

To the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

I present this statement in vigorous opposition to the bill to expand absentee ballot program.

The SOTS reported 8% of returned mail-in ballot applications would be grossly understated for Bridgeport. As Republican candidate for State Rep. for the 128th District (central portion of Bridgeport), in June, I walked the entire District knocking on doors of Republican-registered voters. There were many for which I got a response like, "That person no longer lives here". There were some who were known deceased. There was one who acknowledged that he's not a US citizen (not the first time I've heard that). And for those listed voters who live in apartments where there is restricted access, I sent flyers by mail. So far, 9% of the mailed flyers have been returned (I sent my mailers several weeks before the SOTS sent AB applications and I'm still getting some returned.). Then if I consider those who were reported deceased or moved on, there would be at least 30% of registered voters who are improperly listed. BTW, there were those whom I contacted who said they thought they had registered Republican but who don't appear as registered Republican. Further, it is logical to assume that some mailings have gone to people who should not be on the list but, instead of the mailing being returned, was intercepted by who knows whom. In a court case last year dealing with the issue of fraudulent absentee ballots in the Bridgeport mayoral race, Judge Barry Stevens said there was an alarming amount of evidence of fraud! Thus, for all, the 8% figure reported by the SOTS is wholly incomplete and misleading!

Expanding the absentee ballot program is not the way to go. There are too many ways to commit fraud. The minimal issue of COVID risk does not justify opening the process as is contemplated. There are more practical conservative means to do so!

Thank you,

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