

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF  
NANCY J. DINARDO  
CHAIR; Connecticut Democratic State Central Committee  
March 20, 2023  
IN SUPPORT OF**

**HB 6908 AAC Elections, Presidential Preference Primaries and Deadlines for  
Minor Party Nominations**

**HB 6904 AAC Campaign Finance**

Senator Flexer, Representative Blumenthal, and members of the GAE Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to express my support and the support of the Connecticut Democrats for legislation that will give the voters of our state a stronger voice in choosing a Presidential candidate, and will update fundraising rules for our party structures.

I'm proud to say that support for this legislation is bipartisan. My colleague, the Republican State Chairman, and I have worked together to help craft these bills, and both of us are here today to voice that support in person.

Presidential primary season traditionally focuses enormous attention on a handful of states in January and February. For too many Presidential election years, Connecticut voters have been shortchanged by primaries scheduled on the last Tuesday in April, so late that most of the decisions about the field of candidates in both the Democratic and the Republican party have already been made.

HB 6908 would move the primary date from the last Tuesday of the April to the first Tuesday of April.

As we all know, three weeks in politics can be an eternity. This shift in the schedule will give Connecticut's voters a greater voice in the process, and very likely more opportunities to meet the candidates.

Should this legislation be approved, Connecticut's primary date will coincide with the New York Presidential primary. While our state has not been a priority for candidate visits in previous years, given the late season timing and our relative size, candidates may take a different approach if they are campaigning one state over. The elevated status of Connecticut could also result in more money coming to the state in terms of candidate advertising dollars and event production for visits to the state.

The Connecticut Democrats also support HB 6904, which would update the fundraising limits for the state parties.

The state parties identify and nominate candidates for municipal, state and federal office, and are involved in financing and managing campaigns for public offices. As you know, the state parties are not income generating, and we rely on donations to fund our work, which is fundamental to our democracy.

Fundraising limits have not been updated for more than a decade and over that time, inflation and other costs have increased significantly. HB 6904 will allow both state parties to raise the funds necessary to operate.

I would like to thank the Republican State Chairman for working in a bipartisan way to bring this legislation forward, and I want to urge its passage.