Legislative Testimony

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**Sample Testimony Supporting the Funding of Early Voting, No-Excuse Absentee Voting, and the Connecticut Voting Rights Act**

Senator Anwar, Representative Ryan, Ranking Members Somers and Ackert, and members of the General Government A Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee:

1: My name is \_\_\_\_, and I am a resident of *[town]* and/or a member of *[organization].* I am here to testify in support of fully funding the Connecticut Voting Rights Act (CTVRA), equitable early voting, and timely no-excuse absentee voting in the budget.

**[*Tell your story in 1-5 sentences.* *Add a sentence about any advocacy or communities you represent that would benefit from expanded access to the ballot box.*]**

2: State clearly that we need equitable, accessible, and inclusive early voting and no-excuse absentee voting. Explain that in order to achieve equitable access to the ballot box that we must appropriate adequate funding to early and no-excuse voting. Some suggested value statements:

* Connecticut voters overwhelmingly approved of early voting at the polls, and early voting is extremely popular and necessary. More than 850,000 voters in Connecticut voted early in its first year.
* Connecticut voters deserve a fair opportunity to vote in a way that is easy, accessible, and convenient for us, and we cannot afford to implement no-excuse absentee voting the wrong way.
* I believe that the legislature must fully fund early voting and no-excuse absentee voting so voters have better, fairer, and more equitable access to the ballot box.

3: State clearly that the legislature must fund the CTVRA as well in order to guarantee that our elections, including early voting and no-excuse absentee voting, are truly accessible to all. Explain that in order to implement the Connecticut Voting Rights Act, that we must appropriate adequate funding. Some suggested value statements:

* Voting rights are fundamental to a functioning democracy, and funding our election processes, ballot needs, election worker training, and the Secretary of the State’s office is crucial to ensuring the success of our democratic system in Connecticut.
* I believe that access to the ballot box is a racial justice issue, and Connecticut needs to do more to correct its record of restricting Black and Latine voters especially from exercising the right to vote.
* I believe that our democracy is stronger when areas with histories of discriminating against voters of color receive additional oversight when they try to change their election policies.
* I believe that passing the CTVRA has been a key step towards making Connecticut a national leader on voting rights. Now, we must fully fund the CTVRA along with early voting and no-excuse absentee voting to continue our state’s movement as a champion for voting rights.
* The CTVRA is the most comprehensive voting rights legislation in the country. Connecticut has the opportunity to be the #1 national leader in voting rights access and fidelity.

**[*Add information about why you support this bill and why you felt the need to testify. Connect your personal story to the impact.]***

4: Conclude by asking the members of the Appropriations Committee to fully fund early voting, the timely implementation of no-excuse absentee voting, and the Connecticut Voting Rights Act.

***[Please also send your testimony to your state representative and state senator. Find your representatives here:*** [***https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/cgafindleg.asp***](https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/cgafindleg.asp)***]***