

Testimony IN SUPPORT of Senate Bill No. 431
An Act Concerning Referenda, Independent Expenditures and Certain Other Political Spending

March 18th, 2022

Dear Senator Mae Flexer (Co-Chair), Representative Dan Fox (Co-Chair), Ranking members Senator Rob Sampson and Representative Gale Mastrofrancesco and esteemed members of the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee:

My name is [INSERT YOUR NAME], I am a voter from [INSERT YOUR TOWN NAME]. The freedom to vote is extremely important to me— and I am asking that the General Assembly close a loophole in state law that currently allows foreign individuals and entities to spend foreign funds to influence the outcome of our state and local ballot referendums.

The Early Voting statewide referendum on the November 8, 2022 ballot could well become a target of anti-democratic foreign actors. **We cannot allow this to happen.**

Federal law already bans foreign nationals, including foreign citizens and foreign governments, from spending in federal, state and local elections—but a recent ruling by the Federal Elections Commission says that ban does not apply to referendums such as the early voting ballot question this fall. Other states have addressed this problem at the state level and Connecticut should do the same.

The Connecticut General Assembly needs to enact Senate Bill No. 431 that will prohibit contributions or expenditures by foreign nationals or entities on Connecticut referendums. [ADD YOUR OWN REASONS FOR WHY OUR STATE MUST BAN FOREIGN SPENDING ON STATE REFERENDUMS].

SB 431 will also improve campaign finance laws in preparation for this fall's early voting ballot referendum and make long overdue updates to state statute to reflect U.S. Supreme Court and federal court rulings already in effect.

I urge you to **pass SB 431 to protect our freedom to vote.**

Thank you,

[YOUR NAME], [YOUR TOWN]