



# Town of Portsmouth

2200 East Main Road  
Portsmouth, Rhode Island 02871

*Sent via email*

March 18, 2025

Canvassing Authority

(401) 683-3157

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley, Chair  
House Committee on State Government & Elections

RE: In support of HJR5515 – Joint Resolution to Approve and Publish and Submit to the Electors a Proposition of Amendment to the Constitution – Of Suffrage

Dear Chair Shanley,

I write this letter in support of House Resolution 5515, legislation that would remove the 30-day voter registration requirement from the State Constitution upon a voter referendum.

Currently, the Rhode Island Constitution restricts voters to having to register at least 30 days before an election - a requirement that creates an unnecessary barrier for otherwise eligible voters.

As the registrar of voters for the Town of Portsmouth for more than 12 years, I have witnessed instances where voters were ineligible to vote a full ballot because they moved from one Rhode Island community to another within weeks of the election. Our final canvass voter rolls become obsolete as we print them thirty days prior to every election. The technology exists to allow canvassing offices to update and verify records quickly, accurately, and efficiently, allowing Rhode Island voters access to correct and complete ballots.

Passing this resolution is only the first step. Voters would get to decide to remove the Constitutional restriction during the General Election in the fall of 2026. Then, the General Assembly will still have to update state law to give voters more time to register, including implementing same-day registration.

For some voters, the process would be very similar to what they have already experienced, as we already allow same-day registration for the President and Vice President. Approximately 5,000 to 10,000 people use this method of registering and voting.

I urge this Committee and the full House to support this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline S. Schulz  
Registrar of Voters  
Town of Portsmouth, RI

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government & Elections  
The Honorable Karen Alzate