three-fourths, of the total membership of each house, a resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the State which amendment, in accordance with article sixth of the amendments to the Constitution, was published in the manner prescribed therein and continued to the present regular session of the General Assembly, and which resolution is as follows:

"Resolved by this Assembly:

Section 1. That the following be proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the State, which, when approved and adopted in the manner provided by the Constitution, shall, to all intents and purposes, become a part thereof:
Section 7 of article sixth of the Constitution is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 7. The general assembly may provide by law for voting in the choice of any officer to be elected or upon any question to be voted on at an election by qualified voters of the state who are unable to appear at the polling place on the day of election because of absence from the city or town of which they are inhabitants or because of sickness or physical disability or because the tenets of their religion forbid secular activity. The general assembly may further provide by law for voting in person prior to the day of election in the choice of any officer to be elected or upon any question to be voted on at an election by qualified voters of the state.

Section 9 of article third of the Constitution is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 9. At all elections for members of the general assembly the presiding officers in the several towns shall [receive the votes of the electors, and] count and declare [them] the votes of the electors in open meeting. The presiding officers shall make and certify duplicate lists of the persons voted for, and of the number of votes for each. One list shall be delivered within three days to the town clerk, and within ten days after such meeting, the other shall be delivered [under seal] to the secretary of the state.

Section 4 of article fourth of the Constitution is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 4. [At the meetings of the electors in the respective towns held quadrennially as herein provided for the election of state officers, the presiding officers shall receive the votes and shall count and declare the same in the presence of the electors] The votes at the election of state officers shall be counted and declared in open meeting by the presiding officers in the several towns. The presiding officers shall make and certify duplicate lists of the persons voted for, and of the number of
votes for each. One list shall be delivered within three days to the town
clerk, and within ten days after such meeting, the other shall be
delivered [under seal] to the secretary of the state. The votes so delivered
shall be counted, canvassed and declared by the treasurer, secretary,
and comptroller, within the month of November. The vote for treasurer
shall be counted, canvassed and declared by the secretary and
comptroller only; the vote for secretary shall be counted, canvassed and
declared by the treasurer and comptroller only; and the vote for
comptroller shall be counted, canvassed and declared by the treasurer
and secretary only. A fair list of the persons and number of votes given
for each, together with the returns of the presiding officers, shall be, by
the treasurer, secretary and comptroller, made and laid before the
general assembly, then next to be held, on the first day of the session
thereof. In the election of governor, lieutenant-governor, secretary,
treasurer, comptroller and attorney general, the person found upon the
count by the treasurer, secretary and comptroller in the manner herein
provided, to be made and announced before December fifteenth of the
year of the election, to have received the greatest number of votes for
each of such offices, respectively, shall be elected thereto; provided, if
the election of any of them shall be contested as provided by statute, and
if such a contest shall proceed to final judgment, the person found by
the court to have received the greatest number of votes shall be elected.
If two or more persons shall be found upon the count of the treasurer,
secretary and comptroller to have received an equal and the greatest
number of votes for any of said offices, and the election is not contested,
the general assembly on the second day of its session shall hold a joint
convention of both houses, at which, without debate, a ballot shall be
taken to choose such officer from those persons who received such a
vote; and the balloting shall continue on that or subsequent days until
one of such persons is chosen by a majority vote of those present and
voting. The general assembly shall have power to enact laws regulating
and prescribing the order and manner of voting for such officers. The
general assembly shall by law prescribe the manner in which all
questions concerning the election of a governor or lieutenant-governor
shall be determined.
RESOLVED: That the foregoing proposed amendment to the Constitution be continued to the next session of the General Assembly elected at the general election to be held on November 3, 2020, and published with the laws passed at the present session, or be presented to the electors at the general election to be held on November 3, 2020, whichever the case may be, according to article sixth of the amendments to the Constitution. The designation of said proposed amendment to be used on the ballots at such election shall be "Shall the Constitution of the State be amended to permit the General Assembly to provide for early voting?"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THIS ASSEMBLY: That the said amendment so proposed is approved and that it be presented to the electors at the general election to be held on November 8, 2022.

GAE Joint Favorable