



CITY OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND  
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March 14, 2025

The Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections  
82 Smith St.  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: Support of House Bill 5515**

Dear Chairman Shanley and Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections,

As Election Administrator for the City of Newport and on behalf of Chairwoman Sharon Connors and the Newport Canvassing Authority, I am writing to strongly encourage you to **support** passage of House Bill 5515, which was introduced on behalf of the Secretary of State and has unanimous support of the State Board of Elections and the RI Town & City Clerks Association. This bill would submit to the voters an amendment to the state constitution that would remove the 30-day requirement of residency and would allow the General Assembly to legislate less restrictive requirements for voters registering last minute.

Rhode Island has one of the longest waiting periods between registration and eligibility to vote in the country. This bill would allow the General Assembly to effectively increase voter access, making it easier to register to vote and participate in our democracy, especially for new citizens. If a citizen moves to Rhode Island within the 30-day window or a new citizen is naturalized within 30 days of an election, under current law they would be prohibited from voting. This bill would solve that problem. Technology already allows us to confirm a voter's eligibility to vote the same day they register. In fact, we already do this successfully for anyone who wants to cast a vote for president and vice-president every four years.

This bill would allow the voters to weigh in on improving this process by potentially removing the 30-day waiting period from the RI Constitution, but it would also provide for a 30-day residency requirement for any declared candidates. As is already currently part of the state constitution, the General Assembly will continue to have the right to define residency requirements for all voters. This bill just removes a particular timeframe in the state constitution.

We strongly urge you to consider passage of this bill and allow the voters to consider this amendment, which we believe will increase participation in our democracy, with no risk to election security given the technology we already employ.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hugh Moren", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Hugh Moren  
Election Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sharon Connors", written in a cursive style.

Sharon Connors  
Chair, Newport Canvassing Authority

CC: Sharon Connors