



January 31, 2023

The Honorable Ned Lamont
Governor of Connecticut
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Martin Looney
President Pro Tempore, Connecticut Senate
Legislative Office Building, Room 3300v
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Matt Ritter
Speaker, Connecticut House of Representatives
Legislative Office Building, Room 4106
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: SUPPORT FOR THE CONNECTICUT VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Dear Governor Lamont, Senate President Looney, and Speaker Ritter:

We write to express our strong support for the Connecticut Voting Rights Act (“CTVRA”). This landmark legislation would address discrimination against voters of color in Connecticut and immediately position this state as a national leader on protecting the right to vote. For these reasons, the CTVRA is a top priority for the undersigned civil and voting rights organizations.

In this historic session, we need Connecticut to stand up for equal, inclusive democracy.

Despite Connecticut’s progressive reputation, many discriminatory barriers to equal participation still exist in the state for voters of color and voters whose first language is not English, particularly

at the local level. Until recently, Connecticut had some of the most restrictive voting laws in the nation. Connecticut voters still face limited access to absentee voting, no early voting, and long lines at the polls—especially in Black and Latino neighborhoods.¹ And Connecticut lacks robust state-law protections against many forms of voting discrimination that remain a threat today.

The CTVRA will set a new standard for protecting the right to vote by:

- Launching a “preclearance” program that requires places with records of discrimination to prove that proposed voting changes will not harm voters of color before they can go into effect.
- Providing new legal tools to fight discriminatory voting rules in court.
- Expanding language assistance for voters with limited English proficiency.
- Creating strong protections against voter intimidation, deception, or obstruction.
- Establishing a central hub for election data and demographic information that will empower officials and community members to ensure accessible elections.

The CTVRA builds upon successful laws already passed in California, Washington, Oregon, Virginia, and New York—which enacted the [John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York](#) in 2022. Similar bills are also under consideration in New Jersey and Maryland this session. The CTVRA will carry forward this momentum and become one of the most comprehensive state-level voting rights acts in the country.

Now is Connecticut’s time to lead. We encourage you to prioritize, pass, and fully fund the CTVRA this legislative session, and we stand ready to work with you to secure this victory for all Connecticut voters.

Sincerely,

ACLU of Connecticut
ADL Connecticut (Anti-Defamation League)
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Epsilon Omicron Omega Chapter

¹ See, e.g., NBC Connecticut, *Polling Location in Hartford Had Long Lines on Election Day* (Nov. 4, 2020), <https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/polling-location-in-hartford-had-long-lines-on-election-day/2355523/>; Aakshi Chaba, *Long lines turn away voters*, Yale Daily News (Nov. 7, 2018), <https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2018/11/07/long-lines-turn-away-voters/>; Jaden Edison, *Early voting is on the ballot in CT, a key issue for Black and Latino residents*, CT Mirror (Oct. 30, 2022), <https://ctmirror.org/2022/10/30/ct-early-voting-constitutional-amendment-black-latino-voters/>; Matt DeRienzo, *In Connecticut, Voters Face some of the Biggest Obstacles Outside the South*, Center for Public Integrity (Oct. 7, 2020), <https://publicintegrity.org/politics/elections/us-polling-places/connecticut-voters-face-some-of-the-biggest-obstacles-outside-the-south/>.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Tau Xi Omega Chapter
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Theta Epsilon Omega Chapter
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Bridgeport Generation Now Votes
Campaign Legal Center
Common Cause in Connecticut
Connecticut AFL-CIO
Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans
Connecticut Chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.
Connecticut Citizen Action Group
Connecticut NAACP State Conference
Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund
CSEA SEIU Local 2001
CT Black Women (CTBW)
CT Shoreline Indivisible
CT Voters First
Democracy Women In Action (DWA Indivisible)
Elm City LITFest
FairVote Action
Greater New Haven NAACP
Hartford Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Hispanic Federation, Connecticut Office
IndivisibleCT4 (ICT4)
Indivisible Greenwich
Indivisible Stamford
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
League of Women Voters of Connecticut
League of Women Voters of the East Shore
Legal Defense Fund (LDF)
Make Voting Easy - CT
Moral Monday CT
National Association of Social Workers, CT Chapter
New Haven Peoples Center
New Haven Votes Coalition
PAN34
PoliticaCT
Progressive Women of Greater Hartford
ReSisters
Restore Democracy
SEIU - CT State Council

SEIU 32BJ
Stand Up America
Strategic Advocacy Clinic, Yale Law School
Voter Choice Connecticut
Western Connecticut Action Network
Windham/Willimantic Branch NAACP
Yale Union Retirees Association