

From the House

Our Election Laws Need a 21st Century Upgrade

"Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves and the only way they could do this is by not voting." ~ **Franklin D. Roosevelt**

Building and maintaining a vibrant democracy means recognizing that the world has changed.

Connecticut's voting laws are based on assumptions that we live the same lives we did in the 1950's or 1960s. Voters have a very different lifestyle today than we did even a generation ago – or two or three generations ago.

We need to provide voters with an election system that recognizes modern lifestyles, integrates new technologies and new ways to deliver services. By perusing options for early voting and expanded absentee balloting, we will enfranchise more people and make it easier to vote.

The fact is we are way behind other states when it comes to modernizing our election laws. In 37 states and the District of Columbia, any qualified voter may cast a ballot prior to Election Day. And 27 states permit any qualified voter to vote absentee without offering an excuse.

What about concerns of voter fraud? Well, those fears may be misplaced - The Judicial Branch reports that they only have one record of prosecution for "fraudulent voting" (CGS 9-360) – One!

Voter impersonation fraud is not an issue in Connecticut. According to the Connecticut Office of the Secretary of the State, since 1974 – when the State Elections Enforcement Commission was established – there have been more than 24 million ballots cast in gubernatorial or Presidential years in Connecticut and there have been only a small handful of elections infractions alleging voter fraud.

So, let's modernize our elections and open the voting booth to everyone who is eligible to vote.