

Office of Governor Ned Lamont
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

April 30, 2020

Dear Governor Lamont,

We the undersigned organizations are writing to you because the members we represent, and our communities at large must be free to exercise our right to vote from the safety of our homes by mail. We believe you have a responsibility to ensure that we can vote safely without risking our lives or the lives of others in the process of casting our votes during this COVID-19 pandemic—especially since the November 3rd general election could be happening amidst an autumn coronavirus resurgence.

Connecticut cannot become a repeat of Wisconsin's April 7th primary election voter rights nightmare where partisan operatives weaponized the pandemic for voter suppression.

During this health crisis, it's of common-sense importance to allow voters to request absentee ballots electronically which will reduce foot traffic in the offices of Town Clerks.

We must also reduce in-person paper transactions—and since so many interactions with the state have been taken online we call on you to allow eligible voters to become registered to vote for the 2020 election when they interact with state agencies. Social distancing via the Stay Safe, Stay Home protocols we are following has resulted in thousands of people not being registered to vote and that will only increase due to limited gatherings of the public.

In the wake of April 7th some number of Wisconsinites who had to risk their health to vote likely now have run a fever. They realize they can't take deep breaths—that their bodies ache, relentlessly. It's absolutely unconscionable that exercising their right to vote is an act that could have cost them or others their lives.

This will not stand. We must overcome the sometimes subtle, but always immoral and potentially deadly excuses raised by some who would force us to choose between risking our health by voting or silencing our voices in order to stay safe.

Governor Lamont, as you know so well, this is about saving lives and protecting our hard fought and won right to vote. As we mourn the loss of our dead and work to protect the elderly and vulnerable during this pandemic, we ask with one voice that you issue an executive order allowing vote-by-mail and for eligible voters to become registered to vote for the 2020 election when they interact with state agencies.

Please act right away to allow sufficient time to successfully enact these changes. We cannot wait to see what happens with COVID-19 and get caught flat footed in the fall.

Sincerely,

ACLU of Connecticut
Action Together CT
Action Together CT - New Haven County
Association of Retired Teachers of Connecticut (ARTC)
Bridgeport Generation Now
Bristol Branch NAACP
Clean Water Action
Common Cause in Connecticut
Communications Workers of America Local 1298
CONNECT (Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut)
Congregation Mishkan Israel
Connecticut AFL-CIO
Connecticut Citizen Action Group
Connecticut Education Association
Connecticut Employees Union Independent CEUI SEIU Local 511
Connecticut League of Conservation Voters
Connecticut Working Families Party
CSEA SEIU Local 2001
CT Alliance for Retired Americans
CT Black Women
CT River Huddle
CT Shoreline Indivisible
Democratic Women in Action
Episcopal Church in Connecticut
Every Vote Counts - Yale
Hamden Action Now
Hamden Democratic Town Committee
Hamden Progressive Action Network (HamPAN)
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
Hartford Votes~Hartford Vota Coalition
Heritage Village Democratic Club
Hispanic Federation Connecticut State Office
Indivisible Greenwich
League of Women Voters of Connecticut
Make the Road CT
Make Voting Easy
Moral Monday CT
National Association of Social Workers, Connecticut Chapter (NASW/CT)
New Britain Branch NAACP

New Haven Peoples Center
 New Haven Votes Coalition
 Norwalk Women Who Vote
 PAN34 (Progressive Action Network for the 34th District)
 PoliticaCT
 ReSisters
 SEIU District 1199NE
 SEIU Local 32BJ
 SEIU State Council
 Sierra Club Connecticut
 Southbury Democratic Town Committee
 Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ
 The Arc Connecticut
 The Yale Preventative Medicine Interest Group
 UAW Region 9A
 Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury Social Action Council
 Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut
 UU the Vote CT
 Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church
 Vote 16CT
 Voter Choice Connecticut
 WeCAN, Western Connecticut Action Network
 Wesleyan Democrats
 YWCA Greenwich
 YWCA New Britain

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cc: Senator Martin M. Looney, Senate President Pro Tempore
 Senator Bob Duff, Majority Leader
 Representative Joe Aresimowicz, Speaker of the House
 Representative Matthew D. Ritter, Majority Leader
 Senator Len Fasano, Minority Leader
 Representative Themis Klarides, Minority Leader
 Senator Mae Flexer, Co-Chair, Government Administration and Elections Committee
 Representative Daniel J. Fox, Co-Chair, Government Administration and Elections
 Committee
 Senator Rob Sampson, Ranking Member, Government Administration and Elections
 Committee
 Representative Mike France, Ranking Member, Government Administration and Elections
 Committee