

Testimony in Favor of Expanding Access to Absentee Ballots During COVID-19, LCO No.3576

Every voter should be able to vote in the upcoming General Election, whether or not they are able to do so in person.

I am predisposed to Diabetes Type II, which means that I may be more susceptible to a slow recovery, or worse, if I catch the Covid-19 (SARS-CoV-2) virus. I have been purposefully avoiding large crowds, important gatherings, and even the supermarket, to avoid coming in contact with the virus. I urge you to take a stand in support of expanding access to absentee ballots during the Covid-19 pandemic. My husband and two young children depend on me to be healthy. And we depend on Democracy to live an equal life with others in our community. There is no reason to stall or disallow absentee ballots for the General Election. It is unconscionable to force voters (me) to choose between protecting my health and exercising my right to vote. It is undemocratic to make voting inaccessible to voters who are unable to attend large events such as on Election Day due to health concerns.

My family and I are grateful that Governor Lamont had signed executive order 7QQ that allows all eligible voters to use COVID-19 as a reason to vote by absentee ballot. We are equally grateful that Secretary of State Denise Merrill had taken proactive measures to make it easier for voters to cast absentee ballots, such as mailing all eligible voters absentee ballot applications, with return postage paid. Please expand absentee ballot access to enable voters to do the same for the General Election.

Voting must be accessible to everyone who is eligible to vote. Anything else is un-American.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Shira Tarantino
Stamford