

TESTIMONY OF TOM SWAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CONNECTICUT CITIZEN ACTION GROUP (CCAG)
JULY 21, 2020
BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
ON
LCO 3576 AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING AT THE 2020 STATE ELECTION AND
ELECTION DAY REGISTRATION

Senator Flexer, Representative Fox and other members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee my name is Tom Swan and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Citizen Action Group. On behalf of our thousands of members statewide I want to thank you for raising LCO 3576 AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING AT THE 2020 STATE ELECTION AND ELECTION DAY REGISTRATION.

We applaud your willingness to address the need for people to be able to exercise their fundamental right to vote without risking their and their family members lives. It is unconscionable that there are some people who have played political games to gain an advantage and resisted these efforts.

We believe this pandemic has again proven the need to amend our constitution and remove some of the restrictive language pertaining to voting by absentee ballot or by mail. We recognize that a constitutional amendment is not possible to pass prior to the election so we recognize that the legislation you are considering is our opportunity to protect people in November.

Towards this end we urge you to pass and amend the language in CO 3576. The following changes we hope you will consider:

- Do not make the statutory language any more restrictive than the constitution.
- Extend the time limit this covers to at least July 1st of 2021. We think it should be permanent but am willing to advocate for that in the next legislative session. There is seldom not a special election in odd years and these protections should be in place for the possible elections.
- While we strongly support the proposals to fix the challenges we have had with our Election Day Registration program in the legislation we support the additional changes the Secretary of the State has proposed.

In closing I want to thank the Committee Chairs, Governor Lamont and SOTS Merrill for your leadership on this issue. We look forward to working with you to strengthen our democracy.