

July 20, 2020
Government Administration and Elections Committee
Legislative Office Building Room 2200
Hartford, CT 06106
Via Email GAEstimony@cga.ct
Re: LCO 3576 Absentee Voting

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

I am writing regarding the proposed amendment to CGS 9-135, specifically the new language proposed at subsection (a)(7), which appears to be drafted to add a section permitting voters a one-time ability to vote by absentee ballot on November 3, 2020 on account of the dangers posed by Covid-19 for in-person voting. I have previously expressed my interest in this subject, and I wholeheartedly support a legislative amendment to enable widespread absentee voting during the pandemic. I appreciate receiving notice of the draft from Sen. Maroney, and I thank you for your work during this difficult time.

When Governor Lamont issued EO 7QQ earlier this year permitting absentee voting in the primary, the final Order states “1. Absentee Voting Eligibility During COVID-19 Pandemic. Section 9-135 of the Connecticut General Statutes is modified to provide that, in addition to the enumerated eligibility criteria set forth in subsection (a) of that statute, an eligible elector may vote by absentee ballot for the August 11, 2020 **primary** election if he or she is unable to appear at his or her polling place during the hours of voting because of the sickness of COVID-19. (Emphasis supplied.) But the draft of the revision to our current language now under consideration, instead of clearly and unambiguously providing that the new section (a)(7) applies to the **general** election to be held on Nov. 3, 2020, instead says: “for the **state** election in 2020.the sickness of Covid-19. Emphasis supplied. Likewise, the draft of the revision under consideration to sec. 9-137b also provides: “for the **state** election in 2020...” instead of plainly making this one-time addition to permissible absentee voting reasons “for the **general** election 2020.” If in fact the attorneys at OLR and Elections have blessed the proposed language as valid to encompass both the State and Federal offices on the ballot in 2020, then please disregard my concern about the draft language. I thought that if I, having served as the Milford City Attorney for 23 years, was confused by the draft as currently written, perhaps the average person might also have trouble.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yrs sincerely,
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