

Written Testimony Supporting Equitable Early Voting

Senator Flexer, Representative Blumenthal, Ranking Members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco, and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

1: Introduction of yourself and (if applicable) your organization

2: State clearly that we need equitable, accessible, and inclusive early voting that includes at least 14 days of early voting, with at least one full weekend and hours that are inclusive of early mornings and evenings, and at early voting locations that are navigable by pedestrians and public transit, with disability access.

3: Explanation of how your personal values align with supporting equitable early voting in Connecticut. Some suggested statements:

- I believe that the right to vote is precious, and we must make our democracy stronger by protecting and strengthening access to the ballot box.
- I believe that Connecticut needs to do more to correct its record of being one of the most restrictive states for voting rights .
- I believe that access to early voting means more people have a chance to make their voices heard at the ballot box.
- I believe that access to early voting is a racial justice issue. Early voting will help all voters, but especially Black and Latinx voters, women, disabled voters, parents, low-income voters, and elderly voters.
- I believe that early voting is a critical tool for more people to have access to the ballot box. It makes our democracy stronger by breaking down barriers to people being able to exercise their right to vote.

4: Facts and data supporting equitable early voting: Feel free to reference the Early Voting Fact Sheet or use some of the information below:

- Connecticut voters are busy – especially voters who face interlocking systems of oppression, which combine to mean we have very little predictably-scheduled, paid, free time and often face long lines and waits at the polls on Election Day.
- In Connecticut, voters in majority Black areas wait, on average, more than 9 minutes longer than voters in majority white areas.
- People who are low-income are more likely to work in jobs without paid time off or predictable work schedules that can allow people time to wait in line and vote on Election Day.
- Among the [46 other states that have early voting](#), the average number of early voting days is 23.
- Among the 46 other states that have early voting, 23 and D.C. allow weekend early voting.
- According to research from the [Human Rights Campaign](#), nationwide, almost half of all LGBTQ+ voters (46%), more than six in ten trans voters, and nearly three in four BIPOC trans voters (71%) have been barred from voting in at least one election

because of barriers like inconvenient polling times and locations or childcare responsibilities.

- Nationwide, during the 2020 election, disabled voters were almost twice as likely to experience barriers to voting compared to nondisabled voters. Disabled people are not a monolith, and early voting would give disabled voters more flexibility to use the voting option that best meets their needs.

4: Conclude by calling for the Government Administration and Elections Committee to support the bill.