

From the House Time to Make Voting Easier in Connecticut

By Rep. Matt Ritter

The House of Representatives recently approved two important resolutions that will place constitutional amendments on the ballot in coming elections for voters to consider allowing early voting and "no-excuse" absentee ballots.

Unlike Georgia, which adopted a new law to make it harder for voters to cast their ballots, in Connecticut we are fighting to make voting more accessible and make democracy more democratic. The more people who vote, the healthier our democracy.

Connecticut's current absentee ballot laws are restrictive and archaic, preventing many people from voting. Our constitution only allows voting by absentee ballot under very strict circumstances, such as illness – but what if you work two jobs and can't get to a polling place on Election Day? You would be breaking the law if you voted by absentee ballot.

The COVID pandemic forced Connecticut's hand on temporarily modernizing our absentee ballot process. We mailed ballot applications to every voter in 2020 and allowed everyone the opportunity to vote by absentee due to pandemic concerns. And guess what? People liked it and there was no voter fraud, and our voter turnout hit record highs.

To build on that success, we passed a proposed constitutional amendment (HJ58) that will ask voters to allow the legislature to implement no-excuse absentee voting. In addition, another proposed constitutional amendment (HJ59) authorizes the legislature to create an in-person early voting system. We also approved legislation to make absentee voting more accessible and convenient for Connecticut residents. [HB 6205](#) expands eligibility for absentee voting in a common-sense way.

We proudly call ourselves "The land of steady habits," but sometimes that just means slow and behind the times. Currently, 43 states allow voters to cast a ballot prior to Election Day, and 34 states permit voting via absentee without excuse.

Let's buck the nationwide trend of voter suppression and make voting easier through early voting and no-excuse absentee ballots.

Please contact me if I can ever be of any assistance. I can be reached at Matthew.Ritter@cga.ct.gov, on Facebook [@RepresentativeMattRitter](#) or by phone at (860) 240-8489, if you have any questions or concerns.