

To: Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee
From: Lauren Garrett
Date: July 19, 2020
Re: LCO 3576, Absentee Ballots

Dear Senator Mae Flexer, Rep. Daniel Fox, Senator Will Haskell, Rep. Michael Winkler and
Esteemed members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee,

I am speaking in support of LCO 3576, An Act Concerning Absentee Ballots. I am relieved to vote by mail in the primary on August 11. I am young and healthy but would prefer to cast an absentee ballot. I worry about the poll workers. They tend to be retired members of our community. In Hamden, we have a shortage of people willing to work on election day. I hope that the majority of voters will vote absentee this year. Thank you for this legislation that will allow us to vote absentee in the general election because I worry that we will experience a second wave this fall. This is our new normal. We don't know when COVID will expire so this legislation should not expire. We cannot predict if a vaccine will be available next year and if it will be effective. Please change the language on the Absentee Application by dropping the words, "such elector's or person's" so that anyone can vote absentee because of "illness."

A few towns have municipal elections in May. Will COVID be over by May 2021? We will have municipal primaries in September of 2021. Will COVID be over? A legislative fix should not be temporary. That's not much of a fix, it's more of a day-pass when voters need access. Connecticut has some of the most restrictive voting laws. We don't have early voting. We don't have Vote by Mail. We could improve our voter turnout by making it easier to vote. That should be something we can all support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Garrett
Hamden, CT