TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT of <u>CONTINUATION OF EMERGENCY</u> <u>DECLARATIONS & LIMITED EXECUTIVE ORDERS</u> Hearing: <u>TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2022 – 9:00 AM</u>

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to urge all state legislators to support the continuation of Governor Lamont's Emergency Declarations and also in support of Limited Executive Orders. The reality is that despite the fact that we are all tired of the pandemic, it's possible that COVID-19 may well mutate and send another variant our way. Since the legislature is only in session periodically throughout the year, it is important to give Governor Lamont the flexibility to react quickly to address public health developments and healthcare and education personnel shortages.

I hope that we can all agree that in order to protect the most vulnerable among us, COVID should be permitted as a valid "modified" illness excuse for absentee voting through 2022. Unlike the vast majority of states, CT does not offer the option of early voting. It makes this short term action all the more critical. A public health crisis necessitates flexibility and a commitment to put the health of the citizenry first. Voters will have their say in November. Please don't make it more difficult for voters to do so safely!

Respectfully, Linda Pryde Westport, CT