

July 20, 2020

To Chairs and Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

Re: LCO No. 3576, AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING AT THE 2020
STATE ELECTION AND ELECTION DAY REGISTRATION

I am writing to express my support for the inclusion of a provision in the above referenced bill to accommodate concerns regarding COVID-19.

Connecticut has done a great job reducing the threat of this serious disease by encouraging social distancing and mask wearing. There is no reason to change course now as we head into the fall and winter when other illnesses threaten to complicate our lives further. Given the devastating toll this disease has had on the vulnerable communities, we need to do everything we can to avoid putting people in harms way. Allowing people to vote absentee in order to reduce crowding at the polls and reduce the spread of COVID-19 just makes good sense.

I would like the proposed language to be modified, however. As it currently reads: that one is unable to vote due to "the sickness of COVID-19" strikes me as vague. Is this intended only for people actually suffering from COVID-19? In that case it seems unlikely that they'd be able to use an absentee ballot either. I'd recommend just saying "COVID-19". That allows the possibility of fear of contracting the illness, not just having active symptoms.

Thank you for your consideration.

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