

# Connecticut Town Clerks Association, Inc.

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Good afternoon Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, Senator Sampson, Representative France, and the distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee my name is Anna Posniak, I am Windsor's Town Clerk as well as the President of the Connecticut Town Clerks Association (CTCA).

First and foremost, the CTCA wants to ensure that November Presidential Election is safe, secure and accessible to all voters in our state. We understand and sympathize with voters' desire to cast a ballot while not compromising their health during the worldwide pandemic. Nonetheless, the implementation of an all-mail absentee ballot system from scratch in a matter of weeks is a challenging endeavor.

The members of CTCA are entrusted with numerous election related responsibilities. Our role is vital to ensure the integrity, fairness and transparency of all Connecticut elections. The CTCA has worked diligently with Secretary of the State's office to implement an all-mail voting system for the August 11<sup>th</sup> Primary. With the absentee application process underway town clerks across the state are industriously and diligently working every day to meet the demands the Secretary has bestowed upon us.

CTCA asks for consideration of the following language in LCO No. 3576:

## Section 4:

- g(1) Due to COVID town halls across the state have reduced their hours or require appointments for services. Additionally, not all town clerks' offices can meet CDC guidelines for safety when setting up voting booths for voters in person. The CTCA requests that lines 82-85 that allow for an absentee ballot applicant to cast their ballot in person at the town clerks' offices be removed and add additional language that will allow for an absentee ballot applicant to cast their ballot in person for only emergency travel six days prior to the election. This would require modification to CGS 9-150C and the Emergency Application for Absentee Ballot.
- Under the same section, Line 82 requires the town clerk to mail voting sets within 24-hours. We are asking to extend mailing requirement from 24-hours to 48-hours. This request is due to the anticipated record number of applications town clerks will process for

the November Election. Additionally, we ask for language that any delays resulting due to the mail house shall be reported directly to the Secretary of the State and town clerks shall not be held legally accountable for those delays.

CTCA recommends that the Secretary of the State provide public service outreach and training for those using the all-mail absentee ballot application. Many voters will use the absentee ballot process for first time and are very likely to have their ballots rejected due to unintentional errors. Voters' may have their ballot rejected for lack of signing the inner envelope or not inserting the ballot into the inner envelope. Furthermore, it is critically important to communicate the need for the voter to apply for their absentee ballots early and utilizing the drop boxes for ballots as the date of the election gets closer. This will ensure that the ballot is received by the close of polls on Election Day and reduce the risk of disenfranchising a voter.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this important bill for a safe and secure 2020 election.