

As a Registrar of Voters, I would like to speak in support of absentee ballot applications being mailed to all registered voters and for "Covid-19" being used as a reason for voters to request an absentee ballot for the November 3<sup>rd</sup> Presidential Election. Voters should not have to choose between their health and exercising their constitutional right to cast their vote for President of the United States. This pandemic is not over, and health experts say it will continue well past November. I am concerned for the health of voters, and those living with them, and I am also concerned for the health of my poll workers. We are taking every precaution we can to protect our workers, but by far, the best precaution is to have people cast their votes by mail.

I have heard several reasons why some people oppose this suggestion, but none of them hold up against the facts.

Don't trust the mail: Social Security checks, IRS checks, pension checks, and other important material is sent through the mail every day.

Afraid their vote won't be counted: Connecticut has very strict, detailed procedures for counting ballots, including, among other mandatory procedures, having two counters (one from each major party) work as a team to process and count the ballots

Fraud: In 2016, out of a billion votes cast, there were only 34 that were questionable and these 34 were investigated. Many people repeat false accusations that they heard on talk radio or read on social media. They hear things like "thousands of dead people" voting and/or "thousands of people voting twice." Just because someone's name is on the list, does not mean that he is casting a vote. In Connecticut, the registrars conduct an annual to determine if someone has moved. The state has also signed onto a program that checks voters against other states to make sure the voter is not on the voting list in two different states. Sometimes, a deceased person is on the voter list, but that is because the registrar is waiting for a copy of their death certificate.

This issue seems to have become a partisan issue, which it should not be. Voting is every ones right. Politicians should not be putting up road blocks to make it difficult for citizens to exercise that right. Indeed, elected officials have an obligation to protect our constitutional right to cast a vote. In these uncertain times, you have an obligation to put your partisan opinions aside and do what is right for your constituents and right for the health of our democracy.

I urge you to vote in favor of absentee ballot applications being sent to all registered voters for the November Presidential Election and in favor of allowing people who have very real concerns regarding the current pandemic, to use "Covid-19" as a reason for requesting an absentee ballot for that election.

Thank you for your time.

Katherine G. Grace, ROV  
Beacon Falls